

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE DEATH OF LIEUTENANT WILLIAM WALLACE WARING IN WORLD WAR I

[Lieut. William Wallace Waring](#) was born on February 17, 1887 in Franklinville, New York to William W. and Lucy Thayer Waring. He graduated from Ten Broeck Academy in 1902 and entered Cornell University where he graduated in 1907. That fall he began to study law with the firm of Norton, Penny and Sears in Buffalo and was admitted to the bar in 1909. Both his parents were also lawyers and his mother was the first practicing woman attorney in Cattaraugus County.

He practiced law in South Dakota and Olean. Later he accepted a position with the Buffalo law firm of Corey, Tubbs and Beals in Buffalo and remained there until he enlisted in the U.S. Air Service. He trained as a pilot and was commissioned as 1st Lieutenant in the New York National Guard. After war was declared with Germany he enlisted in the Aviation Signal Corps and on October 5, 1917 sailed overseas.

He was originally assigned to staff duty but requested that he be sent to the front and was given additional training in the use of machine guns in aerial fighting. He joined the 11th Aero Squadron and in September 1918 when planes were supplied for the Squadron he was sent to the front and was engaged in every day active aerial fighting as the pilot of a Liberty bombing plane.



He won the [Distinguished Service Cross](#) for extraordinary heroism in action near Dum-Sur-Meuse, France on September 26th, 1918. Deeming it impossible to catch their own formation, Lieut. Waring and Lieut. Norris attached themselves to a formation from the 20th Squadron and engaged in a 35 minute fight with 30 enemy aircraft. Five of his Squadron were lost and the observer of one of the three remaining planes was seriously wounded. The wounded man had fallen in a position which made control of the machine difficult. Lieut. Waring immediately placed his machine between the enemy formation and the crippled companion in order to protect it and he continued to fly in this place until their lines were crossed and the enemy scouts were driven off. After landing his craft it was discovered that his plane had 32 bullet holes in it and the wings were badly damaged.

On October 16, 1918 he was taken sick with the Spanish Influenza and was taken to the Evacuation Hospital No. 14 where he passed away on October 30th, 1918. His body was returned to Franklinville and he was buried in Mount Prospect Cemetery. He was the second native Franklinville boy in the aviation branch of the service to give his life for his country and the first one in the service to die overseas.

Information contributed by William Watkins, Machias Historian