

Focht, Will

GH 12/3/1918

SERGEANT WILL FOCHT

Fine College and Town Boy Loses
His Life On the Battle
Front.

WAS KILLED NEAR
VERDUN NOVEMBER 3

Enlisted at Camp Funston in June,
1917, at the Close of His
College Course.

Grinnell College lost one of its finest young men November 3, when Serg. Will J. Focht fell while in the fighting line near Verdun November 3.

Will Focht was born near Villisca, April 29, 1894, and at the time of his death was just passed 24 years and 6 months old. He graduated from the Villisca high school and was at that time attracted to Grinnell college. In the fall of 1913 he and his sister, Louella Focht, entered college and in 1914

his mother moved to Grinnell, bringing her younger son, Charles, who entered high school and graduated in 1915. Charles also an excellent athlete and is in northern France in the 10th Aero Squadron.

In June, 1917, Will graduated from college. He had been one of the strong, active men, connected with many of its activities and was universally liked. The next day after graduation he went to camp at Funston, Kan. He was married at Funston on December one year ago. He went to Camp Funston from a very young friend, Allen Bradley, who was with him but did not get the pleasure.

Will stayed at Camp Funston until last May when he sailed for overseas with the 53rd infantry, reaching England June 11.

On Sept. 12 his regiment was engaged in the St. Mihiel offensive, and then he was in the medical corps he took part in the front line fighting and "went over the top."

Mrs. Focht received a letter last Thursday written Oct. 27. He was then near Verdun, and wrote: "Inside of 48 hours I will be in one of the biggest battles of the war," and stated that the Rainbow division was located next the 89th, to which he belonged next to the 89th, to which he belonged.

He had written to his mother of receiving letters designed for Pvt. Wm. J. Focht, written from Pennsylvania, and had written him but had not received an answer.



SERG. WM. J. FOCHT.

In June, 1917, Will graduated from college. He had been one of the strong, active men, connected with many of its activities and was universally liked. The week after graduation he went to Camp Funston to enlist. He was granted a furlough and coming to Grinnell for his last visit in December one year ago. He went to Camp Funston because a very warm friend, Allen Bradley, was there and he hoped to get into the same company with him, but did not get the pleasure.

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The telegram notifying Mrs. Focht of his death reached her Saturday night and came as a great shock, so long after hostilities ceased, when she was hoping for his early return. The telegram from the adjutant stated that her son, Serg. Wm. J. Focht, had been officially reported killed in action November 3.

Will was a fine young man, the pride of his loving mother's heart, always helpful and dutiful, a young man loved by all who knew him.

His death is the second tragedy that has come into her home as her husband received injuries 19 years ago while being initiated into a lodge which resulted in his death.

During her four years residence here Mrs. Focht has made many friends who deeply sympathize with her in the loss of a brave and manly son.