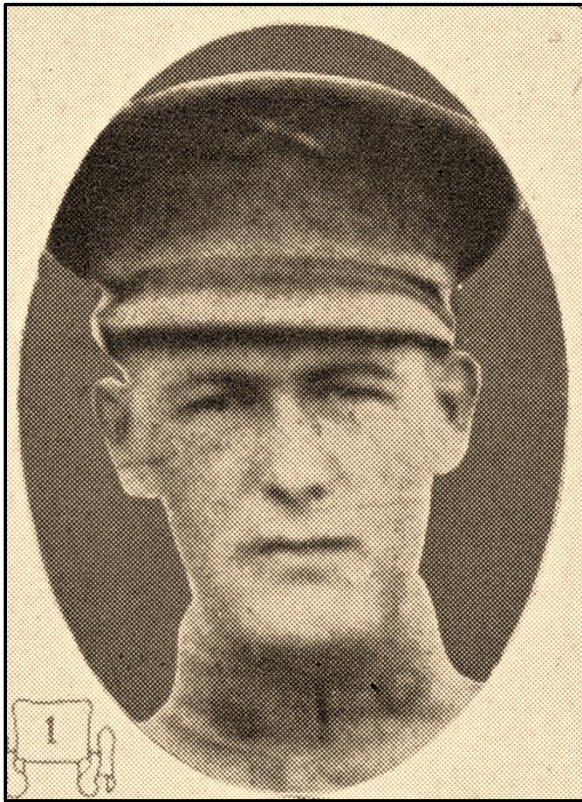**Abner Rude**

Abner Rude was born 25 February 1895 in Sacred Heart, Renville County, Minnesota, to Theodore A. Rude and Othilda "Tilda" Haagenson. Abner's father was born in Norway and came to America with his family as an infant. Othilda was born in Minnesota to Norwegian immigrants. Abner was the third of seven children and the oldest son. Abner attended grade school in Sacred Heart. When Abner was in his early teens, the family moved to South St. Paul where his father worked in the livestock business and Abner continued his schooling. As a teenager, Abner worked as a helper and laborer.

When America joined the war, Abner was working on bridge construction as a cement worker. Single and 22, he enlisted in Minneapolis in April 1917 before the start of the draft. He trained at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, and was sent to Europe in August a few months later. He served as a private in Battery K, 52nd Field Artillery at Alsace Lorraine, France for about a year. The South St. Paul Daily Reporter in September of 1918 said, "In his last letter to his parents, written August 3, Abner said that he expected to be in the front line trenches the following day, but his letter was hopeful and full of cheer for his parents."

Abner was wounded in battle – he received a concussion while on the firing line – and died a few hours later on August 6, 1918 at the age of 23. He was the first South St. Paul soldier to be killed in action. He was initially buried in France, but his remains were returned to Minnesota in June 1921. A full military funeral was held and he was laid to rest in Oakland Cemetery in St. Paul.

Abner's mother died in 1919 and his father in 1939. In 1919, the South St. Paul American Legion was named the Abner Rude Post 481 in memory of Abner. In 1947, Abner's sister, Mrs. Myrtle Cashman, applied for a granite marker for Abner's grave.