Letter Tells How Jack Pilgrim Met Death in Navy

The following letter from Jack Pilgrim’s commanding officer in the Engineering Division of which he was one of the very finest in the Navy, was received last Thursday in New York harbor by Raymond Pilgrim of Grinnell, tell details of Jack’s death:

U. S. S. Natchez (PF-21)
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 fire-room to light the boiler fires preparatory to getting underway. While so engaged, the main steam line from the forward fire-room 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, one of the far flung fronts of this global war, your son gave his life, fulfilling his duties faithfully and efficiently. His record

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 NATCHES
Killed in Ship Explosion

Victim of Steam Scalding in New York

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 treatment.

"Jack" Pilgrim

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 sorrow 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 thousands of friends. When it does reach the city suitable services will be carried through by the community.