

COMPANY G SOLDIERS BURIED AT MEUSE-ARGONNE AMERICAN CEMETERY

Prepared by Valerie J. Young, August 2017

My maternal grandfather, Chester Allen Bower, fought in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive with the Army's 79th Division of the American Expeditionary Forces. He was in Company G, 2nd Battalion, of the 315th Infantry. The 315th Infantry was made up of men primarily from the Philadelphia area and, indeed, came to be known as "Philadelphia's Own." Chester was living and working in that city at the time war was declared; he registered for service during the first military draft on June 5, 1917.

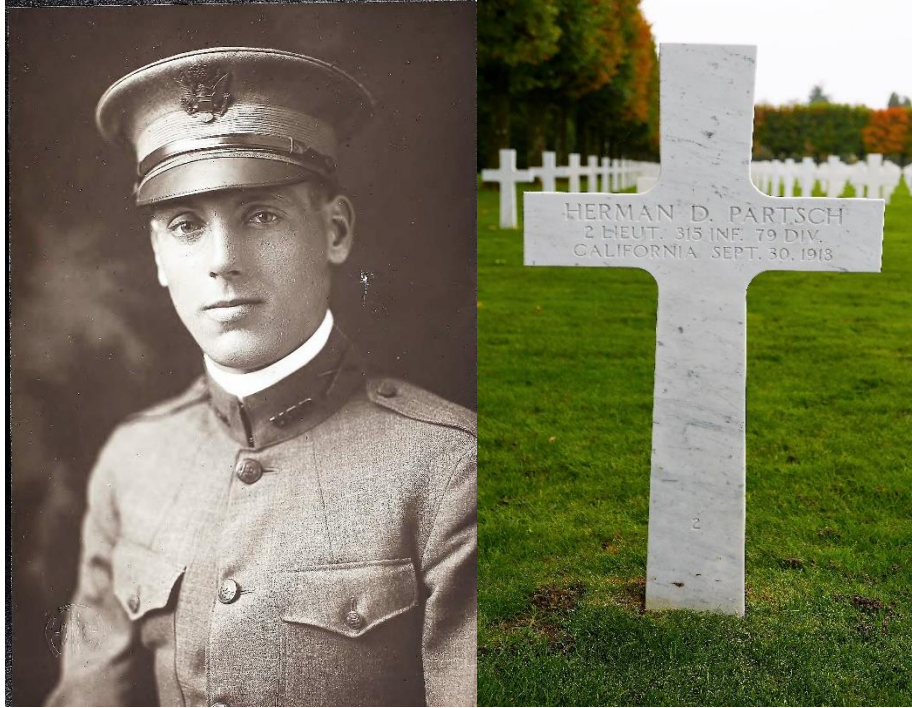
On September 1, 1918, the roster of Company G held approximately 245 men, including five commanders (one captain, two first lieutenants, and two second lieutenants), 15 sergeants, 29 corporals, and about 195 privates (including privates first class). An additional 20 men joined Company G in late October 1918, as replacements for casualties in the first phase of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, i.e., the taking of Malancourt, Montfaucon and Nantillois during September 26-30, 1918.

In researching my grandfather's Great War experience, I learned that Company G lost 20 soldiers during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. They were either killed in action or died of wounds or disease. The number of casualties for Company G is at the lower end of losses when compared to other 315th Infantry companies. I have learned that this was due primarily to the 2nd Battalion being held in a reserve position for much of the fighting, both in the Montfaucon/Nantillois drive at end of September 1918, and in the drive east through the heights of the Meuse in early November 1918. It is not known why the 2nd Battalion was kept in reserve, but their casualty numbers reflect this situation.

Of the 20 Company G soldiers who died in the Great War, eight are buried at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. The remains of the other 12 were returned to the U.S. in the early 1920s. Only one commanding officer of Company G died in France, all of the rest were enlisted men. In my travels to the Meuse-Argonne, I located the grave markers of these eight Company G soldiers, and have researched their history. In this document I share information I have been able to find to date about each soldier.

2ND LIEUTENANT HERMAN DIXON PARTSCH

Herman Partsch was born April 2, 1894 in San Francisco, CA, the only son of Dr. and Mrs. Herman Partsch; he had one sister, Constance. Partsch was an engineering graduate of the University of California Berkeley in 1916, then moved east to Pittsburgh, PA for further study and work with the Westinghouse Electric Company. When war was declared in 1917, he entered the reserve officers training camp at Fort Niagara, NY in May and received his commission as 2nd Lieutenant in August that year. He was stationed at Camp Meade, MD and assigned to the 315th Infantry, Company G. He was married at Thanksgiving 1917 to Miss Sue Basham of Hayward, CA during a short visit home; she came east to live at Baltimore during her husband's time at Camp Meade. Partsch shipped to France with Company G aboard the *America* from Hoboken on July 9, 1918. He was killed in action on September 30, 1918, the final day of the 315th Infantry's successful drive to take Malancourt, Montfaucon, and Nantillois. The German shell that killed him also took out several dozen infantry waiting to be relieved after four days of heavy fighting. Partsch was buried in a small temporary graveyard between Malancourt and Montfaucon, and was then moved for permanent interment at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery (Plot A, Row 15, Grave 2). He was 24 years old at his death and had been married for 10 months. His mother, Mrs. Lizzie C. Partsch of Berkeley, visited her son's grave in 1930 on a U.S.-sponsored Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimage.



PRIVATE 1ST CLASS PETER JOSEPH CONWAY

Peter Conway was born January 21, 1893 in Philadelphia to parents who emigrated from Ireland. He registered for service during the first draft on June 5, 1917. His registration form identifies his occupation as “clerk” and that he was unemployed. He was inducted into the Army on November 4, 1917 and entered Camp Meade as a Private with Company G. He was promoted to Private 1st Class on July 1, 1918. Conway sailed to France from Hoboken aboard the *America* on July 9, 1918; he gave his mother, Mrs. Ellen Conway, as his emergency contact. He died on October 9, 1918 of wounds received during the Montfaucon drive. Conway is buried at Plot H, Row 18, Grave 38.



PRIVATE GUISEPPE DE CELLIS

Giuseppe De Cellis was born February 24, 1893 in Loreto, Italy. He was inducted into the Army in Philadelphia on May 26, 1918 and went to Camp Meade, Maryland. He was assigned first to a training battalion, then to the 311th Field Artillery, and finally as a Private with Company G 315th Infantry on June 16, 1918. He sailed to France from Hoboken on the *America* on July 9, 1918. De Cellis listed his brother, Mr. Fidele De Cellis of St. Clair, PA as his emergency contact. De Cellis was killed in action near the jump-off line (between Avocourt and Malancourt) on the first day of the Montfaucon drive, September 26, 1918. He is buried at Plot C, Row 2, Grave 38.



PRIVATE 1ST CLASS AMERICO DI PASQUALE

Americo Di Pasquale was born October 15, 1893 in Introdacqua, Italy. He emigrated from Naples to New York on board the *Celtic* in April 1910; he was 16 years old and had \$16.00 with him. He identified his occupation as “machine hand.” Di Pasquale’s destination was Philadelphia, and he applied for naturalization in October 1914. He was inducted into the Army from Philadelphia in May 1918 at age 24; he was initially assigned a Private to the 11th Battalion 154th Depot Brigade, and then transferred to Company G 315th Infantry on June 12, 1918. Di Pasquale sailed to France from Hoboken aboard the *America* on July 9, 1918. He was promoted to Private 1st Class on October 12, 1918. Di Pasquale was the last soldier in Company G to die in the war, on November 11, 1918 near Gibercy. He received the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously for his actions that day. The award reads: “... for extraordinary heroism in action while serving with Company G, 315th Infantry Regiment, 79th Division, A.E.F., near Verdun, France, 11 November 1918. Private Dipasquale volunteered his services as a connecting file, and during the course of operations was obliged to cross and re-cross fields swept by shell and machine-gun fire. His efforts were instrumental in keeping contact with the unit of his left. While he was thus engaged, Private Dipasquale was killed.” Di Pasquale’s naturalization application was “dismissed without prejudice” on April 11, 1919 due to his death in the war. Notification of his death went to his friend, Miss Ruth Mary Shaw of Philadelphia. She was also named as his emergency contact when he shipped to France four months earlier. He is buried at Plot F, Row 16, Grave 26.



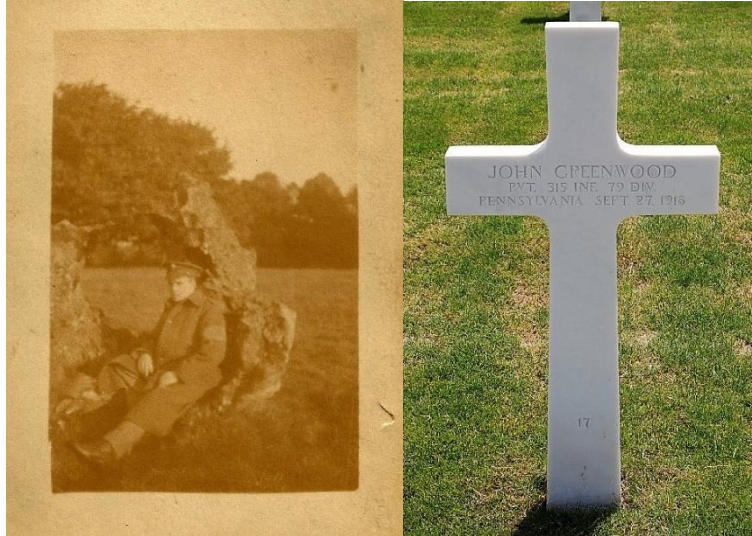
PRIVATE 1ST CLASS WILLIAM HETHERINGTON

William Hetherington was born January 2, 1890 in Philadelphia, son of John and Esther Hetherington, who emigrated from Scotland in 1884. He was inducted into the Army in Philadelphia on November 4, 1917 and went to Camp Meade, Maryland where he was assigned as a Private to Company G 315th Infantry. He sailed to France from Hoboken aboard the *America* on July 9, 1918. Hetherington listed his sister, Mrs. Anna Minnick of Philadelphia, as his emergency contact. Hetherington was killed in action near Nantillois on the last day of the Montfaucon drive, September 30, 1918. He is buried at Plot C, Row 2, Grave 38.



PRIVATE JOHN GREENWOOD

John Greenwood was born May 6, 1893 in Philadelphia. He registered for the first draft on June 5, 1917; he was not married and identified his occupation as a weaver. He trained at Camp Meade where he was assigned a Private in Company G 315th Infantry. Greenwood sailed for France aboard the *America* from Hoboken on July 9, 1918. He identified his step-sister, Miss Ada Raunsley of Philadelphia, as his emergency contact. Greenwood was killed in action on September 27, 1918 near Malancourt, on the second day of the Montfaucon drive. He is buried at Plot A, Row 17, Grave 17.



PRIVATE KENNETH A. MACKENZIE

Kenneth MacKenzie was born August 28, 1894 in Brooklyn, NY. He registered for the draft on June 5, 1917 and identified his occupation as a clerk. He was not married. He was inducted into the Army in New York on May 26, 1918 and was initially assigned a Private to the 34th Company 152nd Depot Brigade. He was transferred to Company G 315th Infantry on June 22, 1918. He sailed to France aboard the *America* from Hoboken on July 9, 1918. He identified his mother, Mrs. Florence MacKenzie of Brooklyn, as his emergency contact. MacKenzie died on October 9, 1918 from wounds received during the Montfaucon drive. He is buried at Plot H, Row 29, Grave 15.



PRIVATE GIOACHINNO SPAGNUOLO

Gioachinno Spagnuolo was born October 19, 1891 in Polizzi, Palermo, Italy. He immigrated to New York from Naples in June-July 1905 on board the *S.S. Italia*. He gave Hoboken as his final destination. Spagnuolo registered for the draft on July 5, 1917 in New York City. He identified his occupation as a mason, working in South Newark, NJ. Also on his registration card, Spagnuolo identified that he had declared his intentions to become a U.S. citizen and was supporting his mother, father, five brothers and sister in Italy. He also indicated that he had served two years as a bugler in the artillery in Italy. Spagnuolo was inducted into the Army on May 31, 1918 and initially assigned a Private to the 35th Company 152nd Depot Brigade. He was transferred to Company G 315th Infantry on June 22, 1918. His name is not on the passenger list of the *America* for July 9, 1918, and no other record of his transport to France was found. Spagnuolo was killed in action on November 1, 1918 at an unknown location. His uncle, Mr. Rosario Pagano of New York City, was notified of his death. He is buried at Plot C, Row 31, Grave 35.

