

Howard Leet Harmon



Howard Leet Harmon was born 19 October 1891 in Walnut Grove, Redwood County, Minnesota, where his parents were farmers. His father, Horace L. Harmon (1841-1920) was born in Massachusetts and served in the Civil War. His mother was Josephine (Town) Harmon (1853-1934). Horace Harmon came to Hastings in about 1868. By 1900, he had married Josephine and they were farming in Springdale, Redwood County, Minnesota.

Howard tried to enlist in the Navy and the Aviation Corps shortly after America entered the War, but was turned down because of slight deafness in one of his ears. He registered for the draft on 5 June 1917 at Glad Valley, South Dakota, where he was engaged in farming, and was drafted in May 1918 at Hastings. He received training in the U.S. and in France. He “went across” in July of 1918 and was in training for about three months before being sent to the front. During his training he was transferred to Headquarters Company, 305th Infantry, because of his marksmanship. The last word from him said he had been in the front line for three weeks without rest. He had been “over the top” three times, when he was killed in the last great drive, on 4 November 1918.

A military funeral was held in Hastings at the M.E. Church in 1919. Howard’s remains were exhumed in 1921 in France and returned to the U.S., and were reinterred at Walnut Grove Cemetery in Redwood County, where his parents had returned to live.