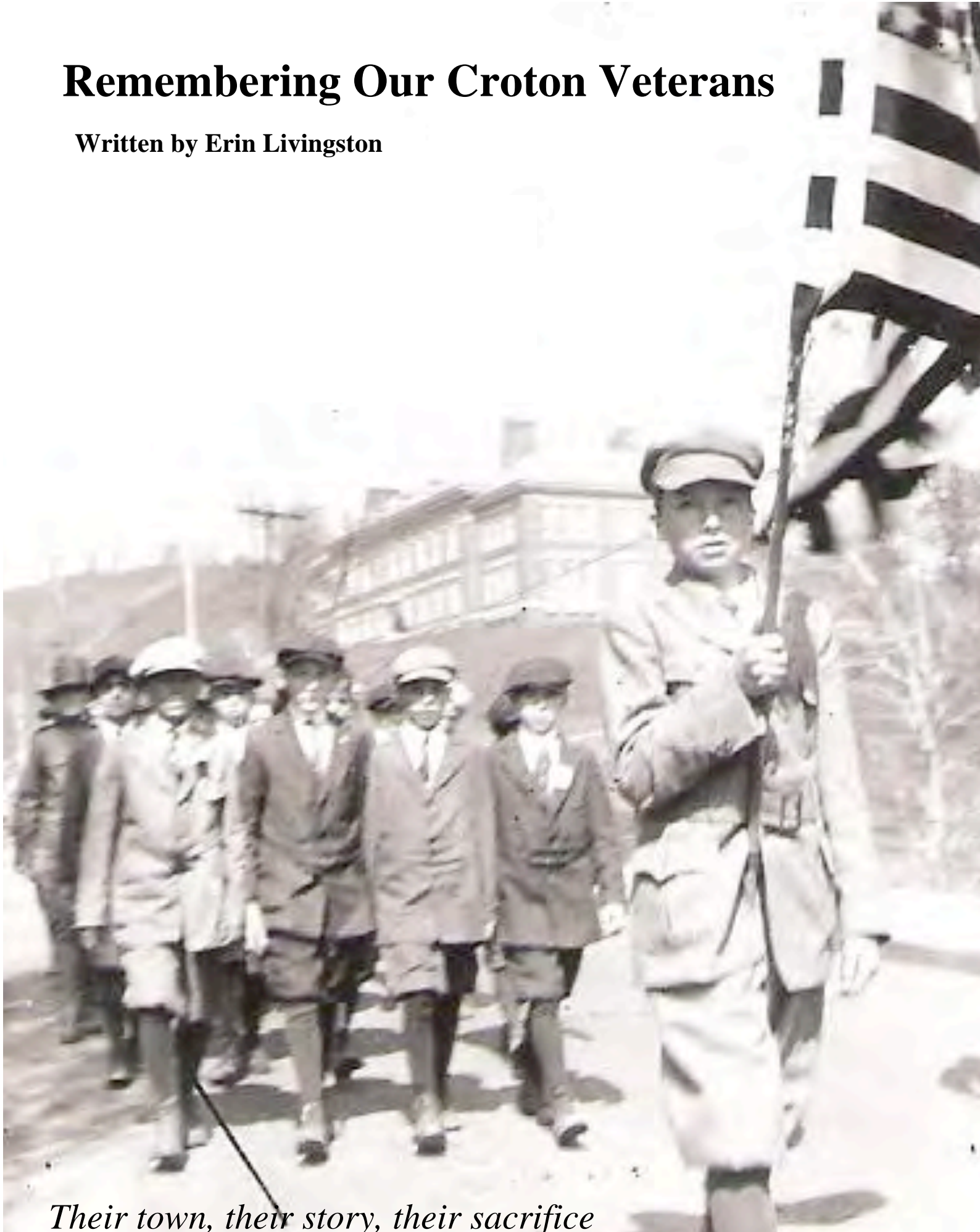


Remembering Our Croton Veterans

Written by Erin Livingston



Their town, their story, their sacrifice

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Introduction

Hello, my name is Erin Livingston and I am a Girl Scout in Kathy Vogel's Troop 1244 in Croton-On-Hudson, New York. This book is part of my Gold Award project, named "Remembering Our Veterans". Initially, the book served as a public service announcement. It allowed for the people of Croton, or anyone genuinely interested in History, to read about the Veterans of our town (each of which has a street named after him somewhere in Croton). However, over the course of writing and working hand in hand with the Historical Society, Dorothy Pezanowski, the Village Historian, and many other wonderful people, I now understand that the book I created is much more than what I originally intended.

The book I have created gives more to the community than a simple background history on Croton's veterans. This book lets their memories, stories, and personalities live on. It allows the veterans to be looked up to and to be used as examples for people everywhere.



A Memorial Day Tribute that reflects the message of this book

When studying history, most people don't really care or take the time to look at the small moments; the moments that may not have such "significant value" in a global aspect but do play an important role in our lives. This is what I wanted to showcase in the book, the real heroes in

history. Their stories serve as an inspiration, and their deaths are honored and respected.

Hopefully, after reading the book, you won't only be amazed by the hard work so many people put in to it, or the actual content of the book, but also be amazed and inspired by the lives of these veterans. It is impossible to put into words the sacrifices they made, and the respect they deserve.

After working for months on a project that was somewhat "thrown upon me" by eager friends, and an expecting mother - my life has truly been changed. I have had the opportunity to work closely with real historians who, although they do not get enough credit, have access to some of the most amazing documents, pictures and firsthand accounts that I have ever seen. I have become friends with 26 new people that may not be around today, but still live on through the files at the Historical Society and the people of Croton (and now hopefully, this book).

I hope that the stories and articles in the following book, impact your life the way they did mine. I hope that after turning the pages, you will have a better understanding of the lives they lived and the sacrifices they made. Without further ado, I invite you to read about the lives of these 26 veterans and look back on them with honor and respect.

□ Note: The order the book is in was determined using the timeline of American History. The wars follow in chronological order; however, the stories of the veterans following each war were set up by alphabetical order.

About the Author

My name is Erin Livingston. Over the course of almost a year I have been working on this book for my Girl Scout Gold Award project entitled, "Remembering Our Veterans".



Me, with my mother Regina Hertl



Me, after getting my Gold Award approval, "Remembering Our Veterans", by the Girl Scout Council of Westchester

I have been a Girl Scout for almost as long as I can remember. I started in Kindergarten, as a Daisy, and slowly moved up the ranks as I grew. Over the years, I really enjoyed camping, earning badges and the most stereotypical, selling cookies! As my troop grew older, we grew smaller and smaller in numbers. After getting my Bronze and then Silver award, we grew smaller still. When it finally came time to achieve Gold, I was the only one who wanted to go for it. The rest of the troop disbanded and I joined a new troop, Troop 1244, with my current leader Kathy Vogel, and several of my friends. Several members of my new troop were also going for Gold, and all of us began the pre-requisite work in the summer of 2012. Currently, almost all of us are avidly working on our projects.

Since my family is very actively involved with scouting, I was expected to select, work towards, and to complete a Gold Award project. The pressure almost doubled when my older sister, Margaret Livingston, achieved her Gold Award in 2011. Although, not excited at first, the project has truly grown on me. It's something that I believe has become a part of my character.



Me, with Patrick Calcutti at the Veteran's Day ceremony in 2012



Me, with a few veterans at the Veteran's Day ceremony in 2012

Currently, I am a sophomore at Croton Harmon High School, where I am active in a few extracurricular activities. In the fall I play on the Varsity Field Hockey team and in the Spring I play on the Varsity Girls Lacrosse team. When not playing sports, I like to play piano, read, and occasionally write.

This year I was enrolled in AP World History, a challenging college level course that gives students a very close look at many different empires around the world and the history of their development. Although difficult, and sometimes a lot of work, I have found it extremely interesting at several levels. More specifically, I really enjoyed learning about the customs of ancient people and the smaller, more specific details about their lives. This is what jump started my project.

By the beginning of my sophomore year, the search was on for a project. By the time school started, I had already attempted more than three ideas, each of which had been rejected. It was around September of 2012 (at which point I'll admit I was starting to lose hope)

when I was given the idea for this project by one of my mom's friends. I immediately contacted a few people and was eventually directed to Dorothy Pezanowski, the Village Historian. We arranged to meet and talk about my objectives and ideas. After having a discussion with her, she immediately jumped on board! I was so excited I finally had a project! The week of Super Storm Sandy, with no power or official presentation, I presented my idea to the Girl Scout Council and they approved as well! Thus, the work started.



Me, with my first Girl Scout leader, Ginny Tuturro, who also inspired me on the project

Overall, I am extremely satisfied with the project outcome. I feel invigorated, proud and accomplished of what I have done, and look forward to moving on with my life, having this under my belt.

Special Thanks To

Dorothy Pezanowski - Village Historian

Without Dorothy, or “Dodie” as many call her, this project would not have been possible. I could not thank her enough for everything she has done. Dodie was my mentor throughout the entire project and helped me every step of the way. Together we collected and reviewed information about each veteran, then looked over and edited the stories for what felt like one thousand times. In addition, Dodie spent almost every Monday and Thursday with me for almost a whole year. The time she put into the project is astounding, whenever I came into the Historical Society she always had some new information for me, and the project. Croton is truly blessed to have this woman as their historian. She is dedicated, responsible, hardworking and above all caring. I don’t know anyone as dedicated as her to the town and its history. Thank you so much.



Dodie and I after our first meeting, when she approved to be my mentor

The Croton Historical Society- The main source of my information

The Historical Society provided about 99% of the information found in the project. Almost every Monday and Thursday they were nice enough to host me and give me the opportunity to look through the hundreds of boxes of information they have. The members there were always very kind and considerate of me and always guided me to find what I needed. I could not thank them enough.

Patrick Calcutti- A Valuable source of information

Pat Calcutti contributed a considerable amount to this project, although he may not know it. Pat gave me several articles on the veterans along with speeches from past Memorial Day Services. Thank you.

Kathleen Vogel & Troop 1244- A constant support team

My Girl Scout leader, Kathy Vogel, and my troop, were extremely helpful in guiding and supporting me with this project. The troop helped me get my project up and running, even after several other failed attempts at a Gold Award Project.

Friends and Family- A constant support team

I could not ask for better friends or family. After almost a year of working on the project, there was not one day when I wasn't supported. Several of my friends put in countless hours to help collect information and advertise my project. In addition to my friends, my family also helped considerably by bringing me to the Historical Society and helping me in contacting people and collecting information. Thank you.

The Servicemen's News- A valuable source of information

Although not around today, "The Servicemen's News" helped tremendously with my project. This monthly newsletter (See the article on "The Servicemen's News") contributed a considerable amount of the information I acquired. The tributes that the organization wrote are some of the most well written pieces of literature that I have ever read. I thank them for their dedication and commitment to the men who were in the service and for the information they contributed.

Delmar "Ted" Kearsley - Friend of several of the veterans

Ted contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. Thank you.

Alicia Anfiteatro - Niece of Philip Loconto

Alicia contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. Thank you.

Gary Cahill - Editor of the Croton Gazette

Gary published a letter I wrote in the Gazette, in order to advertise the project and collect information from its readers. Without his help I would not have been contacted by any of these wonderful family members and friends who contributed valuable information to the project. He also published a second letter advertising the access of the book to the public. Thank you.

Tom Faranda - Owner of Blog with Things on Croton

Tom contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. I used information from some speeches that he posted on two of the veterans. Thank you.

Tom McMahon- Valuable source of information

Tom contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. I would like to especially thank Tom for not only contributing information on Frank Aschman, but going out of his way to research information on Warren Ackerman, a veteran that had scarce information up until the point of his research. I was amazed at his dedication, perseverance, and caring attitude. Thank you.

Warren G. Alexander- Valuable source of information

Warren contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. He provided information on Philip Van Cortland Warren, whose information was scarce beforehand. I would like to thank him for the considerable amount of detailed information he contributed.

Steven Smalls- Valuable source of information

Steven contributed information to one, or several, of the stories on the veterans. He contributed information on Philip Loconto, who went to school with his mother. Thank you.

Maureen Henry- My Aunt and a lovely editor

Maureen did tremendous amounts of work on editing and reviewing the final copy of the book, a job that took several hours. I cannot thank you enough.

Kathy West- A family friend with an intuitive mind

Kathy sparked my idea for the project. Without her this wouldn't have happened. Thank you.

The Movement for Street Signs

In Croton there are 26 different streets named after veterans who have died in WWI, WWII, The Korean War, or the Vietnam War. These street signs resemble regular street signs with the exception of a star added next to the name of the street. In addition to the street signs, Croton honors its casualties through the WWI memorial (See article on the WWI memorial) and the Veterans Corner monument.



Example of a regular street sign found in Croton



Example of a street sign named after a veteran, in this case William Wolf, notice the star on the sign (to the right)

In 1951 the Village Board passed a resolution to the effect that new streets would be named for veterans who had died during service. They were to be named in order of the death of the veteran. Hence, the men referenced in this book have streets named after them. In the mid 1940's several streets were named after veterans in the Croton-Harmon area. The streets in this area had previously been named by alphabetical order such as, "A Street, B Street" and so on. This sparked the naming of over 20 streets in the following years.

HARMON PARK PLAN
To Name Streets for Veterans
Harmon Park streets now designated alphabetically will be named for Croton war dead whose names begin with the letters employed, according to a Planning Board recommendation to be made to the Village Board. Approved by the planning group last night, the change will be presented in connection with revisions to being the official map of the village up to date.
Priority was given to World War II veterans in selecting names for the other streets. Names from this list to be recommended include those of Warren Ackerman, Harold Douglas, Philip Leonard, William Munson, William Newton and William O'Haver.
Only name of a Korean veteran to be recommended will be that of Philip Kinsey. Other Croton men who died in this action, as well as World War I and II dead named on the Central Veterans Committee list, will be used for streets in other new developments. It was pointed out, streets designated by letters B, C and D on 1931 maps are on land now part of the Carme E. Tompkins school grounds, it was pointed out, "H" street was a short mapped thoroughfare never developed, while the letter "I" never was used in Harmon Park layout.

Honor War Dead
The Croton Village Board at its meeting last week officially named six streets in Harmon Park for servicemen who lost their lives in their country's wars. The action had been recommended by the Planning Board in March, 1950, but had to wait until the roads were recently accepted as Village property. Under the Board's resolution, G Street is now named for Irving Gerstein, H Street for John V. Hughes, J Street for Charles R. Jacoby, K Street for Joseph Kinsey, L Street for Philip Leonard and M Street for William A. Munson. All were World War II casualties with the exception of Joseph Kinsey, who lost his life in the Korean conflict.

Streets, Sewers Are Discussed By Board
Streets and sewers were the subject of most of the Village Board meeting Wednesday. The Board will accept Hutholson Rd. after easements are granted, and then name it Warren Rd. after a war veteran; posts for stop signs were received, but no signs; a request for traffic control at Mt. Airy Rd. and Grand St. will be studied; an inspection of Harmon Park water lines will be made, although Trustee Edwards said the lines had been covered up. Trustee Cook will study garbage collection to reduce costs and the Board plans to study the idea of standard garbage cans throughout the Village. The Board noted it "had no objections" to the Rod and

Harmon Park Street Named for War Dead
Nine Croton servicemen who lost their lives in World War II and one victim of the Korean conflict will be honored by having streets in the Harmon Park area named for them under a proposal announced at the Village Planning Board meeting on Monday night. The streets are now numbered alphabetically, but Board members noted the new names on the official Village map which is now being brought up-to-date.
G Street, which runs in front of the new Carrie E. Tompkins School, will be named for Irving Gerstein, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sol Gerstein of Radnor Avenue, a martyr of World War II. In all cases, the Board matched the present letter of each street with the first letter of the name of a deceased Croton veteran. In cases where more than one name began with the same letter, preference was given first to World War I, then World War II, and finally Korean casualties.
The Board proposed that A Street be named for Warren Ackerman; that B and D Streets be removed from the map; that C and J Streets be combined and named for Charles R. Jacoby; that H Street be named for Harold Hahol, first Croton victim of World War II.

Croton mayor, veterans discuss option to street-naming to honor fallen military
During the course of what turned out to be a veterans meeting, recently installed Croton Village Mayor Dr. Gregory Schmidt Tuesday night provided a group of local veterans an alternative to the naming of these village streets in honor of three local residents killed while in military service to their country many years ago. It was decided to village officials in February, by the Croton Historical Society, that despite more than 20 village streets having been named over a period of several decades in honor of local military personnel who died while in service, three men's names had been overlooked. Despite the resolution, the Board of Trustees the following month voted unanimously to name the village's waterworks access road "Ed-Holt Way" in honor of Robert Elliott, who "retired" from the board after 13 years as mayor. At the board's annual reorganization meeting on April 4, at which Dr. Schmidt, formerly a trustee, was sworn in as mayor, Dr. Schmidt and fellow board members—including newly-installed trustee Thomas Brennan and James Steinberg—were urged by some one dozen mostly elderly veterans in the audience to make amends. At that time, Vincent Marino, commander of Post-Exiles Post of Veterans of Foreign Wars, said he had "nothing against" Mr. Elliott, but felt the out-going mayor would have been honored in some other way. Speaking on behalf of the Croton Central Veterans Committee, Mr. Marino continued to say that the board's vote on March 21 "showered these veterans."
A resolution approved by the Board of Trustees back in 1951 states that it is "desired" by the board that future public streets and roads be named in honor of local residents killed while in military service. In 2000, when the village was naming streets in the luxury Arrowcross development, it was believed that there were no more veterans eligible for the honor, according to Village Clerk Peggy Kessler. She said that information came from a local World War II veteran, who passed on last year. The three veterans identified by the historical society are Joseph Quatrocco, who served in World War I; Sam Flanagan, a veteran of World War II; and Robert Reiter, who served during the Korean conflict.
It is not known if the desecration of all three men, assuming they can be located, would agree to a street naming in their honor, the granting of approval by family members has reportedly been an informal prerequisite in years past. Indeed, at least a couple of families of deceased veterans have refused the recognition.
At Tuesday night's meeting with Croton area veterans at the Stanley H. Redfem House Municipal Building, Dr. Schmidt suggested a two-pronged proposal. Gateway Plaza, the main commercial real-estate development from Croton Post Avenue, past the Croton-Harmon train station and village public works garage, would be re-named something on the order of "Veterans Memorial Drive." As for specifically honoring the three veterans cited by the historical society, the second part of Dr. Schmidt's proposal is to name sections of the village-owned parking lots in their honor.
Dr. Schmidt said this could actually provide more "visibility" of the village's act of honoring fallen military than the naming of individual streets.

Several Headlines of the Croton Gazette, from issues published in the 1940's

The most recent naming of streets was in 2005. Three veterans had been looked over and so, in 2005, their names were placed on three new streets in Croton.

While it may seem that having a street named after a veteran would be an honor, there have been past incidents when a family would decline the offer and therefore in the 2005 naming existing family members were contacted for approval.

Often times street signs may be over looked, however, it is important to remember their purpose. They may seem to be one of the less known facts about Croton, but they serve as a reminder of the town's casualties, loss, honor, bravery and much more.

Croton at the time of the War(s)

In the 1900's Croton was very much like other towns, and yearned to help their men in the service. Life on the "home front" consisted of selling war bonds, applying food rationing, writing letters, and keeping track of the towns' honor roll. For the most part the town remained as it always had, quiet.



Croton's Honor roll showing the men in service

In addition to the several fundraisers, and service projects intent on helping the war, several men and women formed a group known as the "Servicemen's Auxiliary". This was an organization that remained in contact with the men throughout battle via letters and telegraphs, then presented this information to the public through a monthly newsletter known as, "The Servicemen's News". This newsletter is responsible for a considerable amount of information found in this book, and to learn more about it please see the article written on "The Servicemen's News". Similar to "The Servicemen's News", Croton Point also kept close contact with their men in the service through a series of letters known as "Letters to Croton Point".

Croton-on-Hudson's Honor Roll MARCM. 1. 1946. A multi-column list of names and military details, including names like Adamo, Frank M. Jr., Agosta, Joseph M., Albert, Jerome J., etc.

Croton's Honor Roll in writing

CROTON-ON-HUDSON

RED CROSS



January 31st, 1945

TO THE CROTON SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN:

This is a message from your hometown Red Cross. I know of no better way to let you know we are thinking of you and are anxious to be of service to you than to report what we are doing.

We receive monthly quotas from Red Cross Headquarters in sewing, knitting and surgical dressings and we meet them always with you in mind! As we sew the Red Cross labels in the garments we keep hoping that some day one of you will write and say that your Kit Bag, Sweater, Socks, Mittens or Gloves had the CROTON LABEL in it!

The HOME SERVICE COMMITTEE is on call 24 hours a day. They stand by to help you or your families in times of emergency! Some of you already know the assistance we have been able to give in belated allotment checks, furloughs, extended furloughs, discharges and help to the returning veteran. When we say "The Red Cross is Always with Him", we mean it. The Red Cross is the connecting link between YOU in service and YOUR FAMILY! Some of you have asked us to purchase flowers or gifts for you to be delivered to your family on special days such as Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries. We always feel proud and happy to do this for you!

We are proud of our Blood Bank Record! Weeks before the Blood Bank Unit comes to Croton our Committee is busy signing up volunteers. On the appointed day and hour the volunteer appears at the High School. He first enters the Library where he is questioned as to recent colds, etc., and where a hemoglobin test is given. If he passes he proceeds to the gymnasium where rooms have been partitioned off by means of screens. There he meets one of our local doctors who checks his blood pressure and heart action. If they are satisfactory he is given a glass of fruit juice and escorted to the "receiving room". In a few minutes he is on his way to the Canteen where he is served refreshments. At the last desk he is given his pin and card and he usually asks when the next Bank will be in Croton as he wants to sign up again. It is so little for any of us to do in comparison to what you are doing! We are terribly proud of you and feel as if we belonged to one large family. Every word we hear from or about you is very precious to us.

If you would like to write and tell us of any of your contacts with the work of the Red Cross we would appreciate it as it would be a morale builder for the Home Front. In writing to your mothers and wives ask them if they are helping in the Red Cross workroom. We need them.

Please remember that your CROTON RED CROSS IS ALWAYS READY TO HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES.

We send you our very best wishes and pray daily for your safe return. We are sealing in this letter a breath of air from Croton. Did you get it?

Very sincerely,

Erma Morton

Mrs. Arthur Morton
Red Cross Branch Chairman

This is a letter to the Croton Service Men and Women from the Red Cross chairman, Emma Morton, who was also a member of "The Servicemen's News". The letter was sent around 1945.

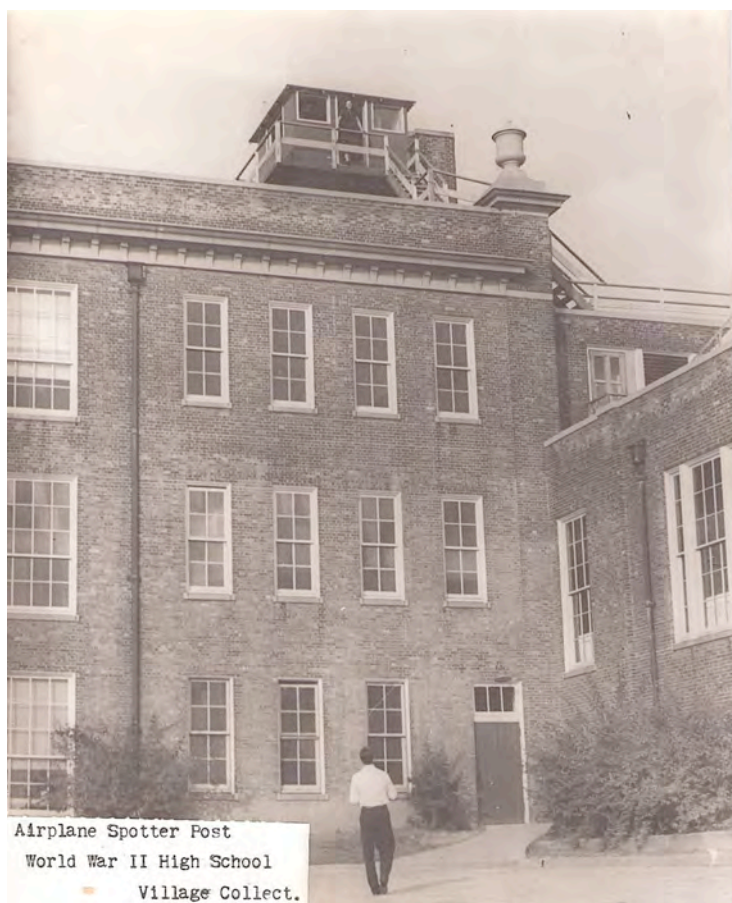


The Croton Lions Club at the time of WWII, working at a salvage drive to help the men in service

There were two honor rolls in Croton, one in front of the Municipal building and the other somewhere else in the town. The honor roll gave a headcount of the men in service, and when one had passed away, a star would be placed next to their name.

In WWI, Croton had close to 200 soldiers entered in the service. For WWII, approximately 500 however, the numbers vary from source to source. The men entered in service were spread out all over

the world throughout the 1900's. To list a few, men went to Germany, England, the South Pacific, Japan, North Africa, Italy, Alaska, and more. Out of the soldiers in WWI, 14 women were entered in the service. To learn more about the role of women in the service please read the article written on "Women in Service".



The CHHS airplane spotter post in the 1940's



A man standing on the stairs of the CHHS spotters tower, looking into the sky for the sign of bombing planes - around the 1940's



*Women outside the CHHS spotters tower-
around the 1940's*



Inside the CHHS spotters tower - around the 1940's

Croton Harmon High School also played quite a role in the service. On top of the High School was an airplane spotter post, for the time during World War II, when one of the main strategies by the enemy was to bomb civilians.

Overall, like many towns facing similar situations during the 1900's, Croton showed incredible support for their men in the service, and continues to honor and respect them, for their tremendous sacrifice.

Women in the Service

During the World Wars, many women had imperative jobs. Whether it be helping out on the home front, or actually taking part in the action on the front lines, for the first time in history women started making their mark on history.



"Duty is Demanding" Women in Service

Before the world wars, men were primarily chosen to work in factories; however, once men were drafted for WWI there was a severe shortage in factory workers. This led to women taking on bigger roles in their surrounding community, including more employment, more rights, and larger payrolls to provide for their families during the hard times at war.

For women working on the home front, life consisted mostly of volunteer work for the war efforts. These activities included, working for the Red Cross, selling war bonds, planting victory gardens and sometimes, knitting socks for the men in service. Most Women who were

entered in the service worked through the Red Cross, as nurses, tending to the injured men in the service.

Overall, the world wars opened up a lot of opportunities for women, showing the men in society that women could easily fill in for their jobs and provide for their country just as well. Shortly after WWI, women's rights movements emerged and within only a few years, women had gained the right to vote.



Croton women taking part in the service during WWI

Although women are not treated with complete equality against men, it is important to remember what women have overcome and achieved within the past few decades.



Croton women taking part in the service during WWI

The world wars impacted almost every country around the world in both positive and negative ways. Although there was a lot of destruction, it is worth looking back on our past with reflection and respect for what we have overcome. The evolution of women is only one of the many results of the wars that continues to impact our lives every day.

Much like the stories of the veterans, it is important to look back on our past with both reflection and admiration, and to see both the good and bad things that have come out of our history. The famous poster to the right represents the unity and strength we felt as a nation during our time in the world wars, something most definitely worth looking back on.

Famous WWII propaganda poster to encourage women to join the service



World War I (1914-1919)

World War I, also known as "The Great War", lasted for about 4-5 years and was remembered as one of history's most violent eras. During the time leading up to the war, tensions escalated quickly amongst several European nations. Each nation fought for the largest empire, the biggest army, and the spot at being "the number one" European nation. It was during this time period that rivalries and alliances were formed, due to nationalist competition amongst certain nations. In June of 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand (the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire) was assassinated, sparking the World War. Because of previous alliances made, this event set off a chain reaction and eventually, almost all of Europe was involved in the war in some way. It was at this time, the two main alliances were formed.

<u>"The Central Powers"</u>	Vs.	<u>"The Allies"</u>
- Austria-Hungary Empire		- France
- Germany		- Great Britain (UK)
- Italy		- Russia
- Ottoman Empire (Area around India)		- USA

Although both sides had several countries involved, the two main competitors in which the most tensions flared, were Germany and the United Kingdom. Despite the fine line between both sides, each country had a war plan.



Parade to celebrate the ending of WWI



Parade to celebrate the ending of WWI

Reactions varied among different people. Farmers and laborers working out in the country responded with shock and fear, however, the youth in the city reacted with joy. Most people thought that the war would help clear up previous problems and tensions amongst the nations.

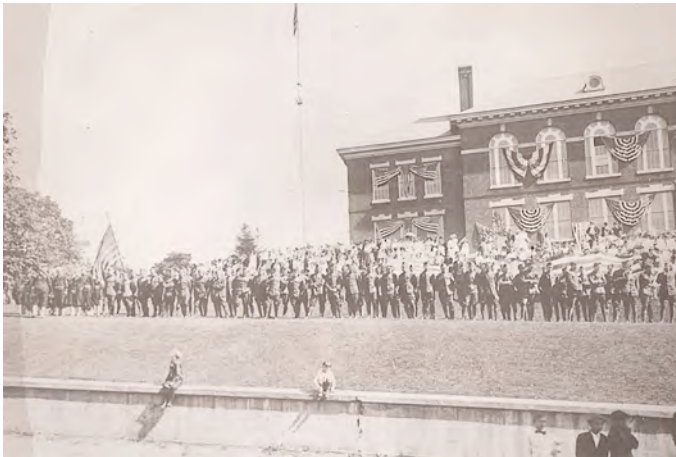


WWI Parade



Municipal Building during the WWI parade

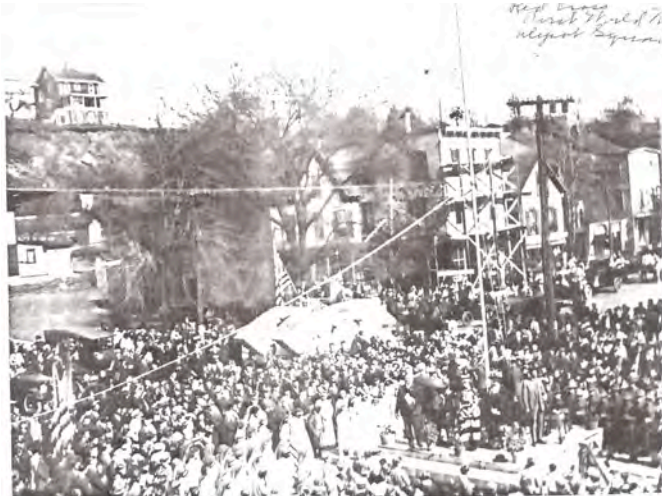
The results of the war were quite devastating. The new modern weapons slaughtered thousands of soldiers. This included machine guns, tanks, airplanes, poisonous gas, submarines, grenades and more. In addition to the horrible weapons, a new style of warfare was first introduced, known as Trench Warfare.



WWI Parade

Trench Warfare consisted of two opposing trenches running deep in the ground. There was a network of trenches on either side, including barbed wire running around the top. The high ground above the trenches, but between each side, was known as "No man's land". This was deadly territory and any soldier who entered was on a

suicide mission. This new style of warfare served to be extremely gruesome, "War ceased to be a noble and sporting affair, if it ever was". Soldiers who served on the front lines of trench warfare were required to wear gas masks due to poisonous gas attacks. One particular tactic Germany started in 1915 was the use of Mustard Gas.



WWI Red Cross Rally- Depot Sq. on Riverside Ave



The vehicles decorated for the WWI Parade

The gas was a liquid agent, and once exposed to the air turned into a noxious yellow gas. Once people were exposed, symptoms did not appear for the first twelve hours, but it rotted the body from within as well as the external areas. After blistering the skin and burning the eyes, the gas attacked the bronchial tubes of the lungs. Victims endured excruciating pain and were strapped to their beds to await death in 4-5 weeks. Approximately 1.2 million soldiers died from gas alone.

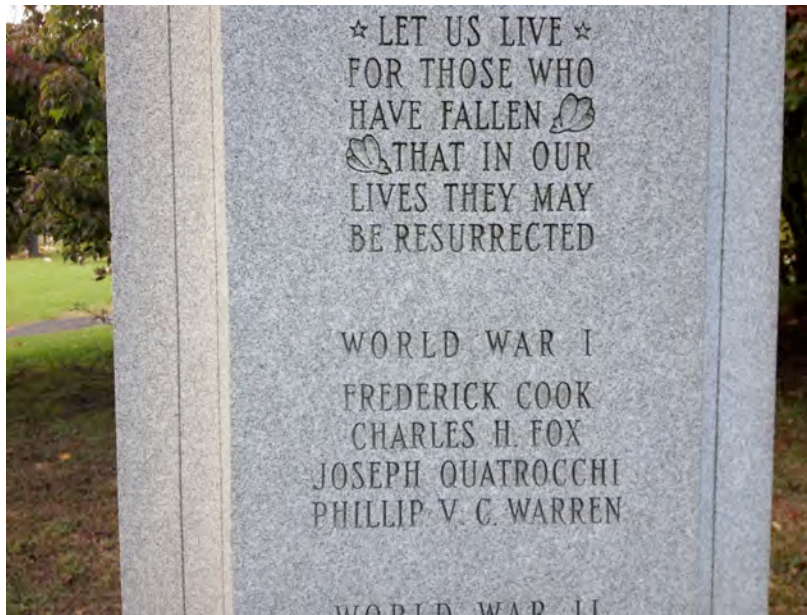


WWI Library

Nine out of ten times, Trench Warfare drew a stalemate amongst opposing sides, and each suffered extreme casualties. In addition to the horrible strategy of Trench Warfare, in 1914 Air warfare against civilians rose. On top of this, several nations started forming blockades to cut off enemies from food, causing hundreds to starve to death.

Most nations were not able to cope with the hardships of the war and in early 1918 Russia dropped out of the Great War, declaring neutrality. This major loss was offset by the entry of the U.S. into the war in 1917, due to tensions they had against Germany. The Central Powers realized that they would run out of men before the U.S. could and in November 1918 pursued peace. The end of fighting in WWI took place on November 11th 1918,

however the war wasn't officially declared over until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. This treaty determined that the reparations of the war were to be paid on behalf of Germany, in addition to declaring several other terms and agreements - all in favor of the Central Powers.



The names of the Croton Veterans of WWI inscribed on the Veterans' Corner Monument at the Five Corners

World War I Memorial

The original World War I monument was erected in 1921 in honor of four World War I soldiers who never came home: Charles Fox, Major Fred Cook, Philip Warren and Dominic Qutrocchi. At the time, the monument was erected by Charles H. Fox of the American Legion - Post #505, who also paid most of the cost. In addition, the Board of Education provided the site and the monument was the project of several local contractors, including Vito Gagliardi and A. E. Ottaviano, along with several other local volunteers.



WWI Monument before refurbishment



*Refurbished WWI memorial on Thursday, November 11th
2010 Memorial Day Service*

The original monument had four circle intaglios, one on each of its four faces, along with the names of the veterans, one per face. Each symbol was different; one was the shield of the Army, one of the Navy, one of the Red Cross and the fourth of a wreath with four stars inside, representing the four Croton casualties of World War I. These four intaglios still remain on the refurbished monument, however, the names of each veteran faded away with weather. In addition, when the monument was first built, four blue spruce trees were planted in honor of each casualty. Later on, another tree was planted and so at one point there were five trees surrounding the monument. The fifth tree was planted in honor of Harold Eklof, the first Croton service man killed in World War II.



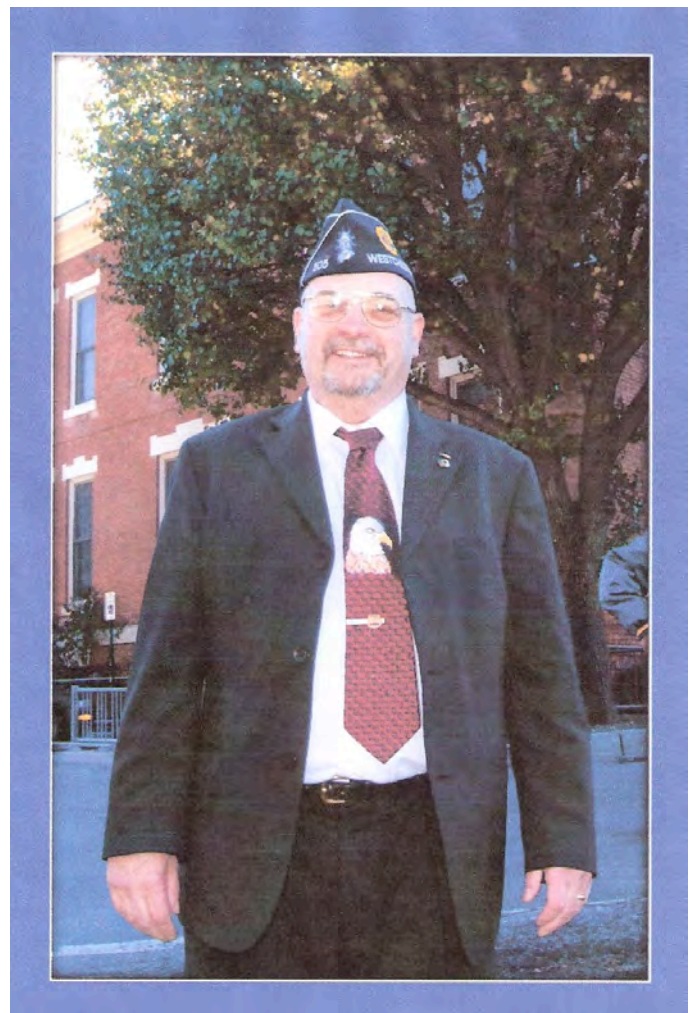
*Red Cross intaglio on original
monument*



The Original WWI Monument, featuring three of the Blue Spruce Trees out of the five planted

This was also the reason for the naming of the Fox-Eklof Post; Charles Fox having been the first casualty of World War I and Harold Eklof the first of World War II. Unfortunately, as time went on, the trees grew quickly and some fell, the rest were then removed to clean up the area around the monument. The original monument was not solid stone, but rather a stone composite mounted on an understructure.

Prior to the new Memorial plot at Veterans Corner, The World War I monument was the site of Memorial Day services and the focal point of an annual parade.



Patrick Calcutti, at the Memorial Day Service at the new WWI memorial, refurbished in 2010



People at the Memorial Day Service in 2010, at the newly refurbished monument

Upon the request of the Village of Croton Central Veterans Committee, and under the chairmanship of Patrick Calcutti, the World War I Memorial monument was restored in 2010. A new plaque was designed for the monument to ensure the permanent recognition of the names of each of the veterans.

The monument is located at the southwest corner of Brook Street and Old Post Road North, near the Municipal building. The monument continues to stand in memory of the four casualties of WWI, who will never be forgotten.



Veterans at the 2010 Memorial Day Service, at the newly refurbished WWI Monument

Frederick Cook



The street sign of the street named after Frederick Cook

Frederick Cook was born in 1884, and is a veteran of World War 1. Not much is known about the life Frederick had outside of the military, but his progress throughout the military was well noticed and kept track of. This was a result of his many advances in ranks throughout his time in service.

Frederick Cook is remembered as an inspiration to his men. It is said he was able to make them follow him into the face of the murderous fire of machine guns and rifles to point toward the objective, which required more than two days of constant fighting to reach.

Information on Fred's parents is not currently known, however, Fred did make a family for himself. In 1910 he was married to Miss Eva Morton, of Croton-On-Hudson, N.Y. They had two sons, Fred A. Cook, Jr., eight years old at the time of his father's death, and Morton Aldrich Cook, three years old at the time. After Fred passed, his family continued to live in Croton.

Major Fred A. Cook, of the United States Army, graduated from West Point in the class of 1906, when he was 22 years old. From there, he served in the Philippines, Fort Thomas, Ky., Fort Shafter, H.T, and on the Texas border, all up until the time of the outbreak of the war in Europe. Fred Cook became a Second Lieutenant of the 2nd Infantry on June 12th, of 1906 and a First Lieutenant of that regiment on April 19th 1911. He was then promoted to Captain in the 31st Infantry on July 1st, of 1916 and the following year he became a Major of a Battalion of the 23rd Infantry. Fred went to France in 1917, and attended the staff schools required of Battalion commanders, and rejoined the 23rd Infantry. He became Commander of the 1st Battalion of that regiment sometime in September of 1918, when the American troops were advancing to the fight in the Argonne Forest.

Frederick Cook was a member of A company in the Cadet Corps throughout nearly all of the five years of his cadetship at the Academy. Fred was known to be one of the "Landmarks" of the company; all the junior cadets who wanted or required the advice or council of an "Old-timer"

sought his advice. He was very well known at the cadet hops and entered into the social life of the academy with ease, a life he thoroughly enjoyed.

Fred's first service was in Jolo in the Philippine Islands. There he conducted his company through all the trails of the island and assisted the others in impressing the Moros (The Natives) with the strength and intelligence of the American arms. His classmates recall "his jovial disposition and the profuse perspiration which his countenance carried in those hot days." Fred was known to have grown heavier and perspired more the longer he remained under the tropical sun.

Afternoons on the islands consisted of a swim and Scotch and Tansen at the Jolo Club. Those were known as the redeeming features of life, in the tropical country. Fred was

fond of the tropical life; after one has spent a few years in the tropics the call to return is almost always insistent.

After three years in the states, Fred went to Honolulu with his regiment. He spent his years there building up posts in Hawaii and living in tents, cantonments and all sorts of houses, shifting here and there just to find a place to sleep. Fred claimed those years as the most interesting in his whole life. He used to frequently say that Hawaii was one of the Garden spots of the world, because he had only the Texas terrain around Harlingen to compare it with.

Major Frederick A. Cook was killed in action on October 8th, of 1918, at Blanc Mont, France, when he was 34 years old. He fell, with his face to the foe and a machine gun bullet through his heart. He died the way every true soldier hopes to die, in the full flush of the battle and going forward. Near the field of battle, his officers buried him and his grave is suitably marked.

Fred's class book, printed in 1916, at the time of the decennial reunion, stated that "he would be the proudest fellow in the world to lead a war strength company of 'doughboys' into battle, and we bet he would make



Fred Cook

them count as long as they lasted.” In 1918, he did exactly that, and led a war strength company of “doughboys” into battle. His Regiment commander and Brigade commander have said the same words: “That he made them count to the maximum as long as they lasted and as long as he lasted.”

Fred Cook was a fine man and a great officer. He will always be remembered by Croton, as one of our finest.

Charles Fox



Street Sign of the Street named after Charles Fox

Charles Fox is a veteran of World War I. Very little is known about Charles Fox, his actions, or whereabouts during the war.

Charles Fox was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred L. Fox. Mr. Fox, his father, was the cashier of Croton's National Bank. Charles also had a sister, Mrs. Robert E. Lent of Linden Avenue, Ossining.

Charles made frequent visits to Ossining and, for a short time, before entering the service, was employed by the Ossining National Bank.

The news of Charles' death was first given to his sister through a letter written by one of his friends on the battlefield.

The details of Charles' death were not given, but it is known that he met a hero's death, "falling face forward during the desperate encounter of the American's with the Prussian Guard, just north of the river of Ourcq, near the town of Seringes". The town was taken nine times before it finally remained in American hands.



Plaque found in the Croton Harmon High School in honor of Charles Fox



Charles Fox



The Gravestone given to Charles Fox, after his death, found in the Bethel Cemetery in Croton

Charles was tenderly buried, the place of his grave marked by American engineers, with every military honor.

Along with Harold Eklof, Charles shares the honor of having the American Legion Post named after him.

He died on the 28th of July in 1918, killed in action. Despite the little information we have on Charles Fox, his actions will always be remembered and looked upon with admiration.

Joseph Quatrocchi



*Street sign of the street named after
Joseph Quatrocchi*

Joseph Quatrocchi died of Pneumonia on October 19th, in 1919. Although no other information is known on the life and death of Joseph Quatrocchi, Croton still recognizes his sacrifice and the respect he had for his country.

Philip Van Cortland Warren



The street sign of the street named after Philip Van Cortland Warren

Philip Warren is a veteran of World War I. He was born in 1899 and graduated Croton schools on June 29th, of 1916. At the time he attended school it was located in the present day Municipal Building. During his time in high school, Philip participated in the Basketball team, although only consisting of five members and two coaches, the team still had fun and was part of Philip's memories at Croton. Philip was one of twin sons born on the Van Cortlandt plantation, or farm, where his father was a tenant farmer. His birth mother was Mrs. Elizabeth Warren and oral history tells that Mrs. Van Cortlandt helped with the very difficult birth of twins.

Apparently, during the birth there was much confusion and the first twin was momentarily placed underneath a bed! Because the Warrens had a large family already and were very poor, the new births made their hardships untenable.

Mrs. Van Cortlandt volunteered to raise the twin who became Philip Warren. Philip was raised on the Van Cortlandt farm and took their name without a "t" at the end, becoming, Philip Van Cortland Warren. After graduation, Philip attended Cornell University, where he enlisted in the Marine Corps.

Philip was remembered as a popular, handsome, and athletic fellow, who was very much loved by the community around him. Philip had a wife, although not much is known about her, and a son, Edward William Warren. Edward, his son, grew up and got married. Mary, his wife, came from a well-off family. Her parents migrated from Germany in the mid 1800's and her father ran one of the many brickyards in Croton Landing. The job was considered to be one of responsibility and prestige, which allowed the family to be rather comfortable.



This photograph of the 1916 Croton High School basketball team was taken on the lawn of the present-day municipal building, with Old Post Road North and North Highland Place in the background. Team members included Guernsey Prentiss, Con Sullivan, Philip Warren, Leonard Tubbs, Harold Tubbs, and John Mullin. T.J. Wagner, principal of Croton High School, is at the left.

Philip Van Cortland Warren and his basketball team, he is pictured the third from the right

Mary's family homestead still stands on North Riverside Avenue, on what used to be called "Sope Hill". Edward grew up to work for the New York Central Railroad, where he worked as a brakeman for 48 years and was retired for only two years when he died in 1939. A sign of his dedication was a deformity in his hand. Edward had no bone in one of his thumbs as a result of a car-coupling incident at the railroad a few years back. Edward had 13 children with his wife Mary. So in theory, Philip had 13 grandchildren whom he never met, 11 of whom grew up to be adults. At the time of Philip's death he also left a sister, Mrs. Lillian W. Alexander, a registered nurse, who resided with his birth mother at 36 Farrington Road.



Philip Van Cortland Warren pictured in the bottom row to the right



Plaque found at Croton Harmon High School, honoring Philip Van Cortland Warren

After enlisting in the Marine Corps, Philip went through about a year of training. After his training, he suffered a broken leg when he was hit by a car while carrying water for the men in his unit. The accident hospitalized him at the Philadelphia Navy Yard long enough to make him miss his company when the unit left to join the American Expeditionary Force. Following his recovery he was made a librarian at the Navy Yard. Philip Van Cortland Warren died shortly thereafter at the age of 19, in October of 1918 from pneumonia, otherwise known as influenza or the Spanish flu. Until penicillin was discovered the flu was a real scourge.

Philip Van Cortland Warren was the second Croton man to die in World War 1. The Croton Central Veteran's Committee proposed the idea of naming new streets for veterans and his name was chosen in accordance with a policy of taking veteran's names in the order of their death. The first to die, Charles Fox, was honored through the naming of the Fox-Eklof American Legion Post.

We continue to honor and look up to Philip Van Cortland Warren, his memory will never be forgotten.

World War II (approx. 1931-1945)

The Treaty of Versailles, in 1919, set the stage for World War II when several nations felt left out of the agreement. This included Germany, Japan, and Italy, all of which did not receive what they wanted after the treaty. These three nations soon formed an alliance, which became known as, “The Axis Powers”. The other nations, such as France, Russia, Great Britain, and later the U.S., were known as “The Allies”.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION

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SIGNATURE *Percy Chase*
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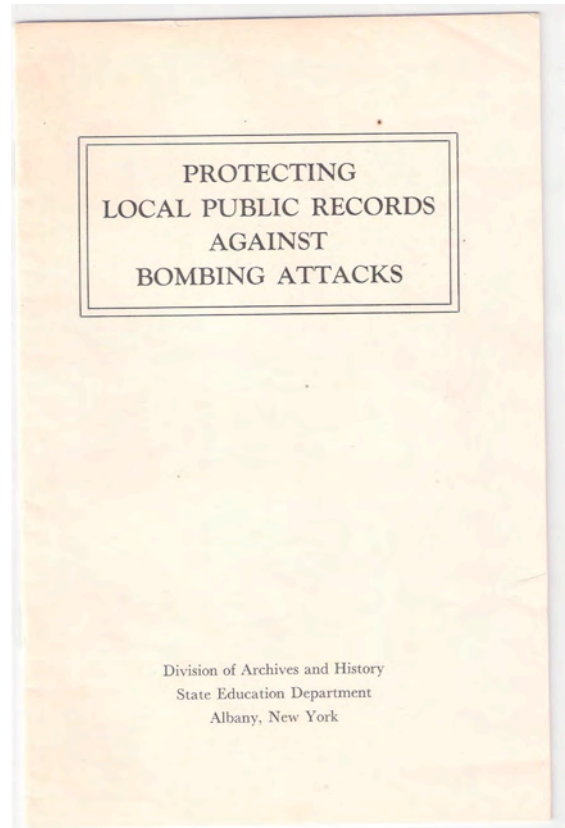
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WWII Food Rationing Book

Due to Germany's detrimental actions in World War I, they were forced to pay all of the reparations and take full blame for the casualties. This left their nation in a very unstable state. Germany attempted a very weak and unsuccessful democracy style of government, which only caused further conflict. Meanwhile, Japan was also upset with the terms of the treaty because they had their hearts set on taking parts of China.

The actual start of World War II can be debated from several different ways, but in this case we will have the start be 1931. This was the year that Japan invaded Manchuria, in attempt to enlarge their empire and increase their military strength. The result was a chain reaction of invasions from both Italy and Germany. In 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia and in 1933 Hitler overthrew the German government, coming to power with a new radical political party known as the Nazi's. In the next few years, Hitler's empire grew rapidly as he took over almost all of Europe. Towards the beginning of



Guide to protecting the public against bombing attacks, used in WWII, when attacks on civilians were common

the early years, other countries in Europe just stood by and watched. Most countries feared another war because they were just recently recovering from the horrible damage of World War I. In 1940, Hitler launched his full attack on Western Europe and in less than 9 months, had conquered almost all of it. In 1941, Hitler turned his sights on Russia and ordered the most powerful invasion force in history (Over 3 million soldiers) to deploy onto Russia.



Artifact representing Croton's efforts in helping out the men in WWII

Also in 1941 was one of the most remembered dates in American History, Pearl Harbor. On the Sunday morning of December 7, 1941 Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, all in hope of destroying the American Naval Power in the Pacific. Shortly after this, Mussolini (The leader of Italy) and Hitler teamed up to declare war on the United States. As a result, the U.S., Great Britain, and the Soviet Union all teamed up against the axis powers.

Things for Germany soon deteriorated, after this strong alliance was formed. Hitler's troops faced a brutal defeat in Russia when the harsh winter came in, causing thousands to die of hypothermia. In addition, more German troops were finished off after several battles throughout Europe. D-Day, another well-known day in American History, also served to defeat the Germans. On June 6th of 1944, the British and the U.S. landed on the French coast of Normandy and the two fronts collapsed on Germany. There were street-by-street battles and on May 8th of 1945 Germany surrendered. Just a week later Hitler committed suicide, like many of his fellow Nazi's.

Although Germany had surrendered, there was still Japan to deal with, who, at the time, still occupied most of the islands in the Pacific. In 1942 The Allies took the offensive approach and started taking back several islands throughout the Pacific. It was during this time that kamikaze planes were introduced and used heavily on U.S. and British ships.

The final blow of WWII is what is most remembered today as one of the most catastrophic events in history. On August 6th and 9th of 1945, two atomic bombs were deployed (by the U.S.) onto the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Japan. As of this writing, these are the only two atomic bombs

that have ever been deployed during warfare. 200,000 plus were killed by the initial vaporization and thousands more died slowly from radiation.

When the Russian Soviets declared war on Japan on August 8th of 1945, they immediately surrendered. The war was officially over on September 2nd 1945.

The Holocaust

Another one of the most famous aspects of WWII was the Holocaust, the most drastic form of racism the world has seen yet. For centuries before the war even started Jews had been picked out by Christians as “a problem” to society. It just so happened that Jews were the primary targets of Hitler. Initially, the Nazi regime encouraged emigration of Jews from Germany, but the problem was that most of them couldn't. Other Nazi “racial experts” had the idea of exporting all of them to one island, but there was fear of a unified Jewish state. The final solution for this “problem” was discovered in 1941, when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, a perfect

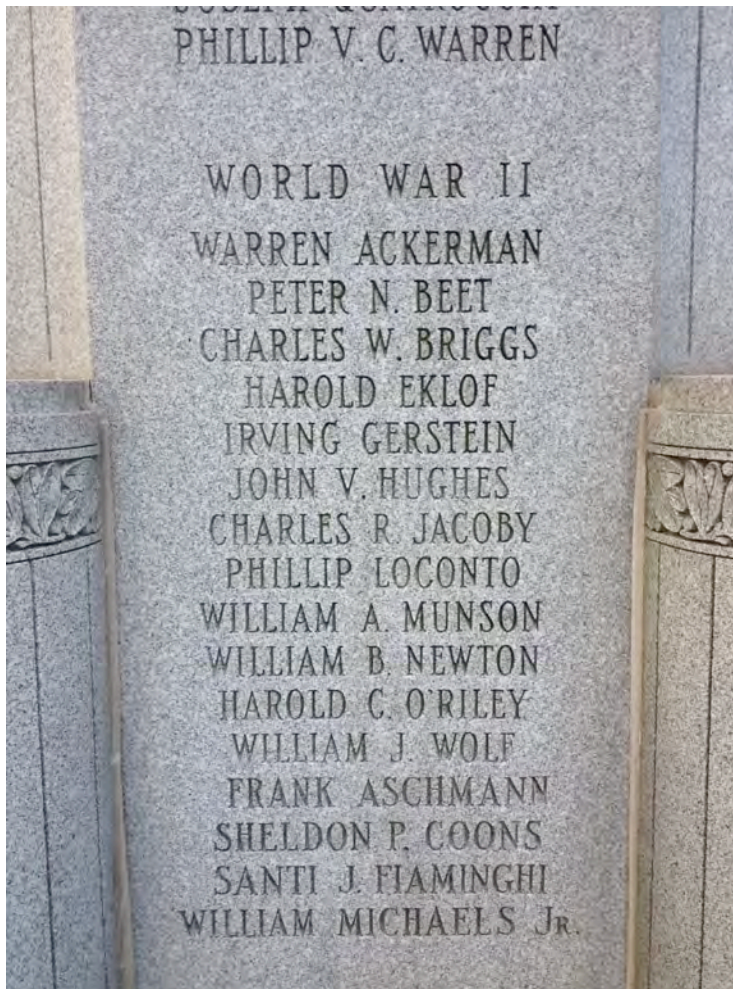
opportunity to strike. During this time, Hitler deployed several “action” squads to kill entire populations of Jews, and by 1943, over one million had been killed. In 1942, Nazi bureaucrats made the decision to send the Jews to concentration camps in Poland, where they would either be worked to death or executed. Several camps emerged and soon, Jews were being killed in mass numbers. The most inhumane tactics included death by flamethrowers, machine guns, lethal injections, electrocution, or poisonous gas. Often times Jews were tricked that they were going into a decontamination process of entering a camp, when they all entered one room and were mass murdered by poisonous gas. Most of the bodies were cremated to cover up the evidence, and the huge graves were dug to put them in.

By the end of the war, approximately five point seven million Jews had perished due to the Holocaust.



War Tokens used in Croton during WWII

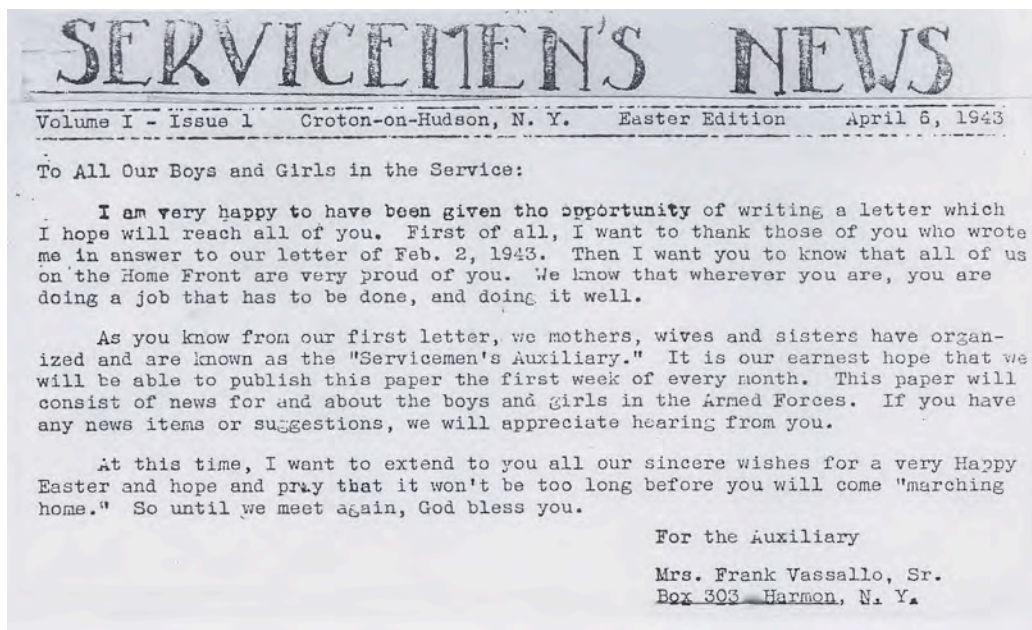
WWII had a huge impact not just on the people of Croton, but civilians around the whole world. Croton will never forget its casualties of WWII and the soldiers' actions will continue to be honored and respected.



The names of the WWII veterans inscribed on the Veterans' Corner Monument

The Service Men's News

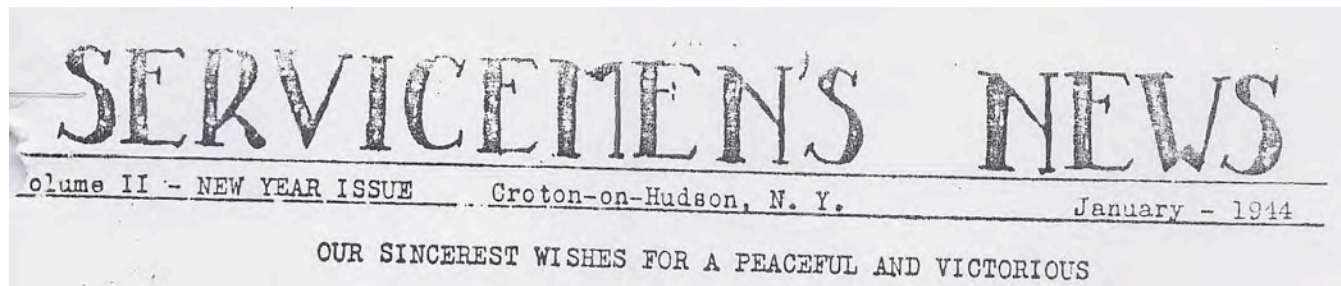
In the 1940's several men but mostly women, on the home front, organized a group known as "The Servicemen's Auxiliary". The following is a letter published in the first issue of "The Servicemen's news".



Letter Published by "The Servicemen's News", reflecting their efforts and goals

As briefly mentioned in the letter, the purpose of the Auxiliary, and their monthly newsletter, was to inform the people of Croton of the whereabouts of the men in service. The letter generally consisted of tallies of the men and where they were, news on marriages, and featured letters. In addition, when a man would pass away, "The Servicemen's News" would publish a special tribute to honor them and send respects to their family.

In addition, the Auxiliary did all they could to help the men overseas. They exchanged letters, pictures and even sent them copies of the local news in Croton, as well as a copy of "The Servicemen's News".



The following is the personnel of “The Servicemen’s News”, taken from the second page of their first issue, volume one, along with a picture on the right.

Personnel

Catherine Jinks- Chairman of editorial committee

Emma Morton- Red Cross Censor

Josephine D’Alvia- Editor and Columnist

Mary Vassallo, Sr. - Auxiliary chairman

Rose Giglio- Proof reading and mailing

Rose Loconto- Stencil Cutter and Mimeographer

Angela Vassallo- Typist

Marry Vassallo, Jr. – Typist

Mary Picciano- Typist

Veronica Picciano- Typist



Some of the personnel of “The Service Men’s News”

The majority of the information found on the veterans in this book, came from the many issues of “The Servicemen’s News”. The dedication that the staff had towards the men in service was astounding and they should continue to be remembered and respected for the work they put in for their town.

Frank Aschman

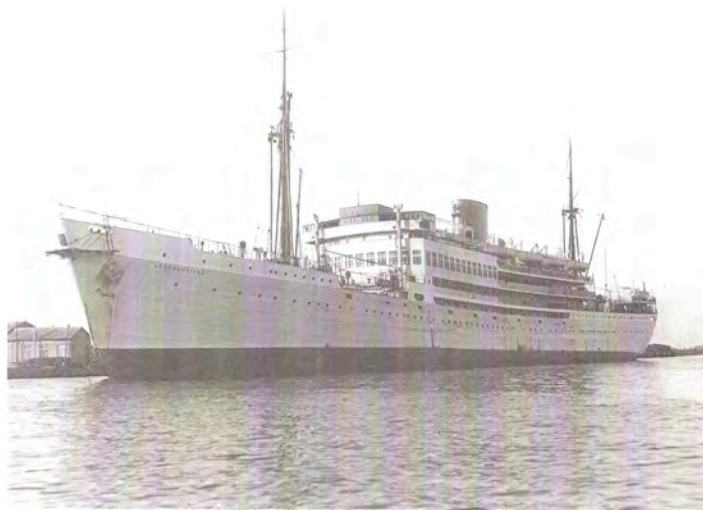


Street sign of the street named after Frank Aschman

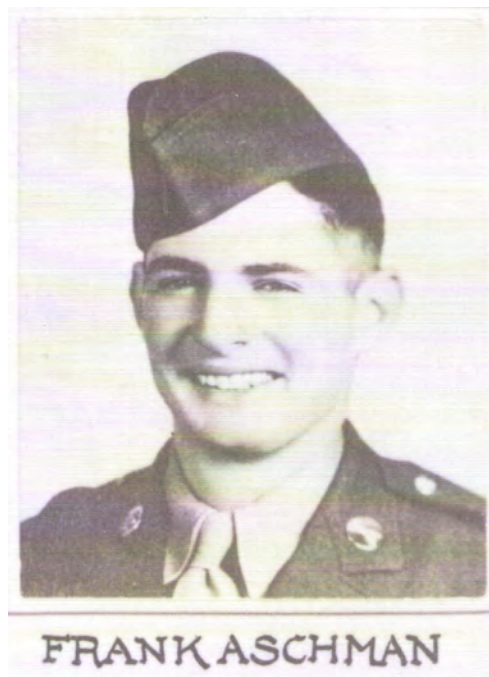
Frank Aschman attended Croton schools from the 4th year of elementary school to the second year of high school; his remaining high school years were spent at Peekskill Military Academy. He entered the service in 1943 while in his junior year at Yale, a quiet, unassuming man of 21, 6 feet tall, with jet-black hair, grayish-blue eyes and an immaculate dresser.

Frank, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Aschman, had an older brother, Charles Aschman. They were former residents of Mt. Airy Road.

Frank entered the Cavalry and acquired basic training at Fort Riley. He was then transferred to the Colorado School of Mines in Denver for specialized training. After that unit was disbanded he was transferred to the Infantry and left for overseas. Frank landed in England on December 1st, 1944.

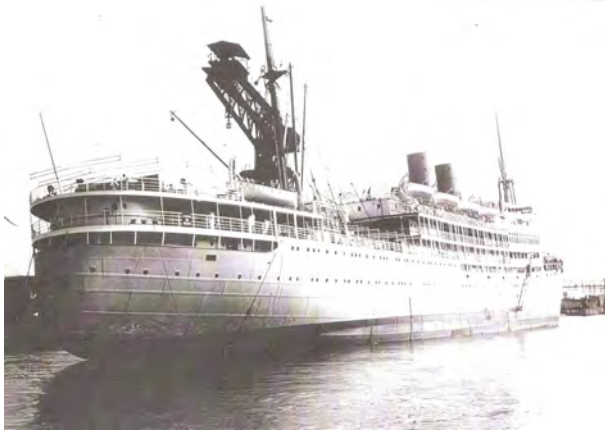


The ship Frank Aschman was on when it went down



Frank Aschman

Frank died on his way to perform a counter attack in France when his ship was torpedoed and sunk. This all occurred on what was believed to be Christmas Day. Pictures of the ship before and after it went down were recorded and are included here.



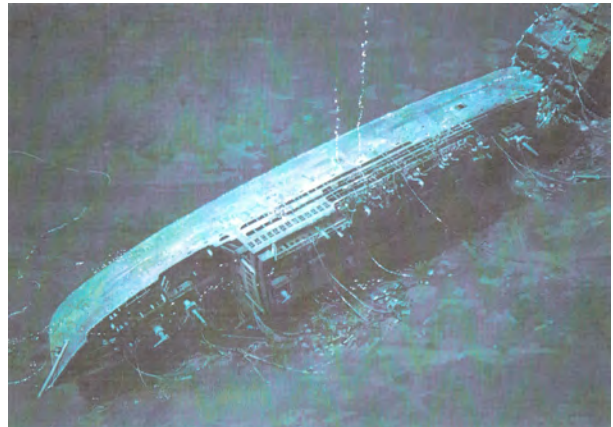
The back of the ship Aschman was on



The Interior of the ship Aschman was on



Aschman's ship sinking



The ship at the bottom of the ocean

The first news on Frank was received on January 17th, 1945 by his parents. The telegram stated that Frank was “missing in action”. The second telegram, notifying his parents of his death on Christmas Day, was received on March 7th. His parents received the telegram that day while in their apartment in the Hotel Carteret, New York City.

Frank Aschman's sacrifice will always be remembered and honored by the people of Croton.

Warren Ackerman



The street sign of the street named after Warren Ackerman

Warren Ackerman, born around 1922 in New York, is a very mysterious veteran. Not much information is known about him or his family, but this does not affect the honor and respect Croton gives to him. He was very active in Boy Scouts, Varsity Basketball and Varsity Baseball.

Warren was a tall, pale, and blond man when he entered service.

He was known to have lived with Sergeant Tom Horan's folks in Croton and Ossining, leading us to believe that he may have been adopted at one point.

After some research done on Warren it could be concluded that, at one point, he was under the care of Miss Eleanor W. Gordon, part of the State Charities Aid Association, of 105 East 22nd Street New York.

Warren entered the service when he was 19 years old. He was known as Private First Class Warren Ackerman, USMC, Engr. Corporal, of the Second Marine Division. Warren spent four years in the Pacific making landings on most of the islands. His last known invasions were at Tarawa and Saipan. It was in Saipan that Warren Ackerman was killed in action on July 28th, of 1944 when he was just 22 years old.



The gravestone of Warren Ackerman

After further research on Warren, it is known that he is buried at The National Memorial Cemetery of Honolulu County in Hawaii, USA. A picture of his grave is included.

Ackerman was the second Croton Marine and the ninth boy to give the supreme sacrifice. Regardless of the little information we have of him, Warren will always be remembered.

Peter Beet



Street sign of the street named after Peter Beet

Peter Beet, born in 1921 was a Croton Harmon High School graduate, Class of 1939. Peter earned all of his schooling through Croton-Harmon schools and excelled as a basketball player, quickly earning countywide fame. Peter captained the Tigers and led them to a Greenburgh League Championship in 1938. After graduating high school Peter attended Syracuse University until he enlisted in the Air Force in November 1941 when he was 20 years old.

Peter was remembered by the Servicemen's News "as he stood near the Croton-Harmon High School tennis courts, shirt collar open, trouser leg rolled one-half way, in white socks and sneakers, wearing dark sunglasses and a white tennis helmet".

Peter was the foster son of, Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Teller of 83 Cleveland Drive. Along with his foster parents Peter also had a sister Alice Beet (after marriage, Mrs. Robert Ogilvie). Alice was a Second Lieutenant with the United States Army Nurses Corps. Prior to her marriage Peter spent a furlough with her in Ireland. She was married in England the Saturday after her brother was reported missing, without knowledge of the incident. Peter's biological father, Peter M. Beet, lived in New York City.

Peter received his basic training at Bennettsville, South Carolina and received his wings and First Lieutenancy at Fort Sumter in North Carolina. After entering the service in 1941, Peter's whereabouts during the service were tracked through The Servicemen's News. In June of 1943 it was recorded that Peter, part of the 97th Bomb Group, had taken part in several raids with success. In August of that same year, it was heard that Peter was in North Africa and was doing "a swell job of dropping eggs down where they'll provide the best smear."



In addition to this piece of news the writers of the article continued on to say that Peter had been searching all of North Africa to buy an egg for breakfast. When he finally found one he sang, "Praise the Lord and pass the Ammunition!" this was said because the shell was still on it. The stories and information on Peter Beet, given by the Servicemen's News, reflected the devotion Peter had to the country he so dearly loved.

Social Activities

BROTHER AND SISTER IN SERVICE



Two popular Crotonites who are now in the service of their country, Second Lieut. Peter N. Beet of the Army Air Corps, now stationed at Key Field in Meriden, Miss. and his sister, Alice Beet, Second Lieutenant in the Nurses Medical Corps on duty with the

armed forces. Lieut. Peter was awarded his bars and wings at Valdosta Field in Georgia and spent a few days at home on furlough before being transferred to his new station. Lieut. Alice is a graduate of the Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City.

Peter and his sister, both of which were in the service

Peter put in many flying hours throughout the African Campaign, then sailed away into the blue horizon with a squadron of planes on a pre-invasion flight to Sicily, never to return. Peter was announced to be "Missing in Action" on July 6th 1943. That September, the Servicemen's News notified readers of their hopes and prayers that Lt. Peter Beet may still come back to them and that the quote "Missing in Action" just meant that he had landed somewhere and will come back. In January of 1944, The Servicemen's News made several resolutions. One of their resolutions was for news of the safe whereabouts of Lt. Peter Beet. Unfortunately on Thursday, January 6th, 1944 an article was published announcing Peter's death. The United States War Department had officially listed Peter as "Killed in Action". This was approximately 6 months from the statement that he was "Missing in Action".

Peter's father, Peter M. Beet, notified the Tellers, Peter's Aunt and Uncle, of the announcement. Although Peter was now formally

announced to be dead, many of his friends locally received the official notification reluctantly and many "expressed a belief that he would turn up either as an enemy prisoner or from some isolated part of the European Theatre".

A Gold Star was placed on his name on the Croton-Harmon Honor Roll with in a few days of the announcement. The pilot was the second local resident to have made the supreme sacrifice in World War II. Peter is honored as one of our best-loved servicemen. It was said by the Serviceman's News that Peter, "like so many American lads, answered his country's call and gave his last full measure of devotion to the country he so dearly loved. Words cannot express his sacrifice".

Charles W. Briggs



The street sign of the street named after Charles W. Briggs

Charles Briggs, born around 1925, received all of his schooling through Croton and was a Croton Harmon High School graduate, Class of 1942. Charles was extremely active in the surrounding community and as a result was greatly loved by the town. Charles joined the Asbury Church at the age of three. Later he was active in Sunday School work, the Epworth League, the Youth Fellowship and the Brotherhood. Despite the fact that Charles was unable to attend services at the church because of his placement in the Army, an envelope containing his contribution could always be found on the offertory plate. Along with this extensive list, Charles was also the manager of his

basketball team in high school. After Charles' graduation in '42, the Western Electric Company in New York City employed him until his induction into the armed forces on March 26th of 1943.

Charles is remembered as a boyish, clean-cut, jolly and studious lad. He was continuously devoted to his family, work, school and his church. His opinion of army training was that "it was good for one".

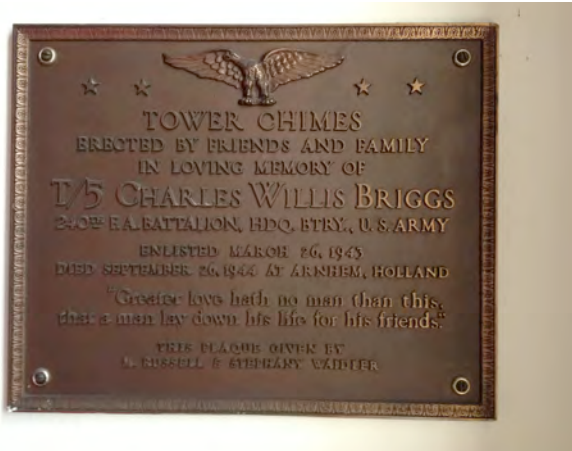
Charles was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Briggs of 36 North Riverside Avenue, Croton. Charles kept constant contact with them throughout his time in service and was known to have sent numerous recordings home to keep his folks cheered.



Charles W. Briggs

Before going into service Charles received his basic training in a tank destroyer division at Camp Hood, Texas. In July of 1943 Charles was sent to Fort Lewis, Washington where he became "Corporal Charles Willis Briggs", of the Radio Division of the 240th Field Artillery Battalion. Charles' last leave before going overseas was on a twelve hour pass given to

him on Father's Day so that he could visit his Dad who had just undergone an operation in a N.Y.C hospital.



The Plaque given to Charles by the Asbury Methodist Church in Croton, in honor of his death and his sacrifice

During this time he visited many friends for brief moments and then left for overseas, late in June. Charles was happy he could do his bit for a speedy victory and an equally speedy return to his loved ones. Charles' whereabouts during the service are tracked through "The Servicemen's News". In the beginning of his time spent in service, Charles started off slowly. It is known that in April of 1943 Charles was at Camp Upton, where he was enjoying washing windows.

Charles went overseas, to England June 22nd of 1944. He left there after a brief stay and traveled through France, where he wrote to his parents that he rode with his colonel, operated the radio, and was 15 miles from the front lines. He then traveled to Belgium, where he spoke of his happy meeting with the first Croton boy since going into armed forces, Sgt. Paul Picciano. After leaving Belgium he traveled to Holland, where he received serious injuries.



A picture from Charles' funeral



A Picture from Charles' funeral

On September 26th of 1944 Charles' parents were notified through a telegram sent by the War Department that Charles had died. The telegram was received four days after it was reported that Charles had serious injuries.

Charles Willis Briggs was the sixth Croton resident to have made the supreme sacrifice in World War II. More than 300 Croton residents are known to have attended the memorial services held for Charles at the Asbury Methodist Church. Many members of the community took part in the memorial services including members of the Fox-Eklof Post 505 of the American Legion, several Croton Boy Scout Troops and other local organizations of the village. Evidence of Charles' popularity in the village was not only indicated by the large attendance it was also shown through the tributes offered during the memorial.



A Picture from Charles' funeral



Charles' Gravestone heavily decorated

In honor and memory of Charles a star was placed next to him on the Croton Harmon honor roll, the sixth star to be placed. In addition a permanent memorial of Charles, in

the form of chimes, was placed in the Asbury Methodist Church. Substantial contributions and pledges were received from those who attended the memorials along with addition contributions that were sent to the members of the committee in charge. All of those who contributed are noted in a memorial register book by their signature. The Western Electric Co. for whom he worked set up the chimes. This memorial represents the love, appreciation, and recognition his loved ones paid towards him and the chimes of church will eternally ring out in tribute to him. As of now, the chimes have been replaced twice, but there is a permanent plaque placed in the church (a picture of which is shown on page 46).

It calls to mind Charles' devotion, his courageous outlook on life and his unchallengeable faith. He will always be remembered and we all salute him.

Sheldon Coons



The street sign of the street named after Sheldon Coons

Sheldon Coons, born in August of 1921, received only some of his schooling through Croton-Harmon Schools. Sheldon also attended Philips Academy, Andover Massachusetts and graduated from Scarborough School. His elementary schools were Walden in New York City and Hessian Hills in Croton on Hudson. While born in the city, Sheldon regarded himself as a Croton boy, as his summers were spent in Croton almost from birth. Today, Croton does not seem to be much of a vacation spot but was, when Sheldon's parents used to rent a house in Croton or Harmon almost every summer. Sheldon became a boarding pupil at Hessian Hills when he was eight years old. He remained a boarder until his parents purchased White Gates, their home on Mt. Airy Road in 1933.

He continued at Hessian Hills through 9th grade and then attended Scarborough School, now known as the Clear View School, and graduated there. Hessian Hills of Croton closed down in the early 1950's and in 1952 Temple Israel bought it, explaining its existence today. Sheldon finished his sophomore year at the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) when he enlisted in 1942.

Sheldon was tall, had a blonde complexion, and was 24 years of age, at the time he entered the service.

At the time of his death Sheldon left his father, Sheldon of 910 Fifth Avenue, New York City. In addition to his father, with whom he made his home; Sgt. Coons left a mother, Esther Merrill, who at the time was residing in Mexico City. Sheldon also left a half-brother, Joseph D., a student at Trinity School, NY, and a step-sister. His father was a business consultant, a trustee of the Mount Sinai Hospital and President of the Better Business Bureau of New York City. He was also a Pioneer member of the Town of Cortlandt War Council and a past Director and Chairman of the Board of the Hessians Hills School. His mother, Esther, was a Red Cross Nurse's Aide and a Trustee of the Ossining Hospital.

The 23-year-old Sergeant had been with the American Air Force 351st Bombardment Group, for 26 months with a base in England. He was first there as an Armament Chief, later as Link Instructor. Sheldon's whereabouts during his service were tracked through "The Servicemen's News". Sheldon arrived in England in January 1943. In England Sheldon had plans of seeing the beautiful countryside, after buying himself a bicycle. Sheldon reported to the Servicemen's News that he enjoyed the parody of seeing homes adjacent to one another, one standing up serenely undisturbed and the other a mass of ruin and rubble. He also stated that he was entranced by those "Piccadilly Commandos", and that at the time, his own current heartthrob was a girl named Trixie McLoughlin with red hair and pale blue eyes. He often wrote home describing the scenic countryside, the different types of personalities in girls and his purchase of his bike to tour England. Around the holidays England is known to have served a holiday dinner to 25 of Croton's servicemen that Sheldon attended. The London pubs served their pint of beer a day ration, however woolen sweaters and fruitcakes were wanted. It seemed that Sheldon had made it through the rough and was on his way home for furlough when his plane crashed.

Sheldon R Coons was killed June 8th, 1945 when the plane he was homeward bound in with 4 other boys crashed, and all were instantly killed. Sheldon crashed near Lanbedr, Wales according to word received by his family. Sheldon Coons is known to be the 14th Croton boy to have made the supreme sacrifice.

Sheldon, who was known to be from a family with great wealth, was twenty-four years old when he died and his estate, which had not yet been appraised at the time, was declared to be over \$10,000! His mother received the entire estate in three parts at yearly intervals. If she were to die before this, it would be passed on to his stepbrother and sister. Sheldon Coons, a true Croton boy at heart, is greatly missed and his sacrifice will continued to be honored by the village.

Harold Eklof



*Street sign of the street named after
Harold Eklof*

Harold Eklof, born in Jersey City, January 14th, 1916 moved to Croton with his family in 1919. Harold is a Croton Harmon High School graduate, Class of 1934. Throughout high school Harold was active in football and basketball. He was remembered by the school as an extremely diligent student who took the full academic course at CHHS, and one who applied himself to his work; along with having an exceptional record at the school. If this outstanding reputation was not enough, Harold's teachers spoke very highly of him, in relation to his personal conduct and as a student. After graduating high school, Harold attended New Paltz Normal School. There, he played basketball, and football and was also a member of Delta Kappa Fraternity.

After Harold's graduation from New Paltz, he conducted his own painting and carpentry business in Croton. During this time, he also became interested in photography, as a hobby, winning recognition for his work with color photography. Before leaving for the army he was also employed as a fireman and brakeman with the New York Central Railroad. He was a communicant of Holy Name Church at Harmon and Croton.

Harold, a tall handsome lad with a million-dollar smile, was known to be quiet, unassuming, a hard worker and well respected throughout Croton.

Harold was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Emil Eklof of 80 High Street. At the time Harold left a brother, Lester, from Union, New Jersey and another brother, Lieutenant Edwin, a former Croton Trustee and Fire Commissioner, who lived in California. In addition, Harold left his wife, the former Elsie Fechner of Croton. He and Elsie were married in September of 1942, just a month before he left for foreign duty on September 21st. After Harold's death, his widow received his Purple Heart award in honor of actions he performed in service. Chaplain William G. Kirshbaum presented the award to her in 1943. At the time she was stationed with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps at Fort Benning GA. Accompanying the medal was a citation signed by Henry L. Stimson the Secretary of War at the time. The

following is a recollection of the ceremony at which Auxiliary First class Elsie Fechner Eklof received her husband's Purple Heart.

"Auxiliary First Class Elsie Fechner Eklof of the Harmony Church WAAC Detachment of The Infantry School, stood stiffly at attention and heard Col. Sevier R Tupper, Commanding Officer of the Student Training Brigade and Basic Training Center pronounce these words of the citation as he presented her with the Purple Heart posthumously awarded to her husband Staff Sergeant Harold Eklof, killed in action in Tunisia. AFC Eklof, who received her first stripe less than two weeks ago, was pretty certain she was going to cry. She had known about the award to her soldier husband who she married a month before he sailed for Africa last October, but she didn't expect a ceremony. Past the long ranks of Auxiliaries especially assembled for the ceremony, she marched, lips quivering, to a position in front of the formation.



Harold Eklof



MRS. HAROLD EKLOFF

Once she confronted Col. Tupper, she regained her composure, accepted the medal, saluted smartly and returned to the ranks. Then she marched back to her barracks. An ordeal, which she dreaded, was over." (Newspaper of Croton-on-Hudson N.Y. Thursday, July 1, 1943).

The Sergeant left Croton with the Contingent on January 21st, 1941. He was sent to Camp Dix, NJ to receive his basic training and from there to Fort Bragg N.C. for Infantry training. Harold left for overseas duty in October of 1942. He was sent to the North African Theatre where in Tunisia he was killed in action on April 7th, 1943.

Eklof's parents were the first to receive news on his death. Harold's mother received the sad news after officials in Washington had tried unsuccessfully to locate his widow. The word was received from the War Dept. in Washington, that their son, 27 at the time, had lost his life in the North African Theatre of war on April 7th. The news of Harold's death cast a gloom over the entire town, where he was "well known and so well thought of".

CITIZEN-REGISTER, OSSINING, N. Y.,



VOLUNTEERS, all from Croton, filled the third draft quota from the Cortlandt-Yorktown district. They are shown as they assembled in front of Croton Municipal Building yesterday morning before leaving for induction. Front row, left to right, are William DiVito, Harold Eklof, Frank Turturro, Ralph E. Horowitz, Michael Matero. In the back row, left to right, are Peter Randazzo, Lawrence Loconte and Robert Cook, Jr. staff photo

Some of the draftees assembled in front of the Municipal Building the day before their induction, Harold Eklof is pictured in the front row holding a piece of paper

Because Harold was the first to pass, his death was engraved in the minds of many in Croton. Many tributes were given to him and published in the paper notifying Croton of his death. There was also a front page editorial "The supreme sacrifice" and a beautiful poem entitled "A Grave in North Africa" whose author is unknown. The following are a few of the tributes given.

"I knew Harold very well. I went through school with him and graduated with him. He was quiet and unassuming; he worked hard and well; he was respected by all who knew him, and we know he made a fine soldier"

~Eleanor Hegelman, an old schoolmate of Harold's

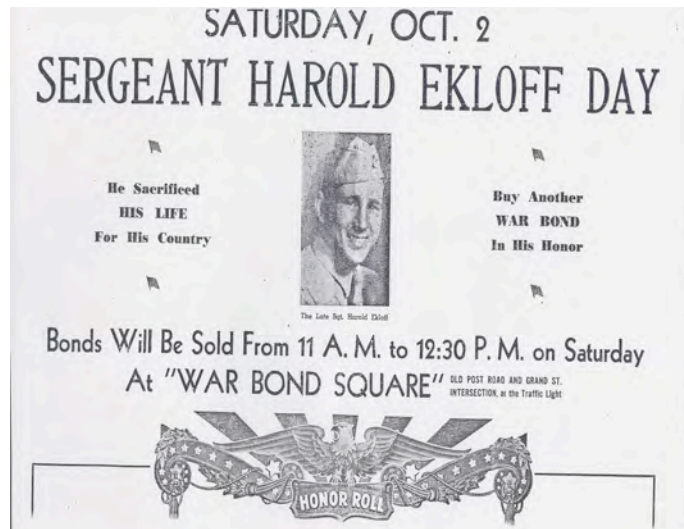
"Harold was a next door neighbor of my parents when they lived on Palmer Avenue at High Street, he became a familiar figure. I often saw him going in and out when I too lived there for a period. Though I didn't know him long, I knew him pretty well, and had the same admiration and respect for him that everyone else in Croton had. His untimely death hit me pretty hard, as it did other members of our family."

~Fletcher Quick, Editor of Croton Journal

"Harold Eklof, gave his life on the North African front so that we might be able to carry on free and unafraid. We re-dedicate ourselves to these truths: These honored dead shall not have died in vain; This Nation under God shall

not perish from the Earth." ~Servicemen's News, An Edition dedicated to Ekloff

"While Harold Graduated from high school just a month before I came here, I, of course, knew him personally and received the news of his death with great sorrow. He was a young man of very high caliber, and I know that as a soldier he was one of our best. His record here at the school was an exceptionally fine one. He took the full academic course here and applied himself diligently to his studies. His teachers have always spoken highly of him, both in relation to his personal conduct and as a student. We are deeply sorrowed by his death."
~Supervising Principle of CHHS, O.W. Hogue



An old advertisement for war bonds, in honor of Harold Ekloff, including "Harold Ekloff Day"

"This is a very heavy blow to me. I knew Harold intimately and valued his friendship most highly. We are all deeply concerned of the welfare of our men in service. We know that the price of victory must be paid in blood and tears, yet it's very hard to take when it hits us like this. Harold was one of the best. He was a good soldier and died a good soldier's death on the field of battle. I extend my most sincere sympathy to his wife and family."
~Chief George Dobbs Jr.

"I am deeply affected by the news of Ekloff's death. We of the Red Cross are doing all in our power in the interest of the welfare of our men in service. News that one of our own has paid with his life for the coming victory, in the midst of our sorrow leads us to an even greater resolve, to even greater efforts. I extend heartfelt personal sympathy and that of every member of our Red Cross to the bereaved family."
~Chairman of the local Red Cross branch, Mrs. Arthur Morton

These tributes, and many more like them, from all over Croton, reflect the overwhelming amount of love Ekloff was shown. The following is the

front page editorial, "The supreme sacrifice", published on behalf of Eklof, as mentioned above.

The Supreme Sacrifice

The war finally came to Croton: the news of the death of Harold Eklof spread a blanket of concern over the hometown - for the first time since Pearl Harbor, Croton folk were forced to make a personal accounting of their contributions to the war effort; scores of boys have died since that sneak attack on December 7, 1941, but it takes the death of someone close to all of us to awaken us.

Harold Eklof gave his life in combat; many of us haven't given much more than a few hours to the home front phases of the war.

Harold Eklof did not go to war to gain adventure and excitement; his only intent was to share in the glory that will attend a United Nations triumph. Then too, we on the home front, at least too many of us, take civilian defense activities as just another form of social recreation, an outlet for civic enterprise instead of the real seriousness of our duty which fits into the scheme of victory as much as the actual fighting on the war fronts.

Harold Eklof had to give his life to bring his hometown folk around to realizing that war is war - on the battlefield and on the home front; Harold Eklof's sacrifice has shocked mothers of other Croton boys in the services - mothers who pray day and night that the war will end soon so their boys can return.

Harold Eklof's sacrifice will be the focal point of all future duties assigned to us on the home front. Everything we do from this day on will serve as a tribute to Harold Eklof - His hometown's expression of the virtue, the valor, the loyalty, the unselfishness and the many other characteristics that belonged to Harold Eklof.

Harold Eklof is Croton's first to die in action; he probably will not be the only one to earn a gold star for his mother. Every little thing we do at home puts us a little bit closer to our common goal.

Harold Eklof answered God's call bravely and as one chaplain put it, "The Novenas, the prayers and other offerings of spiritual guidance to return our boys safely must be in vain in some cases; that is the way of life." Harold Eklof did not die in vain; his memory will serve as a stimulus to Croton for the remainder of this duration and through any war that happens to follow.

~ From the Croton-On-Hudson Newspaper, N.Y. Thursday May 13, 1943

Along with these tributes, and the article, several resolutions were made by the Servicemen's news to see that Eklof did not sacrifice his life in vain. A tribute was also made by the Board of trustees, so they could publicly express their deep feeling of gratitude and obligation of Ekloff to the whole town. In addition, Saturday, October 2 was declared Sergeant Harold Eklof Day and the Charles H. Fox Post, 505, American Legion was renamed Fox-Eklof post.



Eklof's gravestone found in Croton's Bethel Cemetery

Eklof, who was 27 years old at the time of his death, was a man greatly loved by the surrounding community (As seen through numerous events held for him). Eklof's body returned from the Mediterranean area aboard the U.S. Army Transport by Corporal Eric G. Gibson. Eklof's Military services were held in Croton as it was then. He was buried in Croton's Bethel Cemetery.

In a letter home, Ekloff once said, "I never want to come home wearing the Purple Heart". Then again he said, "I'm taking the same chances that millions of other boys are, I won't run into it but I won't run away from it." Those are the words of a hero. God bless the memory of Staff Sergeant Harold Eklof, may his memory stay with Croton forever.

Santi Fiaminghi



*Street sign of the street named after
Santi Fiaminghi*

Santi Fiaminghi, whose birth date is unknown, attended the White Plains schools. After that, his family moved to Mt. Airy Road, Croton on Hudson in the 1930's.

He is remembered as a man with a slight build, dark eyes, dark hair and a dark complexion.

Santi went overseas in 1944. At the time, he left a mother, father and brother, Louis, who had returned in 1945 from France and Germany where he served in the Third Division. This was merely coincidental, as the boys, sadly, never seemed to meet overseas. Santi also left a widow

in Chicago, Illinois and an 18 month year old son, named William Joseph. Santi met Beulah Lashbrook, his wife, in June of 1943 when he was stationed in Texas. It was reported in *The Servicemen's News* that the couple got married in 1943, just a few months before Santi went over seas. Their marriage pushed the *Servicemen's* bride and groom list of 1943 to a total of 22 couples. Beulah passed away in 2011 and their son is also deceased. Santi's brother, Louis, married the former Amelia Anfiteatro of Croton on January 20th of 1946. At the time of Santi's death the family was

Santi's whereabouts after entering the service were tracked through the *Servicemen's News*. In June through December of 1943 Santi was stationed in Texas at Camp Hullen. There he was part of the Medical Detachment Department and was on night ward duty, doing orderly work. It was at this time he was known to have met his wife. Santi was stationed in Coral Gables, Florida where he was working night duty in Regional Hospital, also known as the former Biltmore Hotel.



Santi Fiaminghi

At the hospital, “American Air Force wounded were given a vigorous physical culture program. This included swimming, golf, tennis and more. This had a dual purpose of building healthy bodies and occupying shell shocked minds.” Santi then went overseas to France, where after the battle for the Siegfried Line, he was pronounced missing in action for one whole year. Santi was a Medic in the war effort, and was missing since April first, along with another medic from his company. This was discovered when he failed to answer roll call after his company had returned from a mission. This was the only information received by his wife in Texas. According to a War Department telegram received by his family, Santi was declared "officially" dead on February 6, 1946. A relative was able to shed more light on the subject. Alicia Anfiteatro, the wife of Santi's brother's nephew, said that Santi died while serving in the U.S Army in Germany, where he stepped on a land mine and died instantly.

Santi is buried at Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial (ABMC) of Liege Province in Belgium. He is the 16th Croton boy to have made the supreme sacrifice in the name of liberty and we continue to honor his commitment and his sacrifice.

Irving Gerstein



*Street Sign of the street named after
Irving Gerstein*

Irving Gerstein, born in Brooklyn August 10th of 1927, was an Ossining High School Class of 1939, graduate. Irving then took a Post Graduate class at Croton-Harmon High School. At Ossining he was a member of the 1931 Wizard staff, The Maroon and White News, the Quill, the Scroll Flag Association, and the Flag Assn. On one of his last furloughs home Irving was cheerful, friendly, and “felt he had been in the states long enough and was happy to be able to help bring the mess to an end.”

Irving was a big help to his Dad’s hardware business and had plans to take over. This was before he entered the service in October of 1942.

Irving was well known and well liked in the community. He was remembered as a tall, good-looking, dark haired, dark eyed. He often wrote letters home to his family and Croton to keep them well informed. The following is a letter Irving wrote addressed to the Servicemen’s News.

Dear Top,

This being a weekend of rest for me, I do think it a wonderful opportunity for me to get caught up on some of my mail. It’s been quite some time since I last wrote you, and I do feel it’s about time that I answered your last letter which I enjoyed so much.

As you can see I am still stationed here at Camp Davis with the Anti-aircraft Artillery Board. You seemed to have some doubts as to what the A.A.A. Board does and stand for, so I shall try to enlighten you somewhat, Top. The A.A.A. Board is the only one of its kind and represents the entire anti-aircraft branch of service. The purpose of the board is to test and improve upon all anti-aircraft equipment, rejecting or improving, as they see fit. Really, it’s very interesting here, and there’s quite a bit to do. Naturally everything here is a military secret, and there isn’t very much that we can write about.

My twin brother, Julius, is here with me, and it's a rather wonderful feeling to have someone of your own family with you. Our work is very interesting, and although we've been away from Croton for more than a year and a half, time has passed quickly. It doesn't seem as though we've spent eighteen months in Uncle Sam's Army, but being that we're pretty well occupied, the days and months do pass by.

I do want you to know how much I appreciate all that you and your wonderful committee have done for me since my induction into the service. It's a grand feeling to receive your letters and news items of the hometown, and I do look forward to receiving them very much.

My very best wishes,
Sincerely,

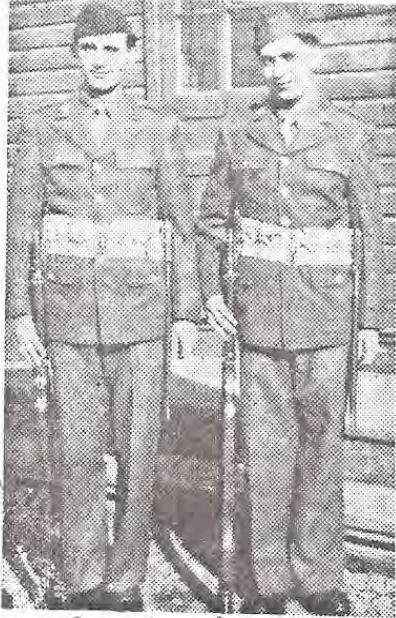
Irving Gerstein

Private First Class Irving Gerstein was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Sol Gerstein, of 22 North Riverside Avenue. Along with his parents, Irving left a twin brother, Julius Irving, whom he entered the service with. The two even received their basic training together, however, were not in the same unit after going overseas to Germany. At the time Irving also left another brother, George, a sister, Jean, an uncle, Isaac Goldberg of Ossining and Tarrytown, and several cousins.



Before the two brothers went overseas, they both received their basic training at Camp Upton, North Carolina. There, they continued on at Mitchell Field in an anti-aircraft unit and then in an Armored Regiment in Louisiana. The whereabouts of Irving during the service were tracked through the Servicemen's News. In February of 1946, Irving and his brother both achieved the rank of Private First Class and became operators in the anti-aircraft division from Farmingdale Airbase, Staten Island. There, they had Field Training before continuing on together. One of Irving's furloughs, before he passed away, was in May of 1944. It was during this ten-day period he relaxed with his brother, a picture of the two of them is included. This was the first one they had in their 19 months of training. They both

went overseas in February 1945 and upon arriving in Germany the two were placed in separate units. On arrival in the battle area they were transferred to the 33rd Armored Regiment. The twin brothers were only separated at one time during their time in service, which was during a one-month period of fighting in Germany. It was in this time period that Irving was killed in action on April 13th of 1945.



2-11-43
Irving and Julius Gerstein,
twin brothers in the service
together

Irving's parents received the news of his death on Sunday May 6th, 1945. After Irving's brother received the news of his death he wrote a letter to his family. The letter contained poignancy, brotherly love and family ties. Irving was killed in Reich, Germany and his remains were sent home for his burial. He was the twelfth Croton man to have made the supreme sacrifice.

The News of Irving's death was brought to Croton on the eve of a Victory in the European area. It left Croton with a grim reminder that war and death are not over until the last gun is silent all over the world.

Below is the article published in honor of Irving Gerstein, it informs the public of his memorial service

**Memorial Service is to Be Held Tonight for Irving Gerstein
Rev. Keil Will Speak Among Others at Ossining Synagogue**

The officers of Congregation Sons of Israel and its spiritual leader, Rabbi S. Gopin, have invited the members of several Croton Organizations to attend a special memorial service being held in the auditorium of the synagogue in Ossining tonight (Thursday) at 8:30, in memory of Captain S. Arthur Bobrow of Ossining and Pfc. Irving Gerstein of Croton, who gave their lives in defense of their country.

Croton organizations specially invited include the Servicemen's Committee, the Croton-Cortlandt Branch of the American Red Cross, the Fox-Eklof Post No. 505 of the American Legion and the Legion Auxiliary, but the presence of all who wish to pay their respects is earnestly requested by the Congregation and will constitute a solemn tribute worthy of the supreme sacrifice these gallant men have made on behalf of America and a grateful humanity. Among the speakers at the service is to be the Rev. Charles J.F. Keil of the Asbury Methodist Church, Croton.

John Hughes



Street sign of the street named after John Hughes

John Hughes was born in 1917 and was a 1936 graduate of Croton-Harmon High School. John took an active part in the school's sports program and even gained letters for basketball and football. Along with these activities, he was also a parishioner of the Holy Name of Mary Church. After graduation he studied photography at a school in New York before entering the service in 1943. His ability for photography gained him a rating and allowed him to be stationed on an aircraft carrier.

John Hughes is remembered as an excellent photographer who put into print battle scenes and war memorials, which will forever be his monument-immortal and imperishable.

John was the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Hughes, of Farrington Road, Croton-on-Hudson. Besides his parents, John left a sister, Dorothy, who at the time of his death was a senior at the Croton-Harmon High School.

John Hughes entered the Navy in 1943 as an experienced photographer. His whereabouts were tracked through The Servicemen's News. At first, he was stationed in Washington D.C, from there John went on several missions in the Atlantic. Then he went to the Philippines and the Pacific where he said he covered a wide and important area, photographing the war. Around Christmas time, John wrote to Croton, saying that his ship, an anti-aircraft carrier, was next to that of Lt. Fay Hogue's (another Croton serviceman) and that he and Fay had been exchanging notes. Along with this letter he also sent a picture of himself munching on a drumstick.

John was aboard the CV 14 anti-aircraft carrier when the carrier was under a Kamikaze attack, John being on board during the attack, followed through with his job and photographed the incident. This dedication resulted in his death. The following is a recollection of the attack from Walter W. Hamilton, another photographer M. 1 c who was John Hughes "Best Friend".

"It was a twist of fate that I am still here, but I lost my best friend John Hughes photographer M. 1 c. We were both assigned photo duty on the flight deck and we flipped a coin to see who would go up on the bridge.

I won the toss and picked the forward flight deck. A Kamikaze plane hit the bridge and we lost a few good men, including John Hughes.

I photographed the explosion when the Jap plane hit the bridge, which involved the entire length of the flight deck forward from the bridge. Also, when the second Jap plane went through the forward elevator shaft, I tried to get pictures but was pulled back to the Catwalk by another man, Kuntzweiler PH, who most likely saved me from getting hit by the 50 calibers and explosions” ~Walter W. Hamilton, John Hughes’ best friend, a fellow photographer.

After reading Walter Hamilton’s words on the attack it easy to see John’s dedication to his job, he, like many historians, felt the need to document and preserve our history, so others may look back on it with awe and appreciation. The following is another recollection of the attack, this time from the point of view of Howard Chamblin, Lieutenant, Air Department.

“You ask if I remember the day, the hour, the minute of the Kamikaze attack? There were 3,500 of us with stories about that day. Some of them never lived to tell their tale. Those who did will never forget the grim and sometimes grisly details, and the heroics and gallantry of those who fought to save their shipmates and their ship.

NOTE: Mr. Chamblin went on to describe him being trapped in the photo lab before making his way to the flight deck, and very well does include some very grisly and some very heroic and courageous details. But it was after getting to the flight deck that he came across his friend (Hughes), so the story is continued at that point.

I lost five of my men during the attacks. As it turned out, one of my top first class photo mates, Hughes, was at his station near CDR. Miller, a terrific location to photograph the oncoming Kamikaze. I searched for Hughes and finally found his body among some 100 others on the fantail. He still had his beat up camera around his neck. I retrieved the camera, and upon arriving in the photo lab, to attempt to develop the film if possible, I was forced to tape up many holes to make it light proof. It was necessary to pry the camera open in the dark room in order to remove the film. I soaked the film in plain fresh water to remove the blood, and then processed the film with normal chemical procedure. To my surprise the film, even though fogged, showed an identifiable and usable picture of the incoming, number two, Kamikaze. This was done by using image-enhancing techniques. Another of our top-notch photo mates was stationed on the starboard side of

the bow of the flight deck. He snapped a 16mm color movie picture of the top of the head of the second Kamikaze pilot rolling across the flight deck and being kicked overboard by a sailor. The picture was so clear the pilot's nationality was clearly identifiable. I want all hands of the big "T" to realize that the ships photographers contributed some of the most outstanding photographs taken by any crew showing actions of WWII. These photographs were forwarded to Washington where they were used by the Navy Department for historical and publicity purposes, in part, to show civilians that their tax dollars were being well spent. When I finally arrived on the flight deck after my photo lab entrapment, only then did I comprehend the massive efforts exhibited by all hands to save our ship. By all hands I mean ALL HANDS. Later on that night of the 21st of January, we listened to Tokyo Rose saying how sorry she felt for our next of kin since we were unable to meet the challenge of the superior Japanese Air Force. 'The Essex class carrier is now at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean' (her words-false of course). How she and the entire Japanese nation failed to appreciate the superior fighting of the big "T" and indeed, of our American fighting men and women!"

~Howard Chamblin, Lieutenant, Air Department, Fellow photographer of John Hughes. He developed John's film, his final images of life.

As a summary of the two recollections: Kamikazes, came through a cloud bank and crashed into the flight deck exploding its bomb load between the galley deck and the hangar deck, which was packed with aircrafts being refueled and rearmed. While the crew fought the flames and enemy planes the second Kamikaze crashed, ripping holes in the flight deck and starting more fires. In total there were 344 killed (This including Croton's John Hughes) 144 wounded and missing.

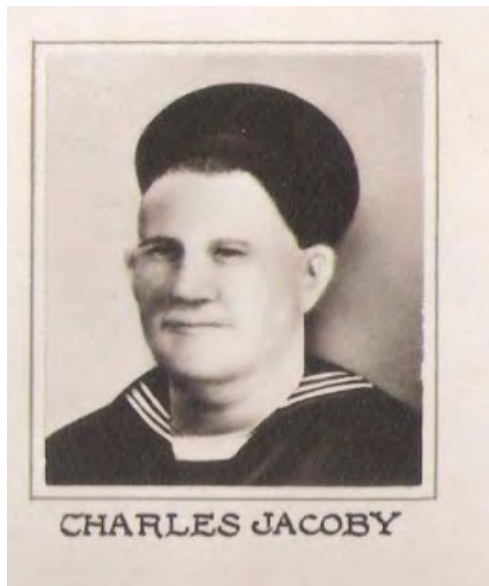


John's parents received a telegram from the war department notifying them of his death on Wednesday February 6th 1945. A tribute was paid to John Hughes on March 1st of 1945 when the Croton's Servicemen's Committee sponsored a Mass at the convent of Holy Name of Mary Church on Grand Street, at 8:15 am. John did not have an official burial because of the telegram given by the war department. The family was informed "Do not divulge the name of his ship." And "Burial will be at sea, or a nearby island". John Hughes was 27 years old when he died and was the second Navy man from Croton to give his life and the fourth to die in the Pacific.

We look back on John Hughes with admiration and respect. Not only did he show dedication and love to his country but also to his job. He helped document and preserve history, as we know it. John will always be remembered by Croton.

Charles Jacoby

Charles Jacoby, born in 1929, was a Croton Harmon High School graduate. After graduation he attended Gaines Business School, in New York City. After graduating there, Charles was a chief storekeeper for the New York Central Railroad at Sedgwick Avenue, in New York City. Charles was a member of the Holy Name of Mary Church, Croton, and also a member of the Ossining Naval Reserve for 12 years before entering the service in October of 1942.



Charles Jacoby

Born in Croton, Charles was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Jacoby. He also had a stepmother, Mrs. Jennie Jacoby, who resided in Verplanck.

Charles married the former Rita Murphy of Croton, who resided with him at 364 South Riverside Avenue. They had a daughter, Catherine, an eleven-year-old student of Pierre Van Cortlandt Elementary School, at the time of his death. Besides his wife, daughter, and stepmother, Charles left three brothers, Edwin Jacoby; Peekskill, Sergeant William Jacoby, Constant

Avenue, Peekskill, serving with the Fifth army; and Sergeant Warren Jacoby, serving in India with a Railroad Battalion.

Because of Charles' membership in the Ossining Naval Reserve, upon entering the service in October of 1942, he was rated as a Machinist Mate, First Class. His first assignment was at Pier 92, New York City. After joining the Navy, he was selected to attend the University of Syracuse to study Engineering. After three months of studying there, he was sent to Miami, Florida to take additional training in code. He was assigned to a ship in Norfolk, VA, as a mechanic. It was on this same ship on May 10th, 1944 that Charles was reported missing in action.

Charles Jacoby, U.S.N. was declared killed in Action in the European Theatre of War, May 18, 1944. His ship was escorting a convoy 120 miles North West of Algeria, when it was torpedoed by a U-boat. At the time

Charles was Croton's only Navy casualty and was the first Navy man from Croton to die in service.

A telegram from the war department informing loved ones of Charles' death was received by his wife in June of 1944.

Croton will continue to honor the sacrifice Charles Jacoby made and the dedication he showed to his country, town and his family.



The street sign named after
Charles Jacoby

Philip Loonto



Street sign of the street named after Philip Loonto

Philip Loonto, born in 1923, was a Croton Harmon High School graduate, Class of 1941. Philip was known to be a very popular guy in high school and was active in sports, playing both football and basketball. After graduating high school, Philip became an apprentice for the electrical shop of the New York Central Railroad at Harmon. He entered the Marine Corps in 1942 when he was 19 years old. When Philip was asked why he chose the Marine Corps, he would respond that he wanted “to get in the toughest outfit and give the best service”.

Philip was known to be quiet, unassuming, but confident and “devil-may-care”.

Philip was the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Loonto of 33 Harrison Street, Croton. Along with his parents, Philip also had a stepbrother, Pfc. Ralph Williams. Ralph was in the Marine Corps as well, and was stationed with Loonto in the same division in the South Pacific. Philip also had two other brothers in service. The first was Officer Candidate James, at the time stationed at Camp Berkeley, Texas. His second brother was Corporal John who, at the time, was stationed at Orlando, Florida. John instructed in physical training at Orlando. This included bowling, rope-climbing and racing teams; along with organizing softball, handball, baseball, basketball and volleyball. Philip also had two sisters, Margaret, otherwise known as Peggy, and Barbara all of 33 Harrison Street, Croton.

Philip received his training at Parris Island, New River, North Carolina and at Camp Pendleton, California. After entering the service Philip’s whereabouts during the service were tracked through “The Servicemen’s News”. In 1943, Phil was in New Zealand where it was recorded that he had met Corporal Charlie Matero, an old friend of his from Croton, and it is even known that the two ate Thanksgiving dinner together. In 1944 Philip and his stepbrother were visited in the South Pacific by three Croton boys, Marine Nick Mussro, Tom Hoban and Quarter Master Charles Matero.



Up until Philip's death in August of 1944, he was known to be in the South Pacific and was the second Croton boy to give his life there. Philip died at the young age of 21, nearly two years from when he entered the Marine Corps. No details of the action in which Philip Loconto lost his life were given. At the time it was stated "the details would be sent when such information would give no aid to the enemy".

Philip's parents received the news of his death on July 21st, 1944. Exactly two years to the day after his enlistment. After the death Philip's parents placed a flag in the window with four stars on it. Each star represented one of their four sons. Along with Philip's parents, sisters and brothers he left his grandparents, two uncles, two aunts and a female cousin who was also in service, at the time, in Austria.

William “Billy” Michaels



The street sign of the street named after William Michaels

William Michaels was born in New York City, 1927. He resided in Croton only during the summers, except for one year when he attended Croton Harmon High School with the sole purpose of playing on the Varsity Basketball team. William can be seen in a picture (included) as number 7 in the first row. The picture was taken for the school year of 1935-36. William’s family, who lived in New York City, resided at Croton Point during the summers and returned to the city during the winter. He was allowed to stay in the village after the high school coach “insisted” on having him play for their school team. This was all before he was drafted in 1940 to the 41st Sunset Division.

William was known to be a kind, good looking and athletic man who liked women and guzzling beer. One of his friends once said:

“Gosh, he could make more errors on the ball field than anyone. I used to run around the field trying to catch a good camera shot of him running after the hit ball but I never could keep up with him. About 6 or 7 years ago, I was in a show at the Club House - they called it ‘The Show Boat’ and I had the part of a Scotchman and sang ‘Stop your Ticklin’ Jack’ and for a long time Billy thought I was Scotch, as he always called me ‘Scotty’ then. I always loved Billy and was so glad to get his letters.”

He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Michaels. At the time, William also had a brother, Eugene Michaels, who enlisted in the service after William’s death.

The Servicemen’s news does not have much to say about William’s whereabouts during service; however, it is known that in November of 1943, Private “Billy” Michaels of the infantry was in New Guinea, guzzling beer, or dreaming about it. Fortunately, William’s whereabouts were tracked through another means, Letters to Croton Point. He wrote a series of letters to Croton Point, telling stories and informing them of his time in a foreign exotic place. The following are the letters he wrote in chronological order, along with responses from his friend at Croton Point and other people he addressed in his letters:

September 7, 1943

Dear Emil: I am still in New Guinea and feeling fine. One of the boys wrote the following poem and I believe it was meant for you:

“Here’s to my pal, who is one swell guy
 Never let it be said that he passed one by
 Always generous and on the level, in everything he does
 I am always wishing in my heart that life may bring to you
 Only joys and the best of luck in everything you do.
 For you’re a wonderful pal - so fine in every way
 That you deserve the best in everything you do.
 You’re thoughtful and understanding - you’re fine and grand
 And - pal, it all can be summed up in these three words
 You’re really swell.
 You’re just a little nicer than the other pals I know
 You’re just a little better in things you do
 You deserve my best wishes and the honors won
 But only those who know you know how grand a job you’ve done
 I think the world of you, dear pal, today and every day.”

I hope you do not think I am silly but I mean everything that is said in that poem. Give my regards to the fellows and thank Helen O’Leary for the nice things she said about me. Write soon.

Your pal, Billy (Michaels)

(That was swell of you Billy - hope I can prove myself worthy of such a tribute from a pal like you. It’s for friends like you that I work and carry on with this work - to bring a smile to your face and some sunshine in your dangerous work. God bless you and bring you back home soon—Emil)

(That poem is very nice, Bill - sometimes it takes a war for us to find out who our pals really are. Don’t you think so? Maybe we’ll all think twice and be more friendly when this thing is over. Keep up the good work over there and you bring Gib and Ray home with you.

Love from all of us - - Helen O’Leary)

June 9, 1943

Hello Emil: I am in New Guinea and feel quite well. There is plenty to do here and because of the climate here everything has to be done slowly or one will topple over with heat. Believe me when I say I have had my share of insects. We have sand flies that come through our bed nets and when they bite you, you have a sore for over a week. There is a bug here that we call a ‘stink bug’ - it smells like a skunk. I am not over estimating the smell and it will make your head spin.



William Michaels

I have received your bulletin and am glad that Don is going to marry Amy. Tell Don I think he is a lucky fellow and that when we meet the drinks are on me. I wish them all the happiness in the world.

Every time someone writes to a soldier they ask him where he is. (Well, Bill, I never did that and don't ever intend to as I know Army regulations – Emil). The censor will not let us name places; so therefore, it is pretty hard to give locations. There is one way to satisfy the censor and say where you are.

It may not make sense but it gives the soldier something to say. Well here goes: After leaving where we were, we left for here and not knowing we were coming from there to here, we could not tell if we would arrive here or not, but nevertheless, we are here and not there. The weather here is just as it is at this season, but of course, unlike the weather we had before we came here. From there to here is just as far from here to there. I feel just as I should for this kind of weather here but of course, I felt alright for the kind of weather there - so there is nothing to be alarmed about. The way we came here is just about the way everyone comes from there to here – in short where I am is where I am.

I guess you think I'm crazy – but that is the only way the description of where I am can be told to the satisfaction of the censor. So long for the present and say 'hello' to everyone for me

Your pal – Billy (Michaels).

July 11, 1943

Hello Pal: I am feeling fine and hope you feel the same. Thanks for the gab sheet because I truly enjoy it. All the fellows in my squad enjoy reading it too. I told you I would get something for you. Well, I have a Ki-Ki stick – the natives use it to eat their food with – it is really a work of art to make one. I can't send it to you but believe me I will try and bring it back. I wrote a long letter to you so if you receive this one first, you will know there is another one on the way (Billy, the long one came in here about 2 weeks ahead of this one – Emil). The other day we had a Memorial Day Mass- I would like you to picture us- a group of men, stationed in a jungle region-

some wore sun tan uniforms, others were in fatigue suits, but all of us wearing leggings. They still looked like soldiers and I was proud to be one of them. Someday, we will prove that we are good soldiers and you folks at home will be proud of us. Say hello to all the folks for me – I hope to see you soon. Your pal – Billy (Michaels)

(Billy you boys have already proven yourselves. We are mighty proud of you all and I am especially proud to have a friend like you).

(What do you mean some day you will prove that you are good soldiers, Billy? For my money, you all have proven it beyond a shadow a doubt. – Hope you all come home safe and sound real soon, Best wishes – Helen O’Leary, Russ and Gib Ryan’s sister).

July 26, 1943

Hello Pal: I am still in New Guinea and feeling fine. It is quite a treat to hear about the fellows and girls back home and I hope you keep right on telling me about them and yourself. I have not seen a non-native girl for 5 months and you know how I feel about women. I love them all. If we ever had a bachelor party, I guess we two will be the only ones attending it. If any of the boys start yelling about not getting furloughs, tell them I have been in the Army two years without even getting one 3-day pass. March 1st will be two years overseas for me and I sure will be glad to get back to the states. I hope you are in the best of health. Say ‘hello’ to everyone for me.

One of your pals – Billy (Michaels).

December 18, 1943

Hello Emil: As you can see by my head address, I am now corporal. I am receiving the paper as regularly as possible.

I did not buy any beer and didn’t have a drink since I returned to the mainland. I guess I am reforming but every time I see beer I get homesick for the hill. Instead I bought as many chocolate bars as I could and went to the town hospital and gave them to the sick kids in the children’s ward. I wish you were there to see the expression on their little faces when I gave them the candy. Civilians can’t get candy and I guess some of the kids never ate chocolate and some didn’t have any for years. When you see them smiling and happy, it makes one swell up and want to buy the town for them. They look forward to seeing me every Sunday and don’t care if I have candy for them or not.

Sometimes it’s hard to get candy because of the shortage. Sometimes when I go there, some of the parents are there and the kids introduce me to

them. The kids are happy to see me, and knowing it, makes me feel happy and proud.

The girls over here are swell to me and I am sending you this picture of the girl of the moment. She is a schoolteacher and 23 years old - believe it or not. If you can enlarge it, I would like you to send me two and one to my folks. I don't see her often because I like her an awful lot and if I went with her oftener, I would probably wind up marrying her and I don't intend to get married until the war is won.

I sure would like to see the gang again but this job over here has to be finished right and that will take a little time. I don't write to the boys but I want them to know that I think of them often and of the good times we had.



Billy on the Croton Basketball team, seen here in the front row, farthest to the right, wearing number 7

Maybe sometime in the near future we can resume the times over again. I will send you the Jap present I promised you as soon as I can. Keep up the good work with the paper because I look forward to reading it. Keep the beer cool, too, because I intend to drink, drink, for drink, with you even if someone has to pour it down my throat when I go under the table. Say 'hello' to every one for me.

Your pal, Billy (Michaels)

December ?, 1943

Hello pal: I am feeling fine and having a good time. I have received the paper regularly and look forward to the next issue. Thanks for the Christmas card - It was swell seeing Croton again. I am in a musical show that the Red Cross is putting on for the boys in the hospital camps Christmas Day. My dancing partner and myself are doing a jitterbug dance. I sure wish I had one of the girls from the Hill as my partner because the Australian girls don't hold a candle to our girls when it comes to dancing. I still did not have a drink and don't miss it. I do a lot of swimming and am putting on a lot of weight. I wrote a long letter to you tonight. Take care of yourself because when I get there I am going off the water wagon and drinking under the table. Say 'Hello' to everyone for me.

Your pal, Billy (Michaels)

The above letter was the last in records received from William before he passed away.

Not much is known about William's death. It is known that he was killed in action in New Guinea on May 28th, 1944. At the time he was a machine gunner and 27 years old. Six months after his death, his brother enlisted in the army.

A motion was passed on Tuesday night July 24th, 1951 for a street once known as Rende Lane to become Michaels Lane in Memory of William Michaels.

Through William's letters, and other known actions, we can see the dedication he showed to his country and the kind acts he bestowed upon people he didn't even know. For this we continue to honor and look up to him in admiration.

William Munson



The street sign of the street named after William Munson

William Munson and his family moved to Croton when he was three years old. They lived on Brook Street, and then on “The Hill”. William, or Billy, as his friends called him, graduated parochial school in 1935 and Croton Harmon High School in 1939. After graduation William worked with the New York Central Railroad as a fireman, second in command to the train engineer, until he enlisted in the Army along with fifteen other men who had worked with the New York Central Railroad. All of them enlisted as members of the 721st Railroad Battalion.

William Munson, better known as “Wabah” in the community, was 150 lbs., about five feet eight inches tall, brown haired, gray eyed, slim, quiet, and a gentlemen at all times.

In his battalion, Billy worked as an engineer in India in Company C. with his friends Nelson O’Brien, Sam Parsons, Albert Rozell, and Warren Jacoby. Not much is known about Billy’s time in service, but at one point he was driving supply trucks. During the holidays, the 12 Croton service folk who had served for two years overseas in their 721st Railroad Battalion in India, came home for a 45-day leave, their first furlough. On January 14th 1946 they all received their discharges and headed for home. That is, all but Corporal Munson. At 7 pm, he called his mom and told her he was going to celebrate his discharge in New York City with friends, and that he might be home late that night or maybe not at all that night. Unfortunately, this was the last anyone ever heard of Munson and the next morning his family and the surrounding community were stunned by the news that he was dead.

Corporal William Munson had been killed at 3:30 that morning by a subway train at 125th Street. The only witness, the motorman of the subway, said he saw the body on the tracks and couldn’t stop the tragedy. No further details are known about his death and his furlough bag was never located.



William Munson

William Munson was Croton's 15th serviceman to make the supreme sacrifice and lose his life. William's funeral was the following Tuesday after the accident, and brought together 170 Croton Vets who wanted to pay a final tribute to their fallen comrade. William's funeral is known to be one of the most touching military parades of World War II Croton Veterans. The village would never see so many Legionaries and VFW members in a parade again.



William Munson, seen in the bottom left



William Munson, seen in the top left



William Munson, seen in the top left



William Munson, seen in the top left

Six of Billy's friends: Nelson O'Brien, J. Vassallo, Sam Paonessa, Don Lyon, Joe Canestra, and Ray Burgdorpf acted as pall-bearers.

All 170 of the Veterans present marched along side of the hearse to Holy Name of Mary Church where Reverend McCormack officiated at a low requiem mass.

As color guard were John Matero, Sam Parsons, Bert Reisdorph and Allan King.

After the mass, the body was taken to the Assumption Cemetery in Peekskill. All along the way, fire engines of different companies rested at the intersections of Grand, Van Wyck, Brook, Riverside, and Depot Square. This was the fire companies' last tribute. At the grave the Veterans were in

military formation. Father Fury gave the ablution. The colors were presented. Maurice Berger, Nick Pileggi, Peter Stellato, and Charles Dobbs fired three volleys of shots under the orders of Sam Villani. The bugler, Paul Picciano sounded taps, followed by the “echo” Dom Franzoso. Then, the American Flag was folded by Frank Waitkins and Bert MacDougall, and then handed to Reverent Wilson, the American Legion Chaplain, and he handed it to Mr. Munson.

While, William Munson may not have died like the other veterans, he still died for his country. He is Croton’s 15th serviceman to make the supreme sacrifice. William’s death will always be looked upon with honor and respect. William Munson is forever in Croton’s heart.



*Street sign of the street named after
William Newton*

William Newton

William Newton lived in the Town of Cortlandt for 13 years of his life and then in Croton for 3 years, where he resided on Finney Farm. Not much is known about William's schooling but it is known that he was involved in the theatrical make-up mirrors business with his father on West Street, New York City. This was all before he was inducted into the Army from the Town of Cortlandt draft board in March of 1943.

William is remembered as a quiet, unassuming man of 33, who was 5 ½ feet tall, weighing 100 pounds with a luxuriant crop of thick black hair.

William Newton resided with his mother, Mrs. William J. Newton, at Finney Farm. However, at the time of William's death she resided in Stamford, Connecticut. William's father, William J. Newton, resided in New York City, where he was involved in business. Along with his parents, William also left his sister, Mrs. Eleanor Downing, who also resided at Finney Farm with William and their mother.

Inducted into the Army in March of 1943, he was believed to have been part of a Tank Battalion in France. Before that he trained for 18 months in Camp Polk, LA. When his Battalion was broken up he was left at the camp until a few months later when he was sent overseas to France. In September of 1944 he wrote home to his family that he had been "wounded in action" in a battle in France. However, according to William, "It wasn't too tough" because he had just finished a bottle of Champagne. Shortly after writing this letter home, he went back into action, and then, in January of 1945 his folks received a War Department telegram informing them he had been killed in action in France on December 20th.

William Newton was 33 years old when he died. At the time he was known as Private First Class William Newton. He had been overseas for 6 months when he died, and his previous injuries in action awarded him the Purple Heart.

Funeral services for William Newton were to be held at the National Cemetery, Pine Lawn on Tuesday, December 7th 1948. Private Newton's body was returned from the European area, where he served with the Tank Corps.

Although not much is known on behalf of William Newton, we continue to honor and respect the sacrifice for his country. His memory will never be forgotten.

Clifford O'Riley

Clifford O'Riley was born in 1923, and attended both parochial school and High School at Croton-Harmon. After graduation from Croton High school, Clifford worked for the New York Central Railroad before his induction into the service on January 29th, of 1943.



Clifford is remembered as a six-foot tall, dark haired, gray eyed, easy going and good-natured man. He was known as a counter part of his brother Jack who was fair, and constantly mistaken for Cliff.

Cliff was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph O'Riley of 91 Brook Street. His brother Jack entered the service at the same time as Cliff.

Cliff took his basic training at Camp Hood, Texas. He then went to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, Camp Pickett, Va., Louisiana, and Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Cliff's whereabouts during active service, were tracked through the Servicemen's News. In October, of 1943, he arrived in England, where his brother, Jack, was also stationed. From England, he wrote home of the blackouts and going on maneuvers with heaps of tanks riding herd over the British farmyards. On D-Day, Cliff's tank was fifth in the first assault wave to storm Normandy beachhead. His brother Jack's unit arrived four days later on August 7th. Cliff's unit passed Jack's unit in Vire, France, then Cliff went to the rest camp where he wrote home of scenic beauty of the Normandy countryside. He also wrote about the "pretty French girls". Late in August he left Dinah Shore singing in his camp, and went to visit Jack. He also wrote home of the tank outfits rumbling by villages like hurricanes, stopping only to allow men to stretch their legs. When the tanks approached the Siegfried Line, Cliff wrote telling his mom not to worry if he didn't write often, because he was at the front. The last letter Mr. and Mrs. O'Riley received from Cliff was dated September 18, 1944. The letter described some of Cliff's battle front experiences and was received by them just a week before receiving a telegram from the war department in October.

The telegram his parents received read, “missing in action on September 20th, in Germany”. Two hours after this disappointing news, the parents received a V-mail from Jack saying he had seen Cliff’s tank outfit go by, but didn’t see Cliff’s tank. Eight months went by with no new word on Cliff’s whereabouts. Then after months of no news, a telegram came in June of 1945 informing his parents of his death.

The telegram read that Cliff’s tank had been under heavy artillery fire near Siegfried Line, Germany. It went on to say that his tank was hit and Cliff killed in that engagement on September 20th of 1944.



Street sign of the street named after Clifford O’Riley

Corporal Clifford O’Riley, gunner, Company A of the 741st Tank Battalion of France was declared officially dead on September 20th of 1944. Cliff would have been 22 years old on July 8th, 1945. He is the thirteenth Croton boy to make the supreme sacrifice.

Clifford’s mass was celebrated at the Holy Name of Mary Church on Sunday, December 9th, 1944 at 11 a.m. and sponsored by the Washington Engine Company.

Clifford is a warrior gone, but never forgotten.

William Wolf



*Street sign of the street named after
William Wolf*

William Wolf, born in 1919, was a Croton Harmon High School graduate Class of 1936. He lived in Croton all 26 years of his life and was his class president as well as Salutatorian in his senior year of high school in 1936. Following graduation, William was employed by the late Dr. Maurice Eisen in his chemical laboratory in Oscawana.

William continued to work for him, through the summers of his college career. In 1938 he entered New York University, where he studied for three years. At the university, he was a member of the Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity, the school glee club as well as the quartet. He also belonged to the Hall of Fame Singers. William entered the Army in 1941 as a private, while a senior at the New York University in the College of Chemical Engineering. He was one of the first to leave with a draft.

William was better known as Bill and was remembered as a tall, bronzed, fine looking, and studious lad of 26, who was dark eyed, quiet, and possessed a beautiful, ringing baritone voice.

William was the only child of Mr. and Mrs. James Wolf, of Farrington Road and 650 West End Avenue, New York City. Bill's father, James Wolf, was employed at a shipyard involved in defense work in California. Along with his parents, Bill also left several aunts, uncles and cousins in Austria. Two of his cousins had already been killed in the service of the Austrian Army.

William's whereabouts while in the service were tracked through "The Servicemen's News". He first completed his basic training at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont. He was made Corporal and then five months later, was sent out with his outfit on convoy duty to Australia, North Caledonia and Panama. His next assignment took him to Iceland, Scotland and Africa after which he was sent home on a 10-day leave. Somewhere along the line he contracted malaria, from which he was supposed to have recovered and was then sent to OCS in the Field Artillery at Fort Still, Oklahoma. Here he met Len Grasso, and another Croton serviceman. As a Lieutenant he went to North Carolina in 1944 and in June was sent overseas to the European theatre of operations, in France, as a Reconnaissance officer.

Lieutenant William Wolf was wounded in action early in November of 1945 and wrote home on December first. He told his mother, "Little

Willie has another medal to add to his collection. This time it's the Purple Heart." Then he went back into action, and early in January of 1945 his mother received a notice from the War Department that he had been "killed in action, December 9th, 1945 in France".



William was the eighth boy from Croton to have made the supreme sacrifice. His commitment and dedication to his country will never be forgotten and will not go unnoticed. Croton will always remember him.

The Korean War (1950-1953)

Shortly after WWII both the Russian Soviet Union and the United States emerged as military global superpowers. Their rivalry was fueled by communism versus democracy. One of the Soviets' main goals was to spread the idea of communism around the world, in addition to growth as a powerful empire that would control all of these states. In order to counter attack this strategy, the U.S. attempted to stop the global spread of communism by coming to the aid of numerous countries, including Korea.

Each side had a tremendous amount of nuclear weapons and eventually it came to a point when there was "mutually assured destruction". This concept assured that if one weapon was set off, it would set off a chain reaction, destroying the world. For many years tensions rose and fell between the U.S. and the Soviet Union to see who would make a move. This long span of time was better known as the Cold War, its name given due to the fact of all the "behind the scenes" tension and no real up front battles between the two powers.

On June 25th 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea, in an attempt to unify by force, and quickly captured Seoul, their capital. The U.S. was convinced that the USSR (Russian Soviets) had sanctioned this invasion to encourage a communist state, and as a result, thousands of troops from the U.S., along with several from the United Nations, were sent out to help South Korea.

Over time, the U.S. forces won on the battle front and attempted to unify Korea under one smart leader, however, at this time the Chinese stepped in (who were also communists), pushing Americans back and a stalemate (or a cease fire) was reached in July of 1953. Today, Korea still remains divided under separate North and South rule.



Names of the Korean War veterans, inscribed on the Veterans' Corner Monument

Francis Daily Jr.



The Street sign of the street named after Francis Daily

Francis Daily is a veteran of the Korean War. He attended Holy Name of Mary School and then attended Croton Harmon High School where he graduated. After graduation Francis worked as a brakeman for the New York Central Railroad. This was all before his enlistment in 1948, and when he entered active service on January 14th, of 1949. Francis Daily was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Daily, of 60 Thompson Avenue, Croton. Besides his parents, Francis had a sister, Dolly.

Before entering the service, he had previously served 25 months as an oilier in the Merchant Marine. During this time he made several trips, some of them taking him to South Africa, Italy, Greece, Germany, and South America.

Francis last saw his parents in July of 1950, just before shipping out for Korea.

On February 1st of 1951, Francis' parents read a Defense Department telegram, informing them that Corporal Francis J. Daily, Jr. had died on December 15th from wounds received in action in Korea. This telegram came more than a month after a telegram they received informing them that their son had been "seriously wounded". His father, a wounded veteran of World War 1, heard the unfortunate news on his birthday when he returned from the veteran's hospital in Brooklyn.



Francis Daily

Corporal Francis Daily was the second in the Croton area to die in the Korean War, and the third to die in the Croton-Cortlandt-Ossining area.

Reports described Cpl. Daily as having been in the midst of rearguard action near Seoul with the 24th Division, in the 26th Anti-Aircraft Artillery. The flags were dipped for Francis on the orders of Fire Chief John Lettis because the soldier had served as a member of the Harmon Engine Co. prior to his enlistment in 1948.

Besides the flags flying at half-mast, Harmon Engine Co. had placed a wreath in Cpl. Daily's memory on its headquarters.

The following is a proclamation that the Mayor of Croton made on behalf of Francis Daily:

"I, Fred Dorner, Mayor of the Village of Croton-On-Hudson, DO HEREBY proclaim Friday, May 25th and Saturday, May 26th as Corporal Francis J. Daily Days. In recognition and gratitude to our Korean War Hero the people of our village are requested to pause a moment on each of these days and reflect that Corporal Daily's supreme sacrifice was not in vain, that he gave his life to help preserve the precious freedoms we enjoy. All public and private places of business are requested to fly their flags at half-mast on each of these days".



Francis Daily's gravestone, found in Croton's Bethel Cemetery. To the right is the grave of his mother Helen, to the left, the grave of his father.

In addition to the mayor's tribute, there was also an article published in the Croton News informing readers of the service held for Daily. The article is as follows:

Tribute to Croton G.I.

5/28/51

Hundreds of Croton citizens Saturday morning paid tribute to Cpl. Francis J. Daily Jr., a Croton G.I. killed in combat in Korea, in a military funeral ceremony led by The Central Veterans' Committee and the Croton Fire Department.

A large number of uniformed veterans and firemen acted as escorts from the M.C. White Funeral Home on Grand Street to the Holy Name of Mary Church where a High Requiem Mass was sung at 10 A.M.

Following the service, the procession, accompanied the body up Grand Street to Old Post Road, and then up the Post Road to Croton's Bethel Cemetery.

Fire Department Salute:

As the marchers passed the intersection of Old Post Road with Grand Street, Maple Street and the entrance and exit of the high school, bells on the five trucks of the Croton Fire Department parked at each intersection were tolled in mourning. Cpl. Daily was an active member of the Harmon Engine Company.

Bearers of the flag-draped coffin were Bernard Scozzafava, Joseph Campanella, Joseph A. Zerello, Joseph Fiorito, Jack O'Riley and Robert Centrella.

Color Guard:

The funeral procession included color guards and a firing squad of six men, a sergeant and a bugler from West Point.

The Central Veterans' Committee under the direction of Samuel Paonessa, chairman, made arrangements for the funeral.

During Friday evening, the body reposed in the funeral home while friends paid their respects. An honor guard of one member each from Fox Eklof post 505, American Legion, and the Croton-Harmon Post, VFW, stood by during the evening, with new men posted each half hour.

Francis Daily Jr. will always be remembered by Croton and his memory never forgotten.

Thomas Giglio

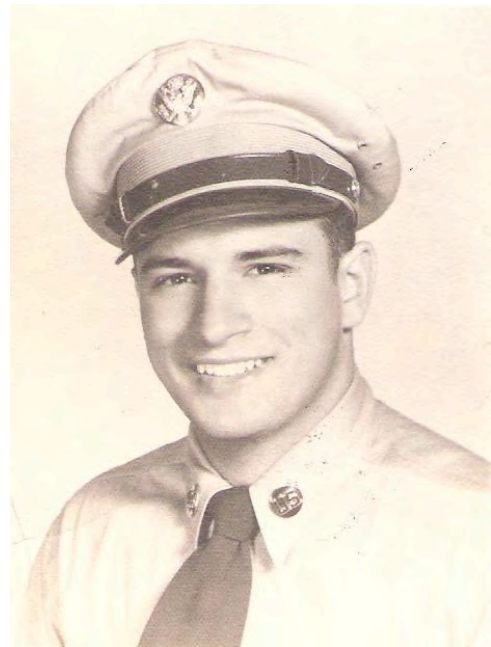


Street sign of the street named after Thomas Giglio

Thomas Giglio is a veteran from the Korean War. Thomas was born on May 2nd of 1931, and graduated from Croton Harmon High School in June of 1949. He achieved all of his schooling through Croton and was greatly loved by the community. Thomas, or “Tommy” as his friends and family called him, was an outstanding three-sport athlete. For those of you who do not know, being a three-sport athlete is no hobby, it’s a job. I myself tried it my freshman year of high school and was quickly over-taken by stress, anxiety and pressure. Tommy remained a three-sport athlete, playing

football, basketball, and baseball for all four years! (Pictures of him on his basketball and football team are included below). This means endless hours of dedication to his schoolwork and to his sports. If one would ever want to measure a student’s endurance, just have them play three sports during high school and see how long they would last managing it all. After graduating high school, Tommy worked as a carpenter helper for the New York Central Railroad, working on office alterations in the railroad buildings throughout New York City. He was also a member of the Washington Engine Company, all before entering the service in 1951.

Tommy was a very well loved, well known, and popular resident of Croton. The following quote was taken from his 1949 year book: “One of the best-looking boys in this year’s graduating class, was curly-haired Thomas Giglio. Tommy’s football, basketball, and baseball merits were a credit to CHHS. In ninth and tenth grade he was a faithful and serious reporter for the gossip sheet ‘Buzz Buzz’. ‘Gigs’ popularity was obvious in his senior year when he was voted president of the famous Cooks Club.”



Thomas Giglio

The following is a tribute from Al Thomas, one of Tommy's coaches in High School: "He was a tremendous competitor and a fine sportsman – a real, fine boy. This is a sad day for Croton".



Thomas on the football team, seen in the bottom row wearing number 17



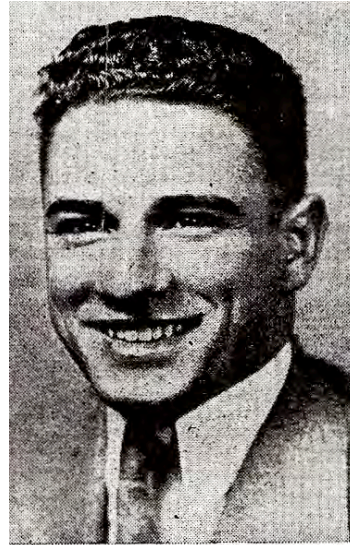
Thomas on the basketball team, seen in the bottom row, farthest to the right

Corporal Thomas E. Giglio was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Giglio of 5 Grand Street. In addition to his parents, he also left a grandmother, Mrs. Dominick Giglio; three brothers, Louis Jr., John, and Vincent, all of Croton; two sisters, Mrs. Donald Myers of Vermont (Madaline), and Mrs. August Sasso (Victoria). Their mother was a stay-at-home mother and their father was an insurance agent for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Through his business, Tommy's father helped many of the older Italian residents of Croton who did not speak or read English, because he spoke and understood Italian. He was able to answer whatever questions they had, to help them out. He was better known as "Louie the Insurance man".

Tommy entered the service in 1951, and was then stationed at Fort Dix, NJ, where he received his basic training. While at Fort Dix, Tommy tried out for the football team. He was the only one to make it on the team that did not play for a college team! This was quite an impressive feat for which he earned a trophy and a certificate. Tommy left Croton December 19th, 1951 and served nine months in Korea with the 14th Engineers Combat Battalion. A letter was written to his family, dated January 9, 1952; informing them he was on board the "U.S.N. Patrick" in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and heading for Japan. During his service Tom was a Corporal in Company "C" of the 14th Engineers Combat Battalion, stationed at Panmunjom, where the Peace Talks were held. His unit erected the same

buildings, in which the talks were held. The last letter received by Tom's family was dated October 8, 1952, in the letter he explained that he was supposed to go on R & R (Rest and Relaxation) in October, but something came up and he would not go until November.

Tom went on R&R to Japan in November 1952. While returning to Korea, on November 14th, 1952 he and 43 others were in a C-119 Flying Boxcar that crashed into the side of a 2000 foot mountain just 20 miles east of Seoul. There were no survivors; everyone inside the plane was killed instantly on impact. It was reported that the death toll was the largest in any military plane crash since the start of the Korean War, a total of 44 deaths. The following was an article released on the crash:



CPL. THOMAS E. GIGLIO

Death Beat 44 to Chute Cord in Korea Plane

Tokyo, November 15th (U.P.) – An Air Force ground party reported today the 44 servicemen who died in the flaming crash of a C-119 Flying Boxcar tried desperately to parachute before the plane smashed into a 2000-foot peak minutes from its destination.

Some of the 37 passengers returning to the front lines from a rest leave in Japan had begun strapping on parachutes when the C-119 hit the mountaintop Friday, 20 miles east of Seoul. Four bodies were found alongside opened parachutes.

Korean farmers said they saw four or five parachutes stream from the plane seconds before it crashed and burst into flames. But the men jumped too late and the Air Force said all aboard perished instantly.

The plane, with Seven Crewmen and 37 passengers aboard, scattered wreckage over a 100-yard wide area near the crest of the mountain. Christmas presents the men had bought in Tokyo were scattered through the debris. The Air Force began an investigation today.

The death toll was the largest in any military plane crash since the start of the Korean War.

The rescue team, which reached the scene of the wreckage after a five-hour climb, began the task of bringing back the dead today.

The terrain was so rough that helicopters could not land, and the ground parties had to bring the bodies back by stretcher.

On February 15th, 1953, Tom's remains were returned to Croton draped in an American Flag. The Mayor of Croton asked that all flags be hung at half-mast on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The Central Veterans' Committee had stationed honor guards with the body on Thursday and Friday. Because Tom was also a member of the Washington Engine Company of Croton, The Croton Fire Department also turned out to pay their respects. Tom had a full military funeral with members of West Point Honor Guard present. He is buried with his parents at Croton's Bethel Cemetery.



The three gold star mothers of: Giglio, O'Riley and Kuney

Corporal Thomas Giglio was 21 years old when he died; with his death, the Croton loss-total in the Korean War came to four. In honor of Tom, Mayor Dorner and the Fire Chief requested that all flags be hung at half-mast for 30 days. In addition, Thomas' family established a scholarship award. In his honor, each year an out-standing senior athlete was given the award. This scholarship was awarded, until 2012 in memory of Thomas Giglio.

Thomas Giglio was a fine soldier and a fine man whose memory will continue to live on in the heart of the community and in those of his friends and family. He will never be forgotten.

Joseph Kuney



The street sign of the street named after Joseph Kuney

Joseph Kuney is a veteran from the Korean War. Joseph was born on November 5th 1929, in Peekskill. At the age of two, he moved to Croton where he lived for more than 20 years. He graduated from Croton-Harmon High School in 1947, the same year he joined the U.S. Naval Reserve. During his time in high school, Joseph excelled in math and was a member of the Washington Engine Company, in Croton, and also the Croton Rod and Gun Club.

Joseph was the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Kuney of 23 Brook Street. Along with his parents Joseph left an uncle, a grandfather, a grandmother, a sister, Joan, and a new nephew, Richard Jr.

In April 1947, Joseph joined the Naval reserve, and the Navy in August 1947, serving until March 1949 when he became a Naval Aviation Cadet. He won his wings and commission on October 15th, 1950, the youngest in his class at 20 years old. After receiving his commission he joined the Marine Corps, intending to make it his career. He had received five diplomas for special training courses and was planning to attend college following his tour of duty. For one year prior to his Korean Service he was at El Toro, California, taking Corsair training. While there he was a pilot in the movie, "Flying Leathernecks," which starred John Wayne. He was then shipped to Korea in October 1951 and made his first mission October 30th. Thereafter, he made two missions a day, weather permitting. On his 88th mission his plane was hit nine times and it had to be scrapped after returning to base! He was also the holder of the Air medal, for, "Inflicting great damage on concentrations of enemy vehicles, material, and personnel." Lt. Kuney was assigned to Fighter Squadron 323 in Korea,



Joseph Kuney

piloting the Corsair. Second Lieutenant Kuney's conduct throughout was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Services.



Joseph Kuney

On March 13, 1952 Joseph called his family from Japan where he was sent for a rest. He spoke with his father and mother, his uncle and his grandfather. At that time he told his family he completed his 89th mission on March 11th.

Joseph was a Radiological Defense Officer at Kangnung, Korea, and would have been home on leave in August.

Lieutenant Joseph Kuney was killed in action in Korea on March 27th of 1952. He passed while on his 90th mission as a Marine fighter pilot. He was 22 when he died.



Joseph Kuney



Most Recent Photo of Lt. Joseph Kuney Jr.
Joseph Kuney, flying

The following is an article on Kuney, containing an interview with his mother (Pictures are included):

Remembering the Sacrifices of War

For Gold Star mother in Croton, every day is Memorial Day

By Cara Bonnett

Monday, May 25, 1998

Six framed pictures sit at the corner of Doris Kuney's kitchen table, angled so she can look at them while she eats dinner every night. Each one shows a young smiling Joseph Kuney Jr., her only son killed 46 years ago while serving as a Marine Fighter pilot in the Korean War.

She knows some call it the forgotten war, but Kuney hasn't forgotten.

While patriotism may be on the wane and the ranks of the gold star mothers are dwindling with each passing year, Kuney, 92, is proud to be one of the state's oldest Gold Star mothers. She wears her star pinned to a favorite blazer along with the gold wings that once adorned her sons' uniform.

And she still prays, every day. "I pray an hour every morning and every night – most of all for no more wars" said Kuney, a Croton-on-Hudson resident. "I pray for peace because it's terrible to lose someone."

The Department of Defense created the Gold Star program after World War I, to recognize parents, spouses and siblings of those who died while in service to the country. The casualties now number more than 670,000, said Army Lt. Col. Tom Begines, A Defense Department Spokesman.

Memorial Day has special significance for Gold Star mothers and wives, who usually are allowed to place their wreaths early and carry flags and banners first in a parade, said Jeanne Penfold, spokeswoman for the American Gold Star mothers, a national service organization based in Washington D.C.

"On Veterans Day the first thought is for the living, but Memorial Day is for the deceased, and that's what we represent," Penfold said. "If there weren't mothers, there wouldn't be sons."

Kuney doesn't plan to march in Croton's Memorial Day parade "Today – she hasn't joined in the parade since 1952, just after her son was killed. "It's a lonely day for me," she said "But I'm glad they're remembering. I think he deserves it."



Kuney's mother holding her favorite picture of her son (from the article)



The three gold star mothers, from left to right, Giglio, O'Riley, and Kuney

Article Continued...

Her son had wanted to be a pilot since he was 4 years old, playing with other children on Brook Street and making believe that a cardboard box in the yard was his airplane, Kuney said.

After graduation from Croton Harmon High school, he joined the marines at age 17. His passions for flying carried him through training in Florida and New Jersey and through the filming of "Flying Leathernecks," a 1951 John Wayne movie in which he piloted a fighter plane all the way to Korea.

"He'd say, 'God willing, I come back...I want to get my private license and I'll take you up and show you how much nearer to God you are than you ever will be on earth,'" Kuney said. "He loved flying, and died doing something he loved".

She got the telegram March 26th, 1952.

Second Lt. Kuney, as part of the 323rd Marine fighter group, was on a routine bombing flight near Sinwon, North Korea, and had just dropped the plane's four 1000-pound when his fellow pilots saw his plane flip and crash in flames. He was 22.

It was his 93rd mission - he had just seven more to go before he would have been eligible for transfer to stateside service. He was looking forward to going to college and continuing his career in the marines, his mother said.

"They said it was an instant death, and that was some consolation to me," she said.

But for 10 days after the telegram arrived, she received letters from her son. "He wrote me every day, and I wrote every day. My letters came back 'address unknown'. The mailman said he felt like tearing them up."

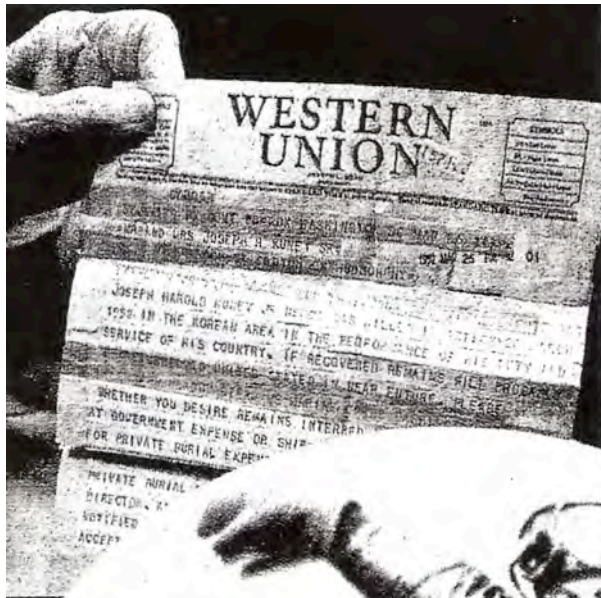
Life has gone on for Kuney. She keeps busy with a local senior citizens group and is at work compiling a family history. She speaks proudly of her daughter who lives in Beacon, N.Y., as well as her three grandchildren. "I thank God every day for that," she said. But she still wonders if her son would have married or had children.

Croton honored him and three other men killed in the Korean War with a monument near Bethel cemetery. And Kuney Street in Croton was named in his memory. But Kuney carries the real memorial in her heart.

She keeps the taped-together telegram in a small cedar chest along with a stack of carefully clipped newspaper articles, her son's log book, and the many yellowed letters from friends and Marine Officers. His medals – six all together, Including the Purple Heart – are framed on the wall along with a citation from President Truman and two small models of the F-4U Corsair, the plane he piloted.

She moved the pictures to the kitchen table after her husband died six years ago. Beside the table, on top of the microwave, she keeps a specially made wood covered book of smaller black and white photographs of her son.

"Every so often I look at it and then I cry and that's it," she said simply. "He'll never die for me".



Doris Kunev of Croton holds the Western Union telegram that informed her of the death of her pilot son, Joseph Jr., below, a Marine flier killed at age 22 during his 93rd mission Korea.

Staff phc
Joe Lare

Joseph Kunev will never be forgotten by Croton, His memory will always be in Croton's Heart.

Robert Rehor



The street sign of the street named after Robert Rehor

Robert Rehor is a veteran of the Korean War. He was born on December 1st, 1920, in North Adams, Massachusetts. He attended the Hill School at Pottstown, Pa. and resided with his family in Leominster, Mass. In 1942, after high school graduation, Robert entered the Army and attended Signal Corps School. In WW2, Lt. Rehor served in the European Theatre of Operations. He was discharged as a Second Lt. in 1946. His family moved from Leominster to Croton-On-Hudson in 1945.

After his discharge, He became a member of the Croton Tennis Association and played on the Association tennis team in 1946 and 47'. Robert was employed by the Baker Chocolate Company of New York as a salesman until he re-entered the service and the Korean War in 1948.

Robert was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W Rehor of 39 Sunset Drive. Besides his parents, he left behind three brothers, Donald A. Rehor of Kankakee, Ill., Douglas who, at the time, resided in Irvington, and Ernest. Douglas and Donald served with the Marine Corps in World War II, Ernest was killed while fighting with the 4th Marine Corps Division at Iwo Jima.

The Croton officer had distinguished himself in World War II, winning a battle field promotion from enlisted rank to Second Lieutenant. He landed in Normandy during the invasion of the continent, fought through many European campaigns, and was not discharged from the service until September, of 1946. In 1948 when he re-enlisted he served in the Pacific Theatre and then in Korea. Robert maintained his previous rank (earned in World War II) of Second Lieutenant.



LT. ROBERT M. REHOR

Robert requested duty in Japan and in June he was assigned to that country. In January 1950, he was promoted to First Lieutenant. According to the official army report he was wounded on July 20, 1950, near Taejon and died the same day as a result his wounds. At the time he received his injuries, Robert was 29 years old and was fighting with a heavy mortar company of the 21st Infantry Regiment.



LT. ROBERT M. REHOR of Croton, whose death in Korea was confirmed yesterday by the Adjutant General of the Army. Lt. Rehor was wounded on July 20 in fighting near Taejon and died the same day. The message from the Army confirmed unofficial reports of his death received here almost three weeks ago.

Robert Rehor

Along with the proclamation Grant made to the town, there was also a memorial service held by the Temple Israel at the Boscobel Church in Oscawana.

Robert Rehor was a good soldier, but an even better man. He is still remembered by Croton and will always be in our hearts.

It is believed that he was buried at Yongchon in South Korea on July 23, 1950. The death of Robert was the second war fatality in the Rehor family in that generation.

Croton took the news of Robert's death to great extent. He was the first Korean casualty from Croton, and was greatly missed. In honor of Rehor, Alan M. Grant, Jr., the Town of Cortlandt Supervisor at the time, declared September 6th to be Robert Rehor day. The supervisor also requested that flags be hung at half-mast that day, along with the days that numerous memorial services were held. Mr. Grant continued on in a proclamation he made on behalf of Rehor, stating, that the Lieutenant was "a valiant hero and a noble soldier".

The Vietnam War (Approx. 1968-1973)

The Vietnam War, like the Korean War, also occurred during the time period of the Cold War. In the history leading up to the war, Vietnam had resisted political influence and colonization from several other foreign countries, including the U.S.

Towards the beginning of the Cold War Nationalist Communists had installed themselves in Northern Vietnam and the U.S. had provided aid towards the south in defense of South Vietnamese Democracy. Over time the U.S. involvement escalated, as well as the tension between each side and by 1968, more than half a million U.S. troops had served in South Vietnam with the purpose of their defense.

The Vietnam War was also incredibly gruesome, and several bombing attacks were launched on each side. In 1968, President Nixon pledged to end the war and he was elected. In the following years he implemented a strategy of turning the war back over to the Southern Vietnamese. Overtime the U.S. troops gradually withdrew from the war and in 1973 the Vietnam War ended with the Paris Peace Accords, a series of agreements signed by both sides of Vietnam, along with several other nations.

While this may have marked the end of the U.S. presence, unfortunately, it was not the end of the war. The agreement was torn up and the battles continued until 1975 when the south faced a military defeat and Vietnam achieved unification.



The names of the Veterans from the Vietnam War inscribed on the Veterans' Corner Monument at five corners

Daniel Birch



Street sign of the street named after Daniel Birch

Daniel Birch was born in 1946, and is a veteran of the Vietnam War. Daniel had been a Croton resident for 12 years, residing with Mrs. Edward Hughes of 19 Terrace Place. Daniel was a graduate of Holy Name of Mary Parochial School Class of 1960, and later attended Rice High School in New York City and Ossining High School. He then joined his father, James Birch, in Los Angeles, all before entering the service around 1963.

Although Daniel was residing with Mrs. Hughes, he was the son of Mr. James Birch and Mrs. Herbert Birch McCoy.

Daniel also left two brothers, Thomas, 21, and Michael 13, along with a sister, Donna, who was 6 years old at the time.

Daniel entered the service when he was 17-18 years old. He was in the service in Vietnam for three years until he passed away. He achieved his Third Class Petty Officer before he passed, and was generally proud of his service and of his duty. He was killed on March 4th of 1966 just a week after his 20th birthday on February 28th.

Not much was known about the death of Daniel Birch, just that he was killed in action. From the records we have Mr. Birch had not been informed in what action his son died, he told the Croton-Cortlandt News in 1966, "We were notified only that he had sustained many fragmentation wounds," Mr. Birch said, and then continued, "We will have to wait for the report from his commanding officer before we know exactly what happened. We only know that he died in action".



Daniel Birch

Mrs. Hughes, at whose home Mr. Birch and his family were staying during their visit to Croton, said that she had what is apparently Daniel's last letter written on March 3rd, just a day before he supposedly passed away. The letter only said that he had just returned from operations, and that he had a pile of mail to answer. It seemed that he did not expect to go into immediate action when writing the letter. However, he did speak of being about to go into the mountains. Both Mr. Birch and Mrs. Hughes reported that Daniel's only complaint was about the heavy rains in Vietnam. He wrote to them explaining how he was looking forward to dry weather and to coming home that June. He did not discuss the war.



CROTON'S FIRST VIET NAM WAR CASUALTY, DANIEL BIRCH, is carried from Holy Name of Mary Church by classmate-pallbearers after a requiem high mass. The U.S. Navy honor guard also fired a salute over the grave in Long Island National Cemetery.
—photo by Michael Ortiz

13-17-66

Daniel Birch being carried from Holy Name of Mary Church

Daniel Birch was Croton's first death resulting from the Vietnam War. Third Class Petty Officer Daniel Birch, a Navy Corpsman attached to the Marine Corps, was buried on a Tuesday in March of 1966, after a Requiem High Mass at Holy Name of Mary Church. He had been reposing at Edward F. Carter Funeral Home on Grand Street, since the return of his body from Vietnam.

The funeral was with full military honors, with honor guard from the Brooklyn Naval Station, under command of Captain, J.T. Green of the U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center of New Rochelle, and Chief Petty Officer Al Reefer. Interment was at Long Island National Cemetery.

Pallbearers were six of Robert's Holy Name of Mary classmates, Charles Dobbs Jr., William Newton, Frank Scozzafava Jr., Edward Mackey, Richard Sinnot, and Barry Paust. A picture of these men surrounding the casket, and walking out of the church, is included. Father Robert Weinheimer, who was assistant pastor at Holy Name of Mary Church, conducted the service at the grave. The Reverent Msgr. Joseph O'Connor,

pastor at the Holy Name of Mary, was a celebrant at the High Requiem Mass.

Among the floral tributes at the Carter Funeral Home was one from Brook Street and from Terrace Place residents to whom Daniel had delivered newspapers during his student days at Holy Name of Mary.

We continue to admire and respect Daniel Birch, and his memory will never be forgotten in Croton.

Carl Hixson

Carl Hixson, a veteran from the Vietnam War, was born in PA, 1939. He was a Croton Harmon High School graduate Class of 1957. The following was a description found in Carl's yearbook, really more of a caption.



Carl Hixson's grave stone found in the Bethel Cemetery in Croton

CARL HIXSON

"Happy Jack"

Chess 4; Football 1;
Junior Red Cross 1;
NIGHT OF JANUARY
16TH; Tiger Rag 4; Track
3, 4.

These were the activities Carl participated in Croton Harmon High school, as well as his nickname "Happy Jack". Also listed are several sports he may have played, clubs, and what seems to have been some kind of play he was in. This description came along with his yearbook photo, which his included, and a poem he wrote about himself.

The poem went as follows:

"Teachers don't give Carl a rest
Though he does very well on each test,
Their constant slave-driving
His free time's depriving
From ping-pong which he likes best."

~Carl Hixson, Senior Year High School

Carl Hixson was the son of the late Carl Hixson and Gertrude Bollinger Hixson of 29 Cedar Lane in Croton. Carl had a brother, Richard, and at the time of his enlistment, Carl was residing at Cedar Lane with his brother.

Corporal Hixson, who was 29 years old at the time, was killed in action on January 5th of 1968. He had been in Vietnam for more than a year, serving with the radio section of the 2nd Battalion, First Marine Division, in his second enlistment with the Marines.

Carl had a memorial service on October 15th, of 1968. The following is a recollection of the service that was published in the Croton News.

'A Time to Mourn'

Cpl. Hixson Buried in Croton

“Six Marine sergeants, brilliant in their red and blue, stood attention outside in the snowy air, while inside the Leach and Thomas Funeral Home, the Rev. Raoul Waters said a few simple words over the body of Marine Corporal Hixson, this areas sixth victim of Vietnam.

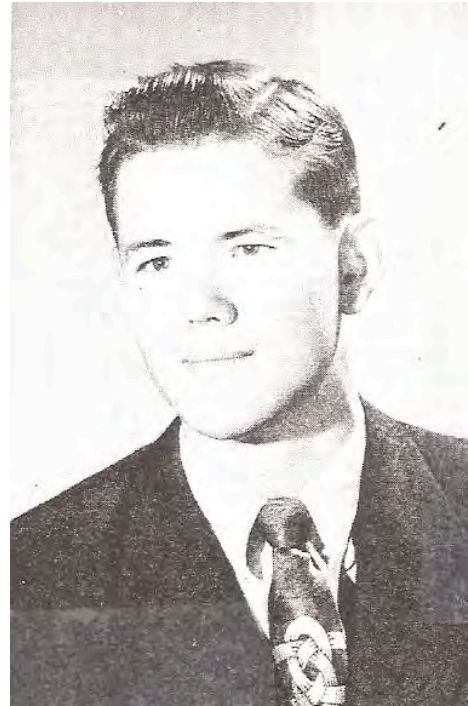
The service, attended by about 20 friends and members of the family, consisted of the 121st Psalm, a story about a small boy's quest for God, and, the family's choice, the third chapter of Ecclesiastes... 'a time to plant, a time to uproot; a time to mourn, a time to dance; a time for birth, and a time for death...'

After a smart salute to Ava Hixson, the Corporal's wife, the Marines carried the flag draped casket to the hearse, the procession then moved to Bethel Cemetery in Croton.

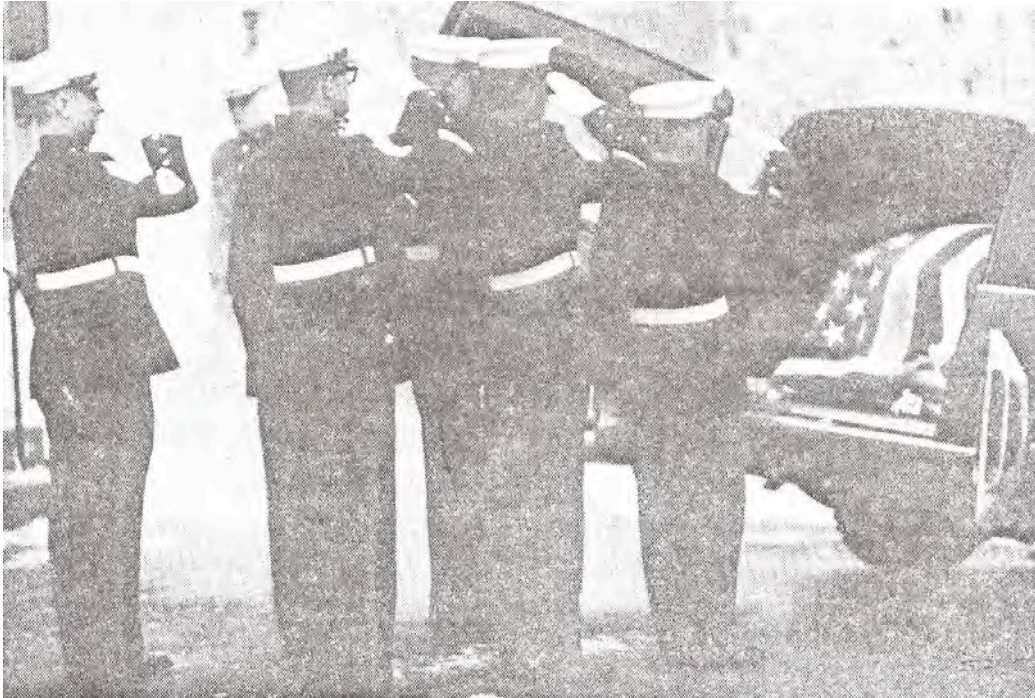
Corporal Hixson was buried in the family plot. Reverend Waters said a few last words, and William H. Sudderth, official bugler for the City of White Plains, sounded taps. Sgt. Dave McGittigan, the Marine who accompanied the body of Corporal Hixson from Vietnam, folded the flag with another Marine and presented it to the widow.

Against the backdrop of the great, giant elm tree that dominates Bethel Cemetery, the Marines lowered the casket.

The family had requested that there be no rifles, so very little disturbed the solemn silence of the falling snow. The reds and yellows and purples of the flowers and the starched dress blues stood out sharply against the white ground.”



Carl Hixson's yearbook photo



Carl Hixson's funeral, other soldiers salute him



Corporal Carl Hixson, is a brave honorable man, and will always be remembered by Croton.

Street sign of the road named after Carl Hixson

Veterans Corner Monument

After World War I and World War II, the Veterans Committee made the decision to erect a “Veterans’ Memorial Plot”. They decided to have the monument inscribed with the names of the Croton residents who had passed away during either of the wars. According to previous articles published on the matter, the monument was unveiled on Independence Day, July 4, in 1947. Below is a picture of the “proposed monument” or one of the blue prints for the project.



Proposed monument for Veterans’ Memorial plot

Below is another picture of the monument, after it was built, with the names of the Croton casualties from World War I and World War II. The picture was taken in 1947 and therefore, the names of the casualties from the Korean and Vietnam War(s) are not shown. These names were inscribed on the monument in the years following both wars.

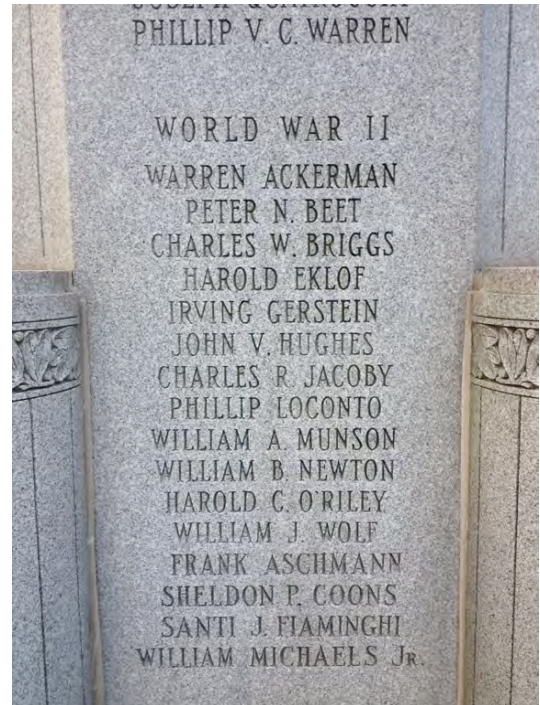


Veterans Corner Monument after it was finished in 1947. Only the names of the casualties from WWI and WWII are shown

The monument stands on the corner of Old Post Road South and Cleveland Drive, better known as “The Five Corners”. Today, the monument is known as “Veterans Corner” and holds the annual Memorial Day service along with a few other services during the year.



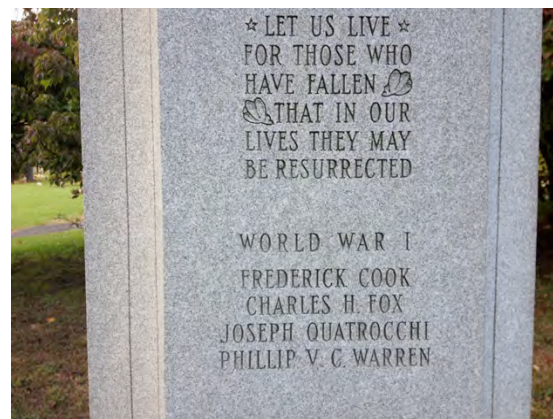
Veteran’s Corner Monument 2012



WWII Veterans on the monument



Korean War Veterans on the monument



WWI Veterans on the monumen



Vietnam War Veterans on the monument



Veterans Corner Monument, featuring all of the names - 2012

Military Terminology

Artillery - Any engine used for the discharge of large projectiles in war

Aircraft - Planes and machines used in battle in the Air force (Airship, Bomber, Fighter, Fighter Bomber, Spotter Plane, Kamikazes)

Ambush - Carrying out a surprise attack on an enemy that passes a concealed possession

Armament - The arms or equipment a military unit is supplied

Battalion - A large group of soldiers with several other small companies found within it.

Blockade - A ring of naval vessels surrounding a specific point or an entire nation; the goal being to halt the importation of goods which could help the blockaded nation's war effort

Bunker - A heavily fortified, mainly underground, facility used as a defensive position, also used as centers for high level officers

Breach - A gap in fortified battle lines

Cavalry - Soldiers or warriors who fight on horseback, horsemen

Colonel - An officer in the US Army, Air Force or Marine Corps who responds to a captain

Edged Weapons - Weapons that inflict damage through cutting or stabbing (Bayonet, Knife, Spear, Sword, Hands)

Explosives - Explosive ordnance causes damage through release of force (Grenade, Hand Grenade, Rifle Grenade, Grenade Launcher, Land mine)

Firearms - A type of weapon used in battle (Machine gun, Musket, Pistol, Revolver, Rifle, Shotgun)

Flank - To attack an enemy or unit from the side, or to maneuver to do so

Furlough - A vacation or leave of absence granted to an enlisted person

Guns - A type of weapon used in battle (Cannon, Gun)

Incendiary Weapons - Weapons that cause damage through the release of heat (Flamethrower)

Infantry - A branch of the army that fights on foot, especially soldiers

No Man's Land - Land that is not occupied, or land that is under dispute between countries or areas that will not occupy the land because of uncertainty

Rank - A single line of soldiers

Retreat - The pulling back of troops from a battle field

Sack - The deliberate destruction and/or looting of a city, usually after an assault

Vessels - Boats and naval machines used in battle in the Navy (Aircraft carrier, Battleship, Cruiser, Destroyer, Submarine, Torpedo boat)

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Croton Historical Society

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Steven Smalls