William Joseph Lucy

William Lucy was born on July 12, 1891 in Savage/Burnsville, Minnesota to Daniel Henry Lucy (1858-1934) and Elizabeth McMahon Lucy (1861-1946). William was in 1908 a Weighmaster Foreman employed by the Washburn-Crosby Elevator in Minneapolis. He was caught between two box cars and crippled for life. He sued the Milwaukee Railroad Transit Company for $40,800 and received a settlement of $10,000. After that he worked until he retired as a jailor for the South St Paul Police Department. He also served in the Civil War with the 8th Wisconsin.

Two of his sons would be drafted and would serve in the same Company. They both registered on June 5, 1917 in South St Paul, Minnesota. They enlisted on May 28, 1918. They were sent to Camp Lewis, Washington to train with the 160th Infantry, 40th Division, Company E. Camp Lewis was established as the training camp for the 91st "Wild West" Infantry Division of the National Army (National Guard) which was comprised of inducted men from at least 14 states. He left for France, from Brooklyn, New York in August of 1918 on the SS Nestor. When he arrived in France, he was reassigned to the 308th Infantry, 77th Division, Company H. The 308th Infantry Regiment was best known for the experiences of several of its companies, including Company H, which formed part of the "Lost Battalion" after becoming isolated behind German lines in an attack on the Argonne Forest in October 1918. On October 18, 1918 parts of the 40th and 77th were sent to an undefended gap between the German and American lines that was actually a deep ravine known as the "pocket". It was located on the edge of the Argonne Forest near the Aisne River in NE France. Considered Impregnable, the Argonne Forest was a natural stronghold. There they were met with stiff resistance. Then they lost their communication link and were trapped. They held their position in the "gap" without food or water for six full days as they continued to fight. With the capture of this key tactical location, the American forces were able to accomplish what the British and French had not been able to do in four years.

In William's own words "I got in the pocket and dug in on the left, close to Lt Cullen. I was his runner. On one of my trips down to the water hole to get water, I heard the Germans talking and asking for hand grenades to be used on our left. I was one of the few fortunate ones in not getting hit as the shelling was heavy and there were quite a few Americans wounded and killed near me. There were a lot of trees and brush when we dug in but by the time we were relieved, the ground was bare."

What was left of the Last Battalion sailed home on the USS America from Brest, France on April 19, 1919. They were just in time to march in the grand parade in New York City on April 28, 1919 as heroes. William was discharged from Camp Dodge, Iowa on May 18, 1919. He returned home and to his job at the stockyards as a salesman. By 1930 he is a Livestock Inspector and at some point he worked as a South St Paul Police Officer and a cement contractor. On May 16, 1931 he married Sarah (Sadie) Eleonore Wilson (1910-1997) and the family moved to Sioux City, Iowa. William died on March 27, 1940 leaving Sarah with five children to raise on her own. He is buried at the Oak Hill Cemetery in South St Paul

The quote by William was found in the book "Lost Battalion" Survivors from Minnesota and the Northwest" by Carl J Peterson