

DIES IN FRANCE

**Harold Halsted First Somerset Victim
of War—Parents Notified By
Bureau of Navigation — Had
Been in France Since
June.**

A telegram received here by Francis A. Halsted, foreman of the composing room of the Gazette, on last Friday morning, announced the death in France of his son, Harold Norman Halsted. The telegram came from the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation at Washington and was signed by Admiral Palmer. It gave no particulars as to how the young man lost his life. Harold was serving as a landsman quartermaster in the First Aeronautical Detachment and is the first Somerset county man to be sacrificed in the war against autocracy.

The despatch stated that it might be possible to have the body of the dead soldier brought to this country at the expense of the Government and United States Senator Frelinghuysen is making every effort to have this done. He has had no assurances yet, however, that the Government will be able to do this at an early date. The authorities said that the purpose was to bring all bodies to this country but they might not be able to do so until the close of the war.



Mr. and Mrs. Halsted and their family have been greatly prostrated over the news. They had received word from Harold under date of July 12 that he was located on the Mediterranean somewhere in France, was happy and as busy as he could be. This letter was received on July 30.

Harold was born in Elizabeth 24 years ago but had practically lived here all his life. He graduated from the Somerville High School in 1912 and matriculated at Rutgers College that fall. Owing to ill health he was obliged to give up his studies during his Freshman year. He passed the civil service examination and entered the Somerville post office as a clerk, which position he held several months. He then entered the Davey Institute of Tree Surgery, at Kent, Ohio, and graduated with the class of 1915. He was an expert tree surgeon and it was while working at his profession at Birmingham, Ala., that President Wilson issued his first call for 250 aviators. Harold, in company with one of his companions, John H. Bunt, enlisted in the naval aviation service for a period of four years at Birmingham, Ala., April 1, and is credited to that State. The Birmingham Times of that date stated that they were the first two men to be accepted from the South. He went to Pensacola, Fla., for his training and was there about six weeks, when he passed all his examinations and tests and was one of the first fifty naval aviators to be sent to France, landing there June 9.

He was an all around athlete and was well known in baseball and football circles. He was a member of a Greek letter society and of the Young People's Temperance Society. He was an active member of the First Baptist Church. Being of a genial disposition he always had a smile and a cheery word for everyone and was highly respected by a large circle of friends.

Besides his parents he leaves four sisters and a brother, Mrs. Harry L. Mettler, of Arlington, Mass., Mrs. Edward A. Weeks, of Brooklyn, Misses Jessie F. and Dorothy and Master Thane.

THE AMERICAN ARMY AND NAVY Y.M.C.A. OF FRANCE.

Public correspondence

Address of the sender:

1st. Aeronautic Detachment, U.S.N.,
Saint Raphael, France.
August 4, 1917.

Dear Mrs. Halstead:-

We are writing you today on behalf of the 1st Aeronautic Detachment of the United States Navy to express to you our sympathy in your recent bereavement and to tell you of the sorrow which we have felt at the passing of our comrade and companion, Quartermaster Harold Norman Halstead.

In our detachment, where we cherish for our comrades a sincere affection based upon months of life in common, during which we have had full opportunity to estimate truly his endurance, Quartermaster Halstead was regarded with peculiar esteem for his modesty, his disposition, his obligingness.

Harold Halstead, we who knew you, worked with you, played with you, ate with you, slept with you, we who took pleasure in your company, in your modesty, in your gentle manner, in your devotion and in your youth, we think of your sacrifice, our breath comes quicker, our eyes grow dimmer- we pass- better and stronger men.

To the dear ones he has left in his own land, in New Jersey, to his grief stricken parents, our respect and our expressions of sorrow are most sincere and heartfelt.

We laid him away with military honors in the little cemetery of Saint Mandrier, on the mountainside where the sighing pine trees overlook the beautiful harbor of Toulon.

"Obscurely sacrificed, his nameless tomb

Bare of the sculptor's art, the poet's lines,
Summer shall flush with poppy-fields in bloom,

And Autumn yellow with maturing vines."

Very sincerely yours,

Charles G. Duffy

George G. Sprague

September 25th. 1917.

Mr. Francis A. Halstead,
118 Bartine Street,
Somerville, N.J.

Dear Sir:-

The college has learned with sincere regret of the death of your son Harold of the Class of 1916. He is, I believe, the first Rutgers man to lose his life in the service of the nation and we are desirous of paying him fitting tribute in the Rutgers Alumni Quarterly. I have from the Somerville paper an account of his death but I hope to be able to print his picture in the magazine. We would be deeply gratified if you would send us any photograph of him you may have on hand.

Very sincerely yours,

Somerville, Oct. 1, 1917.

my dear Mr. Silver:-

I crave your pardon for my delay in answering your letter of Sept. 25. I am a very busy man and I have also been much wrought up over my wife's condition. She idolized her boy and it is hard for her to give him up. I have had her away for a month up in the mountains of Pennsylvania, and she has just returned home, I am very glad to say, much improved in health. This is my excuse for my seeming negligence and delay. I am writing this at the midnight hour when I should have been in bed long ago. You must know that I am not so young as I was once. However, I am sending to you a photograph of Harold under separate cover, which you may use in connection with your article if you so desire. It is not a very good one, but it the last we have left, and I hope you will kindly return it to us when you are through with it, as it is his mother's request. I am also sending you a clipping from the Unionist-Gazette, and would say that the picture contained in the same could be very easily and very reasonably ~~produced~~ reproduced, and perhaps you might think it more appropriate to use under the circumstances. However, use your own judgment. We have been requested to send his photograph to the Navy Department at Washington, and have sent his
(over)

picture to the Navy Institute of Mar Surgery, at Kent,
Ohio, and also to the Ohio State Tribune. Using
one for the local papers also, you see, has taken
all we have. I might add for your information
that we have received full details officially from
Washington, and also from his comrades and the
Y. M. C. A. in France regarding Harold's death
and burial. He died in Toulon, France, July 31,
and was buried with military honors in the
beautiful cemetery of Saint Maudner, on the
island of the same name opposite the city of
Toulon. His casket was covered with many flo-
ral tributes and the glorious old flag. An escort
of 14 French soldiers acted as an escort of mili-
tary honor and he was borne to the grave by
six of his comrades. The funeral was held
Aug 2, and was largely attended by the French
and American officers and all of the American
soldiers and sailors in that locality. A Rev. Mr.
Brown, an Episcopalian minister, assisted by a
French Protestant minister, officiated at the ser-
vices. We are informed that his grave is prop-
erly marked, so that if we should so wish his
remains may be disinterred and brought to
this country, after the war, for interment in
our family plot here in Somerville. His mother,
however, seems inclined to let him rest in
peace in beautiful France. I cannot bring my-
self to look at it in just that light. How-
ever, I shall abide by her final decision. I
also want to inform you that of the 25
fliers and 25 mechanics who comprised the
first aeronautical detachment to go from this

country to France, and of which Harold was an honored member, four of them have already given their lives for their flag and country. These were the proud boys who first carried the Stars and Stripes into sunny France. We are proud of our boy and his comrades, and proud of their willing and ready sacrifice for the just cause of humanity.

Mrs. Halsted and myself are also proud that you have seen fit to claim our boy as one of the sons of good old Rutgers. What more can we ask? I might add that we have received from his comrades, signed by a committee of two, a loving testimonial letter which we would be glad to have you use in connection with your article, should you so desire it, providing you will return it to us. We would be pleased if you should see fit to send us three or four copies of your Quarterly containing the article, that we might send it to his grandmother and sisters. I will remit the cost to you. I am also informed that the Sunday Times of New Brunswick had an article in it some time ago. If not too much trouble will you send me three or four copies. I will pay you for your trouble and expense. Again begging your pardon, and on behalf of Mrs. Halsted and myself thanking you for your kindly and sympathetic interest in Harold and us, I remain very cordially,

Francis A. Halsted,
118 Bartrie Street,
Somerville, N. S.

Somerville, Oct. 5, 1917.

My dear Mr. Silvers:-

Yours of Oct. 4 at hand, and I want to thank you on behalf of Mrs. Halsted and myself for your very kind words. I find that my daughter, Jessie, has taken the testimonial letter to Arlington, Mass., to show to her sister, Alice, who lives there. I will write to her tonight to return it immediately, and we will probably receive it by next Tuesday. I will forward it to you as soon as we receive it, which I hope will be in time for your use. Regarding Harold's death, he died of brain fever induced by overwork and overzealous ambition. Please remember that we should like at least four of the Quarterlies containing the sketch. Stockton Cramer, another loyal Rutgers boy, entered the navy today. You may rest assured that old Rutgers will be well represented at the front. They are all full-blooded Americans and love the glorious old flag. We, the parents, must all submit to the will of Him who doth all things well. May a father's blessing rest upon and your comrades who cherish the memory of our boy. I remain very cordially,

Francis A. Halsted,
118 Bartine Street,
Somerville, N.J.

If you may use your own judgment regarding my letter.

Somerville, Oct. 10, 1917.

My dear Mr. Silvers:-

I am enclosing the testimonial letter you wanted. We just received it from Boston today. Please return it when you are through with it. Thank you very much for the prompt return of the photograph in fine shape; also for your offer of the magazine. We would like six of them if possible. Also about the same number of the Sunday Times if you can get them. If you will let me know the cost I will remit the amount to you, as I do not wish you to expend your money for us. Mrs. Halsted is getting better, thank you.

I remain very cordially,

Francis A. Halsted,

118 Bastwick Street,

Somerville, N. J.

October 15th. 1917.

Mr. Francis A. Halsted,

118 Bartine Street,

Somerville, N.J.

Dear Mr. Halsted:-

I am returning the testimonial letter which you so kindly sent me on October 10th. I do not think that we can include it in the October issue of the Quarterly but I have made several copies so that it may be kept among the records of the college and may be filed in the College Library. As soon as the Quarterly is issued, I shall send you ten copies and shall try to secure some of the New Brunswick Times stories for you. I am glad that Mrs. Halsted is getting better and trust that she may fully recover from the shock of her son's death. If at any time there is anything we can do here at college, I trust that you will not hesitate to call upon us.

Very sincerely yours,

December 5th. 1917.

Mr. Francis A. Halsted,
118 Bartine Street,
Somerville, N.J.

Dear Mr. Halsted:-

I am sending you under separate cover six copies of the October issue of the Rutgers Alumni Quarterly, in which you will find your son's picture, also an account of your son's death.

Will you please forgive me for delaying so long in sending these copies? The Quarterly did not come out until November 15th and I have been so busy with other duties since then that I have neglected forwarding copies to you. If you wish any more, I hope that you will not hesitate to advise me. I trust that I shall be able to meet you personally some time and that you will be sure to visit me in my office if you ever come to New Brunswick.

Very sincerely yours,