Martin Knutson

Martin was born 5 October 1886 in Molde parish, Møre og Romsdal, Norway. Martin worked as a farmhand at Westwood Stock Farm in Farmington, MN before the war. His brother, Albert Knutson, lived in San Francisco.

Martin registered June 5 and was drafted in August 1917 at the age of 30. He was one of the first fifteen to be drafted from Farmington. The townspeople donated $30 for a sendoff banquet and dance. Blake's Lunchroom was "taxed to the limit in giving the boys a good feed." The leftover money was given to the men to do with what they pleased. Over a thousand people gathered at the depot to send Martin and the other draftees off.

He enlisted in the Army on September 21, 1917. Martin was part of Company B of the 135th Infantry, 34th Division. He trained at Camp Dodge, IA from September to October 1917 and then at Camp Cody, NM from October 1917 to August 1918. The 34th Division was shipped to France on September 14 and arrived in Liverpool, England as a replacement division. He was stationed in Verdun, France from 15 October 1918. As a wagoner, his primary duties were hauling and supply; he did see action on 5 November 1918 at Bunevo. The 135th regiment earned a WW1 streamer without inscription. Martin returned to New York on 28 May 1919 and was mustered out on June 7, 1919 as a Private Wagoner at Camp Dodge, IA.

Not a lot of threads could be found to weave Martin's story but in the 1920 US census he resided in Empire township, Dakota County, MN and worked as a general farm laborer, working on the Raymond F. Nelson farm.