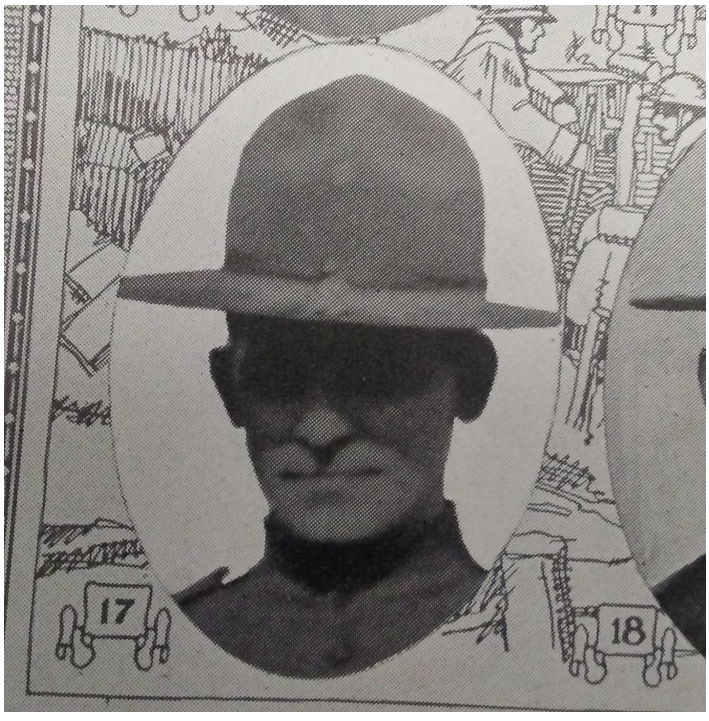
Gustave Bortz

Gustave Bortz was born on February 23, 1889 in Landsburg, East Prussia, Germany. He was the son of August Bortz and Marie Damrow Bortz. The family immigrated to the United States when he was three years old. They lived in Minneapolis until 1899, then moved to South Saint Paul. He had two sisters and three brothers. His brother Herman was also a veteran of World War I. His brother Henry was a sports writer for the South St Paul Daily Reporter.

Gustave registered for the draft on June 5, 1917. He was living at 1534 South Concord Street and working as a meat packer at Swift & Co. While waiting for his call to service, Gustave received several letters from a friend who was training at Camp Dodge, Iowa and Denning, New Mexico. The letters depicted typical Army infantry training, drilling 8 hours per day, eating German bread and boiled potatoes and drinking black coffee. They slept 8 men to a tent and suffered measles and smallpox. Three or four men died during basic training. Private pay was $30 per month. The letters indicate that Gustave visited his friend at Camp Dodge. Gustave formally enlisted one year later in June of 1918 in the 36th Depot Brigade of the Army. He was a corporal. He served at Fort Sheridan, Illinois until January of 1919.

After the war, Gustave married Evelyn Bertha Krech on June 14, 1922 at Grace Lutheran Church by pastor A.E. Koehler. They had three children: FlaDella, Raymond and Lucille. He was a foreman at Swift & Co. and worked there for over 30 years. His father-in-law was a charter member of Grace Lutheran Church. Gustave died on Monday, March 24, 1941 at age 52 at the Veterans Hospital. He had been in the hospital since January 16 with heart issues. He is buried at Fort Snelling.

Photo source: Dakota County in the World War



Albert,
August, Herman,
Gustave,
Marie
Louise, Wilhelmine

Albert F. 1883-1957
married Bertha

Herman 1887-1965
married Lorena

Gustave 1889-1941
married Evelyn Krech

Louise Marie 1896-1971
married Mathew Gisch

Wilhelmina "Minnie"
Married Robert Smith

Henry W. 1905-1971
married Margaret Falk

Note: Henry was born after the photo was taken.

Gustave Bortz & Evelyn Krech
were married June 14, 1922