

THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Preserving and promoting the history of Georgetown

Summer 2018 Newsletter



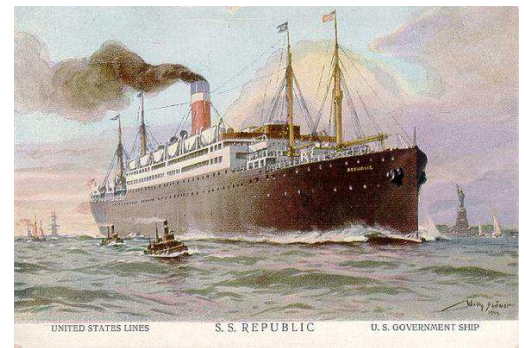
SERVICE FLAGS were first introduced in the United States in 1917 after the U.S. entered World War I. They were proudly displayed by those who had immediate family members in the Armed Services. Each star represented a soldier: blue for those on active duty in the military; gold signifying the loss of a loved one in the service during the war.

Mothers and widows of fallen soldiers banded together in the 1920s and successfully lobbied Congress in 1929 to approve federally-funded pilgrimages to Europe to visit their loved ones' graves. Between 1930 and 1933, over 6,500 Gold Star mothers and widows traveled to Europe through this program. One Gold Star mother from Georgetown, Jennie Tidd, made the pilgrimage, and we are pleased to present her story.

A GOLD STAR MOTHER'S PILGRIMAGE

By Karen Brockelbank

At the age of 66, twelve years after her eldest son's death during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Joseph Tidd's mother, Jennie Hoyt Tidd, boarded a steamship on June 24, 1930 and set off to visit her son's grave in France. Three of her sons had enlisted and seen combat, but Joseph was the only one who did not come home. To honor the occasion and to create a memoir for her family, Jennie kept a journal during her trip across the ocean. She wrote almost every day and filled a notebook with precise details of the trains, boats and coaches that she and her travel companions used during their journey. She wrote of the food, local people, traditions and culture that she found in France. During her pilgrimage, Jennie met local women from Massachusetts, some of whom she already knew. Her words convey the monotony of ocean travel, the excitement of Paris and the joy and relief she felt as she finally reached her son's grave at the Meuse-Argonne Cemetery. To the Tidd family, Joseph was known as "Big Brother." Here are some excerpts from Jennie's journal:



Jennie Tidd with service flag

TUESDAY, JUNE 24: *Left Georgetown at 7:35 a.m. for North Station, Boston, where I met about forty other Gold Star Mothers, among them Mrs. Mary Horsch of Haverhill, the only one I had ever seen before. Seats were roped off for us, and then we went by bus to the South Station, where we were greeted by a band, and after hearing some speeches left on the train for New York. We had a fine dinner on the train as we passed Providence, R.I. We reached New York about 3:45 and were taken to the Hotel Commodore.*

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25: *At 9:00 a.m. we took busses for Hoboken, N.J. to board the S.S. Republic. A large crowd bade us farewell and we were soon on our way. There is nothing to do but eat, sleep and walk the deck, so there is not very much to tell as yet. Saturday (June 28) we all went to the Social Hall and were presented with bronze medals, and a certificate from the S.S. line.*

SUNDAY, JULY 6: 8:00 a.m. for PARIS – six hours on the train, and by bus to Commodore Hotel in Paris, and here I am now, rooming (by her request) with a Mrs. Foster of Foxboro, Mass. She knows the Jackson boys and President Wood of Gordon College, and I'll tell you more when I see you soon.

TUESDAY, JULY 8: Today we go to the cemetery, twenty miles from here. I'm very thankful for the friends who sent flowers to Big Brother's grave, and am very glad I'm here to place them there. This has been a wonderful journey and if we find PEACE at the end, it will be all the more wonderful.



WEDNESDAY, JULY 9: Left at 9:00 a.m. and went to the cemetery. Before us on a slope were the white crosses. We were called by letter, each plot having a letter A & B, C & D, E & F, so I went to plot F, row 6, grave 17. Never did I walk so slow for fear - - that I should not find his name there, but it was there, and now I feel that my son sleeps there in one of the beauty spots of a beautiful country. I placed a wreath of lovely flowers and greens there on his grave, and shall take more on Friday a.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 10: Went to Meuse Argonne Cemetery again today. After lunch we went on to what they called the "Trench of Bayonets," where French soldiers were buried standing in the trenches with the tops of their rifles above ground. We went on through a shell marked country, where every now and then the remains of dugouts and foxholes are shown.

FRIDAY, JULY 11: It is raining but we go the cemetery just the same, as our flowers will be there. Brother's resting place is covered now. It stopped raining just long enough for me to get up there. On our way this morning a woman who was passing asked our nurse what the bus full of flowers was for. She told her, and the dear soul lifted her hands and blessed us for coming here on this errand, giving her love and sympathy to the mothers who came so far to see their sons' graves; she added, "I lost a son too," and went on wiping her tears.

SATURDAY, JULY 12 A.M. Today we will go to the cemetery to say our last farewell to the resting place we love so well. I'm thankful for the privilege of coming, and pray that I may live so that I may be fit to meet my dear son when I too "go West."

SUNDAY, JULY 24: Reached North Station at 4:10 then went by train to Haverhill. My daughters and their husbands met me there and now I am HOME. It was a wonderful trip and I thank everyone for their kindness to me.



Above right – Jennie Tidd's badge, which she was instructed to wear in a conspicuous place at all times while on the Pilgrimage

NEW WORLD WAR I DISPLAY



Visit the Brocklebank Museum this summer and see our new display commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I and honoring those who served. Included are medals, letters, photos and mementos brought home by local soldiers or those with local connections. Also included is Jennie Tidd's original journal from her trip to France, along with the full transcription.

Thank you to the Georgetown Peabody Library, Wayne Moffitt, Jean Perley, Karen Brockelbank and Chris Comiskey for loaning or donating items for this display.

BROCKLEBANK MUSEUM – LOOKING GOOD!

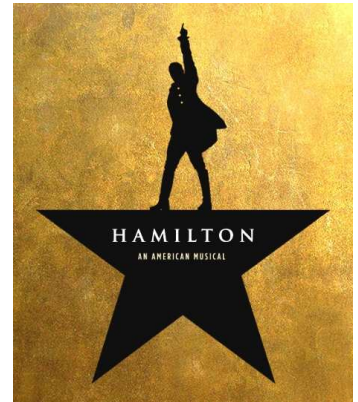


Have you noticed how great the museum and grounds are looking? Thanks to Community Preservation Act grants, we have had the exterior repaired and painted and our alarm system updated. Thank you to all who attended the 2017 and 2018 Town Meetings to support these Historical Preservation projects.

Our Grounds Beautification Committee has been hard at work planting new gardens on the museum grounds. Thank you to those who have donated plants, and to our great committee: Mary Saunders, Betsy Moran, Sylvia Johnston and Eileen Seaberg.

HAMILTON TICKETS TO BE RAFFLED!

GHS is raffling off two tickets to see *HAMILTON* at the Boston Opera House on **Friday, September 28th at 8 p.m.** This ground-breaking musical about Alexander Hamilton was the winner of eleven Tony Awards in 2016, including Best Musical, and is the most sought-after ticket on Broadway. We will be selling raffle tickets at the Brocklebank Museum every Sunday from 2-5, and at all GHS events this spring and summer. Tickets are \$10 each and can be ordered by e-mailing us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com. The drawing will be held at the Brocklebank Museum on September 16th at 5 p.m.



SAVE THE DATE!



Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, September 11th, from 5-9 p.m.**, when GHS will be hosting a fundraiser at Flatbread Pizza in Georgetown at the Black Swan Country Club. For every large or small pizza sold, Flatbread will donate a portion of the sale to Georgetown Historical Society.

We hope you will join us for some delicious Flatbread pizza and a fun evening with family and friends. Visit our GHS table and buy *HAMILTON* raffle tickets, or sign up for a free house history.

Thank you to all who showed up to help support GHS at our fundraiser night at The Spot restaurant on June 11th.

TRAILS & SAILS 2018

The Georgetown Historical Society will once again be participating in Essex National Heritage Area's *Trails & Sails* event with an Open House at the Brocklebank Museum on **September 23rd and 30th** from 2-5 p.m. We always need extra volunteers at the museum for this special event, so we hope you might consider volunteering. No tour-guiding experience is needed.

Trails & Sails offers two weekends of FREE events throughout Essex County including a variety of historical tours, guided hikes, sails, and much more. This year's event will run from September 21-23 and September 28-30. For more information on over 150 other FREE *Trails & Sails 2018* events, visit: <http://www.essexheritage.org/ts/>



HOMER TAPIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

We are pleased to announce that Colby Brennan has been chosen to receive the 2018 Homer Tapin Memorial Scholarship. Colby will be attending UMass Lowell this fall, majoring in History and English. We wish him all the best

The scholarship is given out each year to a Georgetown High School senior who is planning on majoring in a history-related field. It is given by the Georgetown Historical Society in memory of Homer Tapin (1916-2011) a founding member and past president of GHS.

ANTIQUES APPRAISAL NIGHT



Our Antiques Appraisal Night was held on May 23rd at the First Congregational Church of Georgetown, and it was another great success! Many people showed up with very interesting items to be appraised. Our sincere thanks to Dan Meader of McInnis Auctioneers for an entertaining and informative evening, and to all who came and brought their heirlooms and artifacts to be appraised, as well as all those who purchased raffle tickets. As an added bonus, we had three new members join GHS as a result of the event!

PENN BROOK STUDENTS VISIT MUSEUM

On June 15, our tour guides welcomed about 84 Penn Brook School third-graders and their teachers for a tour of the Brocklebank Museum and one-room school house to learn about what life was like in the “old days.” Although we are always happy to do this tour for free, the students surprised us by taking up a collection and presenting us with \$84 to help with the upkeep of the museum!

Thank you to our wonderful tour guides and helpers for making this a fun and memorable day for the students. Our crew this year consisted of Starr Anderson, Beverly Knapp, Mary Saunders, Rick Detwiller, Chris Comiskey and Betsy Moran. Thank you also to the Georgetown Police Department who safely guided the kids across busy East Main Street



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We extend a warm welcome to our newest GHS members: Peter Skeirik, Patricia Selin, Raquel and Matthew Valcourt, Richard and Beatrice Boucher and Heather and Shaun DePriest.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

Please share our newsletter with family, friends and neighbors who share your interest in preserving local history and encourage them to join GHS. We depend upon the generous support of our members and friends, through memberships, donations, merchandise sales and fundraisers, to keep GHS going and to keep the Brocklebank Museum open. Remember, GHS members can tour the museum for FREE! Visit us any Sunday from now through Columbus Day weekend from 2-5. We LOVE to have visitors!



Georgetown Historical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 376, Georgetown, MA 01833

Membership Form

Name(s) included in membership _____

Address _____

Phone number (optional) _____

E-mail _____

I would like to help GHS “go green” *and* save money. Please send my newsletter by e-mail. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Membership Levels:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 | BENEFACTOR(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | LIFE (One-time payment) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | SUSTAINER(S) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50 | CONTRIBUTOR(S) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 30 | MEMBER(S) | | |

Optional:

- ☐ I would like to make a donation to Georgetown Historical Society’s Homer Tapin Memorial Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$_____

Your membership fee and scholarship donations are tax-deductible. Please make all checks payable to: Georgetown Historical Society.

Optional:

I would like to help as a GHS volunteer (check area(s) of interest)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museum tour guide | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising/Merchandise sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Board member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special events | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |



Georgetown Historical Society
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Georgetown Historical Society



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