

STAFFORD

Persis Prole Bell (1872-1952) was born in Stafford and became known as the “house mother” and Director of the Belaire Health Camp. The Genesee County Tuberculosis Public Health Association started a health camp for children in the summer of 1924. Three years later a permanent camp was built and operated until 1946. There were two sessions during July and August with approximately 50 children attending. The children were all undernourished and in contact with tuberculosis cases. (Children who tested positive for tuberculosis were not admitted.) Each child was weighed and given a physical examination and ranged in ages from five to fifteen. The camp’s goal was to improve their over all condition, including increasing their weight. [Persis Prole Bell was also the first woman in Genesee County to obtain a driver’s license and own one of the first automobiles in the area.]

Submitted by: Susan Conklin, Genesee County Historian

Army Pvt. Leon Francis Kingdon (1891-1918) died Nov. 1, 1918, while fighting in France. The 27 years old Kingdon was one of 368 Americans killed during World War I who was buried in Flanders Field Cemetery.

According to the November 29, 1918, edition of *The Daily News*, Private Kingdon grew up in Stafford and also lived in Batavia. Before being drafted he worked at the Massey-Harris Harvester Company and was a member of the Masons. The private served in the Army’s 148th Infantry. He left behind a wife and daughter. Also surviving were his parents, William and Sarah, and seven siblings, all of whom lived in Stafford. The private’s mother, Sarah Kingdon, visited Flanders Field Cemetery in the 1930s. The United States government paid for a boat trip to allow Gold Star Mothers to visit their sons’ graves.

Taken from: Daily News November 11, 2006, By Paul Mrozek