

Letter Tells How Jack Pilgrim Met Death in Navy

The following letter from Jack Pilgrim's commanding officer to Raymond Pilgrim of near Grinnell, Iowa, tells details of Jack's death last Thursday in New York harbor:

U. S. S. Natchez (PF-2)
C/O Fleet Post Office
New York, New York
21 July 1944

Mr. Raymond S. Pilgrim,
R. F. D. No. 4,
Grinnell, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

Nothing I may write or do will serve in any degree to assuage your sorrow in the loss of your son, Jack Eugene Pilgrim, motor machinist's mate third class, United States Naval Reserve, who has given to his country and to the service the greatest contribution a patriot may tender.

Your son had entered the after fireroom to light the boiler fires preparatory to getting underway. While so engaged, the main steam line from the forward fireroom ruptured, instantly filling the compartment with saturated steam of intense temperature. He succeeded in escaping from the compartment, but succumbed to his injuries six hours later.

Just as truly as if in combat on one of the far flung fronts of this global war, your son gave his life, fulfilling his duties faithfully and efficiently. His record

was one of the very finest in the Engineering Division of which he was a member. The circumstances were tragic to you and to all of us; but war is tragedy in its demands upon those who are called upon to make sacrifices in order that the nation and its precepts may continue to exemplify the plan of the founders of the Republic.

A large number of your son's shipmates attended a memorial service conducted this morning in the Base Chapel.

The officers and men of the USS NATCHEZ extend to you their sympathies.

Sincerely yours,

N. B. Bullard, Lt. Comdr., USNR
Commanding, USS NATCHEZ

Killed in Ship Explosion

Historical Department

Victim of Steam Scalding in New York



"Jack" Pilgrim

Scalded By Steam Friday In N. Y. Harbor

Body Being Brought to Grinnell For Burial Services

Again Thursday citizens of Grinnell and surrounding community were shocked by the news of the death of another well-known local boy serving in the uniform of his country.

This was the death that day, by scalding, in New York harbor of "Jack" Pilgrim, 20-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Pilgrim, of near Grinnell. His death followed major burns received in an explosion of the ship on which he was serving. Death came at a nearby marine hospital, where he was rushed for first aid.

Parents Get Two Wires

Late Thursday afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Pilgrim received a telegram stating that Jack had been seriously injured in the explosion. As they were preparing to get plane passage to New York through the Des Moines airport, they received the second, stating that he had passed away in the hospital.

Popular With All

"Jack" was one of the extremely popular younger "Grinnell boys" in the service. He was born near Grinnell and grew to manhood here. He attended the local schools, from which he was graduated only a few years ago.

He was familiarly known to those of his age, and older citizens of the community, and all are indeed sorry to learn of his tragic death, and the attending sorrow to his parents, and other relatives.

The arrival of the body in Grinnell is being anxiously awaited by his relatives and friends. When it does reach the city suitable services will be carried through by the community.