

Pvt Lawrence Anton Hahnkuper

Born: Nov 24, 1890

Died: Jan 7, 1962

Period of Service: WW I
Sources: Monument,
Cemetery 015 01, B10 F2,
JG, Carol O'Neil

Entered service June 11, 1918 at Sturgeon Bay. Was in 124th Co Trans Corps, Comp C 57th Engineers.

Trained at Camp Laurel MD. Sailed in transport ship "Orita" from Port Richmond, PA on July 13, 1918 for overseas duty, and arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia on July 14 to join convoy. The convoy left July 22 with 34 ships. Four German submarines attacked on July 30 and American and British "chasers" sent them to the bottom. Landed August 1, 1918 in Swansea, Wales, the first troops to land there. On August 3 left for Le Havre, France, arriving the next day. Arrived in Paris on August 5, and was transferred to 124th Transportation Corps which was originally called the Engineering Corps. The regiment had five companies, three of which were operating and the other two repairs and building. On November 9th a train took them to Cammercy, about 12 miles from Metz for canal duty. Spent the next months on barge duty on the Seine river loading and unloading both barges and trains at various ports. They were not in combat, but due to a technicality they were given credit for battle participation anyway. Companies A and B comprised more than one third of the regiment necessary for credit for battlefield duty. And the other companies were also given credit. They left LeMans June 26, 1919 for the journey home. The Armistice was already four months old and he said there was no more work to be done. He was discharged from Camp Grant, IL in July, 1919, arriving back on the Island on the 19th.

Was vice commander of American Legion Post 402 in 1941, commander in 1942, and sergeant-at-arms in 1943 and 1944.

He died on the Island following a stroke. The American Legion took part in the burial rites.

Part of the Goodletson family. (Some dropped the 'son' to become just Goodlet.) (JG)

His parents were Hans Rudolph (Ludolph) and Anna Marie Olson who were married on 1/1/1888. He had eight brothers and sisters born from 1889 to 1908. He was a member of Bethel Church.

Carol notes from his letters home he was a frugal man, complaining about the cost of tobacco (\$1.50 in Maryland), the cost of a camp picture (\$2.00, though it's in the Jacobsen Museum) and the souvenirs his sister asked him to bring home. He was grateful for favors and even mentioned the dollar sent him by the Red Cross allowing him to "have some beer or wine and some fun now that he had the funds to pay for it." He looked forward to Christmas dinner but wished he were home for the family style feast. He wanted letters from home, not necessarily long ones, but a lot of short ones so he could have mail more often. He made a lot of friends, some close ones from Oconto, WI, and two from Michigan. There were also three Islanders in his group: Leon Cornell, Claude Cornell, and Roy Richter.

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He tried to be fair, and praised the French climate and minimized the drawbacks, but in one of his last letters he said, "I am as tired as I can be of France. We are the 124th company and in the 19th Grand Division so when you see that outfit is across you will know I am in the Good Old USA which is the only place for a civilized man to be, I think."

Lawrence and his brother Arnold had a small business checking on people's homes in winter. They were much sought after because of their reliability and honesty. They also found a boat on the beach one day that had apparently floated up. They got permission to keep the boat and called it *The Claudess*.

In later years, once in a while, after company had gorged on his sister Ethel's cooking, he would trot out his gas mask and shaving mirror. He would carefully explain how much this little souvenir meant to him. As he pulled the mirror out of its material bag or as he handed it to the hapless visitor, he would let it fall to the ground. Horrified, the visitor waited for the splintering crash only to hear a small clang instead. It was polished steel. He loved the joke.

"He never married and lived without notoriety, and left the Island for only the shortest of trips. He died as he had lived, without fuss, quietly, leaving hardly a ripple. He had done his duty. If there was no glory in it, there was no dishonor either. His was a quiet life, immortalized only by his name carved on his headstone and the town monument."