

THE GLIDDEN GRAPHIC.

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NO. 32.

Glidden Boy First American Killed In France

MERLE HAY DIES WHEN HUNS CHARGE PERSHING'S MEN IN TRENCH

Telegram from War Department to Boy's Father Near Glidden Brings Sad News of Death Which Occurred in France Last Saturday.

THREE AMERICANS DEAD

Germans Cut Off Small Detachment of Troops from the Main Body, Kill Three, Wound Five, Capture Twelve.

The large flag on the flagpole in the square in Glidden hung at half-mast last Monday. Merle D. Hay, one of our own boys, had been among the first three Americans to offer up their lives in the Great War.

The news was brought here by a telegram sent to Harvey D. Hay, father of the boy, by the war department, simply announcing with regret that Private Merle D. Hay had been killed in action in France on November 3rd. No news ever spread more quickly about town than this important dispatch. People were shocked with the realization that this was a real touch of War, brought very close to home.

Meagre dispatches at the time indicated that the Germans had concentrated fire upon the portion of the trench occupied by Americans. By means of that terrible weapon known as barrage, or a curtain of fire, they had managed to isolate a small detachment of Pershing's men from the main body, and a charge made the rest very simple. Three were killed, five wounded, and twelve reported as missing.

Volunteered in May.

Merle was one of the eight young men from this community who enlisted at Des Moines as volunteers last spring. The others were Walter Brown, Ray Dankle, Joy Dillavou, Henry Dillavou, Herman Knute, Chas Simons and Mathew Lammers. On

Coon Rapids, from which the car refused to allow itself to extricate. The first individual to happen that way was Merle. He offered his services, and when that proved unavailing he offered to take us to his home, about a mile from there, in order that help might be summoned by phone. When this failed to bring results, he drove several miles farther to obtain a garage man for our benefit. And all in the kindest spirit did he devote an hour or more of his time and the use of his car, without being willing to accept more than a thank-you.

Readers of The Graphic will pardon this personal reference, but to us it appears to be the expression of real character and christian helpfulness. It so occurred to us at the time, and our very best wishes went out with Merle as he left two days later for the mission from which he will never return.

Associated Press Report.

The news of the small engagement in which American blood was first shed was prominently featured by the daily newspapers all over the country Monday evening and Tuesday morning. The report from Washington was as follows:

"Iowa has written her name in blood on the battlefield of France. One of her sons, Private Merle D. Hay, of Glidden, met death in the recent German raid on a trench held by the soldiers of the U. S. A.

"Another Iowa youth, Private Dewey D. Kern, of Collins, is among the captured and missing.

"These two are the Iowans included in the official casualty list announced today by the war department.

"In all, three Americans were killed, five wounded and twelve captured or missing, when the German raid on the American first line trench took place.

"The enemy losses are not known, according to the official announcement, which adds that 'one wounded German was taken prisoner.'

"Private Hay's father, Harvey D. Hay, lives in Glidden, and Private Kern's mother, who lives at Collins, is Mrs Eva Tilton.

"The parents were informed of their sons' fate in messages sent by the war department before the names were made public.

"The other two killed were:

FIRST TO DIE IN BATTLE FOR UNCLE SAM IN THE WORLD WAR

Born at
Carrollton
Carroll County
Iowa
July 30, 1896

Enlisted in
the U. S. Army
May 3, 1917



MERLE D. HAY

Killed in Action
"Somewhere in
France"
Nov. 3, 1917
While in the
Service of
His Country
in the Interest of
Human Freedom

Did Not Expect to be Sent To Trenches for Some Time

That Merle Hay did not expect to be engaged in dangerous trench warfare for some time yet is the interesting information contained in a letter received by his parents a short time ago. The letter is dated Sept. 28th, and is the last word heard from him. He refers to a statement sent home by another Glidden soldier to the effect that the American forces were soon to be sent to the trenches, and says the statement is not true. The boy evidently had no realization of the warfare that they were about to engage in, still less did he realize how near he was to the end of his earthly journey.

Another item of interest referred to in the letter is concerning a pet lion which was given to the 16th Infantry by the people of Paris at the time the boys paraded in the French capital July 4th.

His Last Letter.

Somewhere in France, Sept. 28, 1917.

Mother and Father:

How are you all at home? I am well and hope you are all the same. I received your letters of Sept. 4 and 10 last Wednesday, and was surely glad to hear from you. But then I am always glad to hear from home. I received a letter from Mildred Smith and one from Bill Kline at the same time, so I will have lots of letters to write when I get time to write them.

My but I would like to be, there and eat some of that stuff you are canning. My but it would taste good. And some of that bread you were baking and some of those sweet rolls that you were writing about. I would surely have some feed. I would eat a dozen of them. We had biscuits for supper a while back and I ate eleven of them, so I guess I could eat twelve of yours, don't you think?

I have not got that box of stuff you sent me yet, but think I will get it tomorrow for we will get some more mail then. I will write you a letter when I get it and tell you if it was all right. All the rest of the boys

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MERLE HAY HELD MONDAY

People of Glidden and Vicinity Gather at Presbyterian Church to Honor Memory of Departed Soldier Boy

When news was received Monday forenoon that one of our Glidden boys had been the first to die in action with General Pershing's expeditionary forces in France, it was felt that something should be done to show the bereaved family how deeply the community sympathized with them, and show the country at large that Glidden was not unappreciative of the honor that had fallen to its lot by the sacrifice of our boy in khaki. There was no precedent to follow—such an event had never happened before—but a few public spirited citizens took it upon themselves to see that something be done.

A program was quite hastily arranged, yet it proved to be one that was splendidly appropriate to the occasion. The meeting was called for the Presbyterian church at eight o'clock Monday evening. Through the courtesy of the Glidden Telephone Co., the central girls, who had already been through a hard day's work on account of the many long-distance calls, notified all the country lines and each individual home in Glidden of the coming event.

The result left not the slightest reason for a doubt as to how the community felt in the matter. The church was filled to capacity when the eight o'clock hour arrived. It was a peculiar and eventful gathering. It was entirely unusual and unique, yet all felt that it was a memorable meeting, one that would go down into the local history of the town, and one that has been recorded in most of the daily papers of the country. People came with hearts filled with sympathy and left at the close of the meeting with a deeper resolution to support the boys in the field to the limit of their ability.

The parents, brother and sister, did not feel able to be present at the meeting, but the meeting was in no less fashion a memorial to their son

GLIDDEN "ON THE MAP"

lation in the wild scramble for details of the story. The Graphic's at

"Proud of the Boy."

left for Des Moines. The parting scene at the depot was one that will never be forgotten by those who were present, especially as regards the farewell of our departed soldier boy and his mother. Now Fate has decreed that the mother's worst fears were to be realized.

The boys were in Des Moines only long enough to be registered and were then taken to Fort Logan, Colorado. From there they went to Texas, and thence to the Atlantic seaboard. All but Simons were then taken across the ocean and they landed in France on June 27th.

During the past four months that they have been in training the boys have all been in close touch with each other. Their letters home, many of which have been printed in The Graphic, all indicated the close fellowship the boys from Glidden enjoyed among themselves. The regret over Merle's loss must be felt very keenly by the rest. He was a member of Co. I. None of the other local boys were in the same company.

Was Born at Carrollton.

Merle D. Hay was a native of this community. He was born on July 20, 1896, on the Gilley farm at old Carrollton, and has been a resident of this community ever since. Eight years ago the family moved to the farm east of Glidden on which Harmon Lathrop now resides, then two years on the Perigo place, and the past two years on the Schnepps farm, seven miles southeast of Glidden. The deceased leaves his parents, one brother and one sister.

Merle was not in the draft age and had he chosen to do so he could now be safely at his home. He was 21 years old several months after the draft registration last June. He went voluntarily because he felt his country needed him and needed him quickly. His sacrifice was of the genuine kind.

Glidden Mourns.

It was one chance in a hundred thousand that the first blow of the war should fall upon Glidden. Yet it is a great honor to feel that the first Iowa boy and one of the very first Americans to offer up their lives in France is one of our own. Glidden should take a modest pride in the fact. The bereaved family has a heritage more precious than any that could be bestowed upon them.

Merle was an honest, kindly, likable boy. He was industrious and dependable. The Graphic editor cherishes an incident in this connection that testifies to the kindly helpful spirit that filled the heart of Merle Hay. We recall that two days before he departed for the army camp we had the misfortune to strike a "bottomless pit" in the spring roads on the way to

* * * * *
* "Keep the home fires burning,
* While your hearts are yearning,
* Though your lads are far away
* They dream of home.
* There's a silver lining
* Thru the dark clouds shining.
* Turn the dark clouds inside out
* Till the boys come home."
* * * * *

Mr. Mrs. Alice Dood, Evansville, Ind.

Men Trapped in Dug-Out.

"The casualty list was accompanied by the following announcement:

"The war department has received a dispatch from the commanding general of the American expeditionary forces which states that before daylight Nov. 3 a salient occupied for instructions by a company of American infantry was raided by Germans.

"The enemy put down a heavy barrage fire, cutting off the salient from the rest of the line. Our losses were three killed, five wounded and twelve captured or missing. The enemy's losses are not known. One wounded German was taken prisoner."

"The American troops captured probably were trapped in their dug-outs and forced to surrender or be blown to pieces with hand grenades without a chance for their lives.

"This is the only explanation which occurs to army officers today, lacking any details of the fight. The fact that one wounded German was captured, however, indicates that the trench had been re-occupied by American forces.

"Whether the men killed and wounded received their injuries in hand-to-hand fighting with the German infantrymen or were struck down by shrapnel is not known. A single shell, scoring a direct hit in the trench, might have caused all the casualties. That would not explain, however, the surrender of the remaining twelve.

Probably Advanced Post.

"Under anything short of positive orders the twelve would have been expected to offer desperate resistance to the Germans crawling up thru the darkness to jump into the trench, and there would probably have been more than one wounded German left behind when the Germans retired.

"The general practice of trench raiding along the entire front seems to offer an explanation. It has been customary for the raids to be carried out under a heavy barrage fire, used to isolate the small sector of enemy line which it was planned to invade.

"As additional protection for the raiders the artillery fire has covered a wider portion of the front than that which constituted the real objective of the raid. The object of the fire is to conceal from the defenders the exact point of attack until the raiders arrive there.

"Presumably the trench raided was an advanced post with only twenty men in it. It could not have a front of more than fifty or sixty feet. Probably it was the head of a sap driven out into No Man's Land at right angles with the general trench line, to be used as a listening or observation post. In that case the barrage fire of a few guns could cut the sector off from its support. The thin line of the communicating trench would be unpassable under a shrapnel shower."

Probably Trapped.

Later press reports indicate that probably the American detachment was led into a trap laid by the Germans. Another supposition is that the three boys killed were members of advanced scouting party.

Editors of Daily Papers of All Parts of the Country Keep Wires Hot All Day Long Asking for Details and Photos

Many times more long distance telephone calls and telegrams were received in Glidden last Monday than in any other one day in the town's history. The fact that Merle Hay, a local boy, was the first to go down in battle of the American forces, made Glidden the center of attraction from a news standpoint for the day. Requests for photos were so numerous that the available supply was soon exhausted and Photographer Alfred Nielsen hurriedly made more. Editors also wanted local details of the young man's life, his enlistment, etc.

The Graphic supplied photos and information to papers in Des Moines, Omaha, Chicago, St. Louis and even as far as Boston. All either made their requests by wire or long distance phone, with instructions to hurry things up with special delivery first class mail. Correspondents of other daily papers were bombarded with similar requests. Photographer Nielsen received a wire from the World Feature Film Co. of New York City asking for a photograph.

Former Gliddenites who reside now in some other city were sought out and questioned concerning details in any case where it was known that this was their former home. Naturally unfounded rumors gained some circu-

death of Merle Hay, this incident will give an idea. One of the Omaha papers sent a correspondent here from Carroll with instructions to get all the photos and details possible. The instructions were to get them to Omaha at once, by special messenger if necessary, and not to mind the expense. In his orders to the correspondent the Omaha editor said: "This boy is the hero of the whole United States and we want to give him the greatest of prominence." Glidden, while sorry deeply over the loss of one of her boys, should be proud of the distinction his death has thus conferred upon her.

THE TELEGRAM THAT BROUGHT THE NEWS

OM F 30 Govt
Washington D C 150 AM Nov 5 1917
Harvey D Hay
Glidden Ia

Deeply regret to inform you that Private Merle D Hay company F sixteenth infantry is reported killed in action

McCain The Adjutant
General U S Army 805 AM 5th

Shall the Sacrifice be in Vain?

Merle Hay has laid down upon the altar of his country the greatest gift that man can give. When he enlisted in the army last May he realized that the length and breadth of the service he was willing to give was limited only by life itself. This country has required of him the very limit of sacrifice.

A gentleman named Vergo, who has spent considerable time in the work of the Y. M. C. A. with the armies in Europe, gives us this account:

"I have seen many men go over the top; I have seen a few come back. In every case they go with a cheer and a song. I had the privilege one day of being near the first line trench, when I saw a big Britisher who had been wounded, trying to make his way up a series of steps. In his terrible condition I wondered how he was ever going to reach the top. But he finally did, and then happened to see me with the look of anguish and despair I must have worn. Looking up into my face he said, with grim determination, 'Buck up, old man! It's all in the game!'"

We like to think that was the spirit with which Merle Hay went to his death. Despising war, he realized that it would take the utmost sacrifice of young men like him to straighten out the world affairs that had been so badly upset by the hellish designs of an unscrupulous Hohenzollern. As one of the other Glidden boys recently wrote home, "It's a big disagreeable job, but it's got to be done, so we might as well dig in and do it." As far as our dead hero is concerned he has done his utmost—angels could do no more.

Well, what are WE going to do about it. Are we merely going to express our sympathy to the bereaved ones and say it's too bad, and let it go at that? Are we going to content ourselves with damning the kaiser and cheering for the U. S. A.? Shame on us if that is the LIMIT of the service we are willing to give!

We must understand that never in the history of the present generation has there been such a demand upon the service of every American citizen as at the present time. While other things are asked of us, the principal thing we can give as a support to the boys in the field is MONEY—all the money that is required for the various branches of the service.

We can provide no better memorial to the sacrifice of Merle Hay than to give liberally to the Red Cross and Army Y. M. C. A., and to the purchase of Liberty bonds. The thing immediately at hand is the Army Y. M. C. A. Surely we will not forget that the boys at the front are looking to us to provide them with the facilities that this institution affords. Surely we will not deny them these comforts when they are daily placing their lives in danger for our benefit.

Were we all to give ALL THE WEALTH WE POSSESS we would not come ANYWAYS NEAR giving as much as Merle Hay has given.

his country, I'm proud of the boy," said Harvey D. Hay, when told of the death of his son Merle, who was killed in action in France last Saturday. "I have another son at home whom I would gladly give up for the same great cause were he old enough," said Mr. Hay. "Merle went with my consent and—I'm proud of him." Mrs. Hay was overcome with grief when she heard the news but stated that she was glad the boy had been killed in action rather than being taken prisoner by the Germans.

is not true. We are a long ways from there and will be for a long time so you do not need to worry. As to our pay you do not need to worry. We get it every month, so we have a little money, if you could call it money. As to that insurance I do not know anything about it, so I can not tell.

I guess that lion is getting to be quite a pet for one man, but no one else can go up to him and pet him, for he will fight. But the man that takes care of him can play with him all day and he will not hurt him. He even sleeps with him every afternoon. I do not see him very often, for he is in Co. G. They all have to take care of him on Mondays.

Yes, mother, I get all your letters now. I get one or two every week. We do not get mail every day like you do. Sometimes once a week and sometimes once in two weeks.

I let Herman read his letter that was in the paper. My, but he was mad. He said he would not write any more but I think he will all right. We do not get much to read. As for newspapers, we do not get many but we get the New York Herald every day. It is printed in Paris, but there is nothing in it.

Well I am tired of writing so I think I will quit and write you again when I get that box of stuff you sent me. Good bye all, from your loving son, Merle Hay.

Good bye, mother, father and all.

Another Letter.

In France, Sept. 24, 1917.

Dear Mother: How are you at home? I am well and doing fine here. I got your letter of Aug. 27 last week. I sure do like to hear from home. It is hard to believe that I am so far from there but I guess I am.

Have you had any frost there yet? There has not been any here but it has been cold enough here at night it seems to me to frost.

You wanted to know what was the matter with the French money. You say there are no pennies. It is all pennies. I think they have a 1-cent piece and a 2-cent piece but they do not call them pennies. One cent is five centimes, two cents is 10 centimes.

I got the picture of Basil and think it is very good, but I would like to be there wearing clothes like them. We sure do get tired of wearing the same kind all the time. Same old clothes, same old thing every day. But then we will not have to do it all our lives. Some day we can do as we please and wear what we please, you can bet.

Did you get some money for me that was sent to you? I made what is called an allotment of \$15 a month for six months and it is to be sent to you and you can do with it whatever you please. I did not want it while over here. I would just spend it and it would do me no good and it will you.

I will quit for this time and will write again soon, so good-bye. Write me a big letter. From your loving son, Merle Hay.

Mayor R. A. Hamilton. In his opening remarks Mr Hamilton reminded the congregation of the purpose of the meeting. He said: "This is not merely a family or a community loss; it is a national loss. The whole country tonight mourns the loss of him whom we call our boy. It is entirely fitting and proper that we should gather in such an assembly as this."

The speakers of the evening were Rev. Guy J. Fansher of the Methodist church and Rev. W. H. Parker of the Presbyterian church. Rev. Fansher cited reliable statistics which go to show that only six out of every hundred soldiers who go to the front will lose their lives, and only fifteen out of a hundred will be wounded.

"The fact that this sad news has come to us so early in the American participation in the war," said the speaker, "does not disprove these statistics. The loss of our boy merely indicates that the finger of Fate has pointed to Glidden as the first to suffer."

"For the young man who has departed we can do nothing," Rev. Fansher said. "But beside this young man in the trenches are other young men from this and other communities. We must do all we can to make their lot easier, to see that they lack nothing that is in our power to give."

He then cited the Y. M. C. A. campaign next week as presenting a splendid opportunity for the public to show genuine appreciation and make real sacrifices as their part in the great struggle for freedom.

Rev. Parker spoke more from a scriptural standpoint, beginning his discourse by reading the first two stanzas of "Lead, Kindly Light." He cited this song as being especially appropriate for the occasion. He called attention to the parting scenes when the boys left Glidden last May, and urged a deeper consecration on the part of us who remain at home.

Rev. Parker also endorsed the work of the Y. M. C. A. in the army and told something of what the organization was doing. He gave splendid scriptural promises very appropriate for the event. He said, "When the first contingent of Canadian troops left for the front they had tattooed on their breast, 'For My King.' While our boy had no tattoo upon his breast we believe that he bore a similar spirit and went forth into battle with the thought, 'For My Country and Human Freedom.' Let us catch that spirit that we may do our part in the great conflict."

Much credit is due those who on such short notices made the musical part of the program a success. Miss Lucile Snyder sang very sweetly that well known song that brings better than any other the sentiments connected with this particular war—"Keep the Home Fires Burning." The Presbyterian choir of ten voices, with Mrs. Moorhouse at the organ, sang a beautiful anthem. A double male quartet from the Methodist choir rendered, "The Wayside Cross," with Mrs. Molsbee at the piano. W. L. McLaughlin took the lead in this selection in splendid fashion.