

For Immediate Release

September 17, 2015

Contact: Susan Navarre, Executive Director

director@fitchburghistoricalsociety.com 978-345-1157

Photographs available

The Fitchburg Historical Society Fall Exhibition to Feature

World War II Career of Cleghorn's Felix Leger

As Member of the First Infantry, PFC Leger Earned Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Croix de Guerre

(Fitchburg, MA) From **Tuesday, September 8 to Wednesday, October 28, 2015**, the Fitchburg Historical Society will present an exhibition about Felix Leger, a Cleghorn citizen who fought in the European theater during the Second World War as part of the First Infantry's famed Yankee Division.

Felix Leger: A World War II Soldier from Cleghorn fills the George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall of the Phoenix Building with photos, maps, letters, newspapers and magazines that tell the story of Leger's service and his long-distance communication with his wife back in Fitchburg. The exhibition was curated by Kathleen Flynn, a retired educator from the Fitchburg Schools and a member of the Historical Society Board of Directors. An accompanying photographic montage was created by Katrina Brown, Membership Assistant at the Historical Society and a graduate of Fitchburg State University in Communications Media.

In this exhibition, the war experience is seen through the lens of one family from Cleghorn. Felix Leger was originally born in Cape Bald, New Brunswick, as the fourth of 12 children. Like many other French-Canadian families, job opportunities in the Fitchburg mills attracted them to the Cleghorn neighborhood. A student at St. Joseph School, Felix fell in love with a local girl from Columbus Street – Beatrice Jeffrey – and they married in 1939. Felix worked as a milkman for the Sunshine Dairy and Beatrice made pocketbooks at Margolin. They were parted by the war in 1943, and Felix would go on to earn commendations and medals in the last years of the war. Finally, he returned to Fitchburg to work at Watatic Mills and resume everyday life.

Felix Leger: A World War II Soldier from Cleghorn is made possible from a substantial gift of artifacts from the Leger family. In recent years, the Fitchburg Historical Society has been expanding its World War II collection. Many Fitchburg residents served in the Armed Forces during the Second World War; the city was also an important center for wartime production. Many people now living in Fitchburg remember purchasing war bonds and participating in scrap and rubber drives.

The Phoenix Building is located at 781 Main Street, Fitchburg, with free parking behind the building. Exhibition hours are Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The building is fully handicapped accessible. For more information, call 978-345-1157; or visit fitchburghistoricalsociety.org.

- 30 -

Felix Leger: A World War II Soldier from Cleghorn

On view Tuesday, September 8 through Wednesday, October 28, 2015

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society

Free and open to the public, donations accepted.