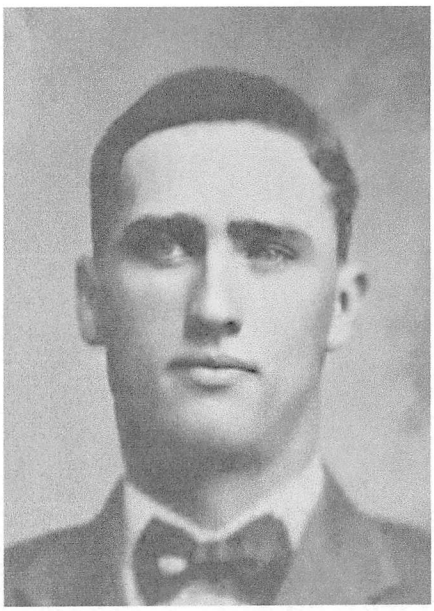

Edward Joseph Schommer

Edward Schommer was born on September 25, 1895 in Oak Grove, Wisconsin to William Schommer, a farmer (1849-1932) and Anna Rock Schommer (1859-1938). Both parents emigrated from Germany. Edward was just one of fifteen children. Both parents lived into their 90's and both survived all of their children but one. On June 5, 1917, Edward registered for the draft from Hastings, Minnesota where he was working on a farm.

On February 26, 1918, he enlisted. He trained at Camp Dodge, Iowa and was assigned to Company M, 119th Infantry, 30th Division. He left for France from Boston, Massachusetts, as a Private on the SS Laomedon and arrived first in London on May 12, 1918 and then France on May 30th. He participated in the Bellicourt battle to secure the St. Quentin Canal Tunnel, that ran under Bellicourt and was used a main line for the German forces. Edward was there between August 17 and September 3, 1918. The other main campaign that he participated in from October 17th to October 20, 1918 was St. Souplet. This important battle fought by the US Army in their pursuit of the retreating German Army in the Somme Offensive Operation. This was part of the Allied advance on a wide front to break through the Hindenburg defensive line which became known as the "Advance to Victory". Nearby at Bellicourt there is a Memorial to the 27th and 30th Divisions. It is quite a superb memorial giving comprehensive details including a map of the operations carried out by these two Divisions. A month later the Treaty of Versailles was signed and the war was over. Edward was scheduled to ship out on February 28, 1919 with his Company but he received orders to wait and be sent to Camp Dodge Detachment with the rest of the 30th Division. They left France from St. Nazaire on the SS Huron and arrived in Charleston, South Carolina on March 21, 1919. He was discharged from Camp Dodge, Iowa on April 12, 1919 as a Private. He received a bonus in the amount of $210.

Returning to his boyhood home, he married Margaret Fuchs (1901-1999) on May 11, 1920. He drove a truck for the King Midas Flour Mill for many years. Edward and Margaret had 13 children, six girls and six boys. Only one of them would precede them in death. When they passed away they had 50 grandchildren and 72 great-grandchildren. Three of Edward's sons served in WWII, Bernard, Leonard and Raymond. Raymond was wounded three different times. His younger sons, Bernard and Edward (Mike) served later in the Korean War. Mike was seriously wounded in action on October 27, 1951 and was not expected to live long but he proved them wrong. Injured in his stomach and arms, he received the Purple Heart and married, passing away in 2013.

Edward passed away on January 10, 1987. He was 91 years old. He died at the St Croix Care Center in Prescott, Wisconsin. He was a retired custodian for the Hastings Public Schools. He is buried at St Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Cemetery in Hastings, Minnesota.