

Gilbert Ratcliff

August 22, 1890 - November 10, 1918
Interred: Section E, Lot/Row 118, Space 6



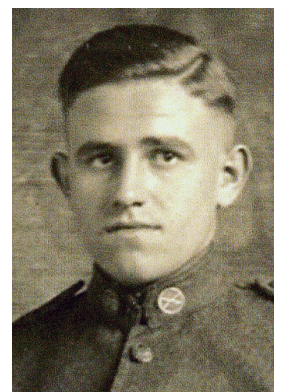
Gilbert Ratcliff was born on August 22, 1890 in Clay Village, Kentucky, and died on November 10, 1918 in Argonne Forest, France, at the young age of 28. He is laid to rest in section E and row 118 at Grove Hill Cemetery.

Gilbert was described as medium height, stout build, blue eyed, and had light colored hair. He grew up on a family farm and quickly learned the value of hard labor. His parents were Logan Ratcliff and Lucinda Ann Sleadd Ratcliff. They married in 1867. Lucinda was a mother of 14 at the age of 52 with only eleven children living during Gilbert's lifetime. Just a few of his sibling's names were William, Jessie, Homer, Newel, and Virginia.

After World War I broke out, Gilbert was eager to sign up to go to War. Ratcliff enlisted on June 5, 1917. He entered service on May 27, 1918 and was first ordered to Camp Zachary Taylor. He was assigned to the 314th Infantry. He headed overseas with that group on September 1, 1918. He was

ranked as a private in Company L, 11th Infantry, in the U.S. Army. He was killed in action in the Argonne Forest, France on November 10, 1918. This was one day before the enemies ceased fire and WWI ended.

The Meuse-Argonne Forest campaign was the final and largest offensive of WWI. Involving over one million Americans. It is also the largest campaign in the U.S Army history, resulting in over 120,000 total casualties. This would be the big turning point of the War, breaking the German offensive for the Allies to win WW1.



Gilbert Ratcliff was laid to rest on Sunday, September 10, 1921, in Grove Hill Cemetery, Shelby County, Kentucky. His whole family gathered with full military honors rendered by the J. Franklin Bell Post of the American legion.



This statue, located in downtown Shelbyville, is dedicated to soldiers who served in WW1. Gilbert Ratcliff was included in the memorial. Sadly, however, his last name is misspelled on the monument as Ratcliffe instead of Ratcliff.

Resources:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1/meuse-argonne>

Script, Gilbert Ratcliff Story Reenactment, Friends of Grove Hill Cemetery

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Stories Behind the Stones – A Project Based Learning Partnership of Shelby County High School Junior History Class 2024, Friends of Grove Hill Cemetery, Calvary Cemetery Friends, and Shelby County Historical Society.

Thanks to all the students and educators from SCHS who worked with us to provide this historical record for our community.



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