

1919

**FOR VALOR**



## **FORWARD –**

The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 1918 – Armistice Day. The hostilities had mostly ended and the Treaty of Versailles was being drafted. It had been a brutal campaign – this “war to end all wars” – but it was finally ending.

Twenty six year old Charles “Pappy” Schuch had already served his country after enlisting in November of 1911, and training as a coastal artilleryman before serving in the Philippines as a cook – not a surprising assignment as the son of an immigrant baker/brewer. His enlistment peacefully ended in October of 1914 but as storms were brewing in Europe he would re-enlist six months later and serve on David’s Island at the western end of Long Island sound ushering many young men off to war.

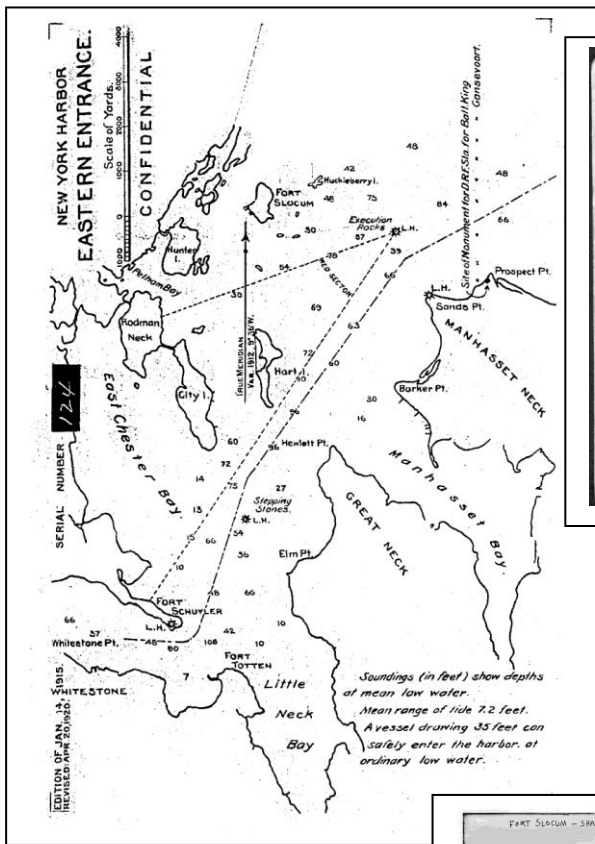
On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to Austria-Hungary's throne, and his wife, Sophie, were assassinated by Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip while the couple were visiting Sarajevo. In quick order Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, Germany declared war on Russia and France, the United Kingdom declared war on Germany after Germany invaded Belgium, Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia and Serbia declared war on Germany. Not wanting to be pulled in to the conflict, on August 14, 1914, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson announces the U.S. intention to remain neutral. With the threat of new tactics and weapons - trench warfare, poison gas, tanks, U-boats sinking ships – one can understand why.

However, with the loss of 159 American lives in the sinking of the RMS Lusitania on May 1, 1915, and the secret German attempt in January 1916, to entice Mexico into the war, on April 6, 1916, the United States also declared war on Germany.

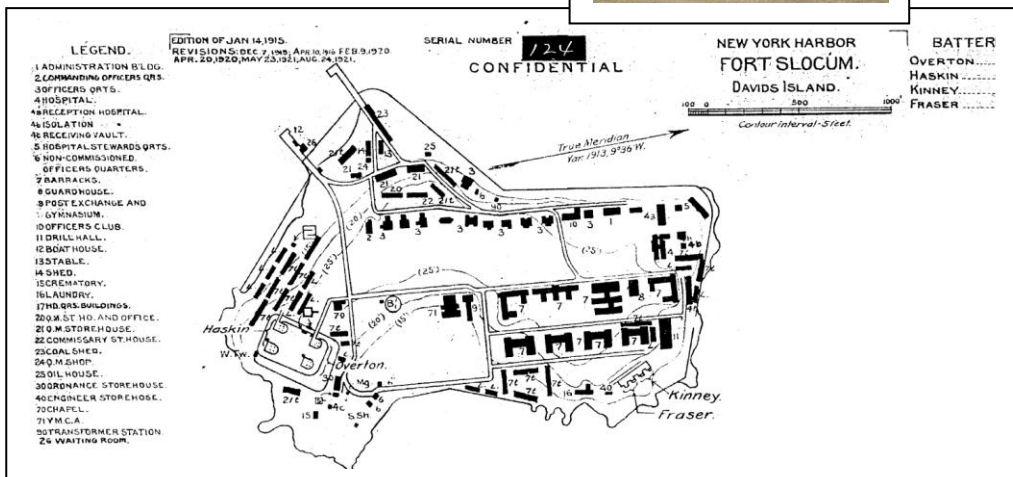
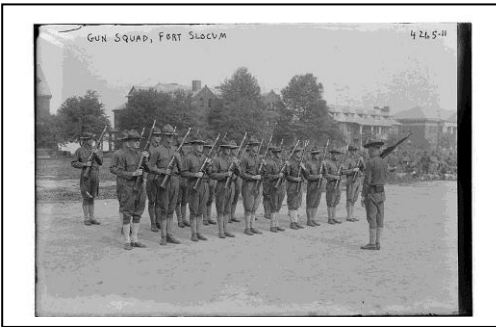
In 1917 the administration of Woodrow Wilson decided to rely primarily on conscription, rather than voluntary enlistment, to raise military manpower for World War I when only 73,000 volunteers enlisted out of the initial 1 million target in the first six weeks of the war. The Selective Service Act of 1917 was carefully drawn to remedy the defects in the Civil War system and — by allowing exemptions for dependency, essential occupations, and religious scruples — to place each man in his proper niche in a national war effort. The act established a "liability for military service of all male citizens"; authorized a selective draft of all those between twenty-one and thirty-one years of age (later from eighteen to forty-five).

Initially in 1917, 10 million men were registered. This was deemed to be inadequate, so age ranges were increased and exemptions reduced, and by the end of 1918 this increased to 24 million men that were registered with nearly 3 million inducted into the military services.

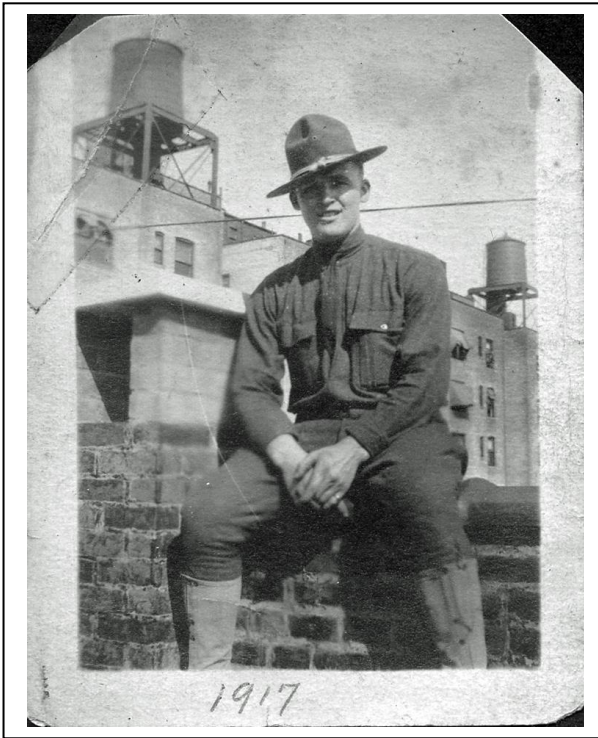
At the start of the 20th Century the Davids' Island had become the East Coast assembly point for units being assigned to America’s new overseas operations. By the onset of World War I Fort Slocum had become one of the busiest recruiting stations in the country, processing 100,000 soldiers per year and serving as the recruit examination station for soldiers from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the New England states. Between 1917 and 1919, over 140,000 recruits passed through the post. In fact, Recruit Week in December 1917 brought so many recruits to Fort Slocum that an overflow had to be housed in New Rochelle.



Joseph Gunter,  
Pearl and Hazel  
Honeywell with  
Pappy – all newly  
married in 1917



From his re-enlistment and assignment at Ft. Slocum, NY in Mar, 1915, as a cook until his honorable discharge in 1920, Pappy fed and cared for many of the Doughboys who were destined for the front lines and an uncertain future.



But God was kinder to Pappy. He remained stateside, the Great War came to an end and he was spared the misery and haunting memories of being on the front lines. Little did he or his generation know that this war would not end all wars. Neither did he know he would raise a son who 25 year later would emerge a hero from the same Hell he was spared. This is the story of his son.

