

Human Interest in Legion's Acts Seen in Survey

Thousands of replies have been received at national headquarters of the American Legion from Legion posts throughout the country to a recent questionnaire pertaining to Legion activities, and each mail brings in from scores to hundreds more. O. L. Bodenhamer, national commander, is expecting each of the 10,000 posts to give the information sought, and requests that posts which have not already done so, to return the questionnaire sent them, properly filled in, at once.

Throughout more than 3,000 received, and which have been carefully studied, there runs a thread of sincere human interest, understanding and sympathy in the accomplishments and endeavors listed by the individual posts.

Here is one story, which for Legion comradeship, illustrates vividly how these war veterans have carried the spirit of mutual helpfulness from their war-time experience of more than a decade ago, into their peace-time service. It is told by Francis L. Fahy, commander of the Quentin Roosevelt Post 11, of Washington, D.C., who recently lost his aviator brother, Herbert, in an accident at Grayling, Mich. It recounts the post commander's experience with a legion post in the little town where his brother died, and reads, in part, as follows:

"The morning I was to bring Herb home on his last journey, I had to wait until 1:30 p.m., for the train down to Detroit. I was also at the time. About 10 o'clock the commander of the local Legion post came in and said they wanted to hold a short service for my brother and escort him to the train. I gave my permission. He said he had 30 members on the rolls, of which 18 lived in and near the town, the rest being scattered throughout the northern part of the state.

"When I arrived at the post hall, I found a typical little country meeting hall, with an old wood stove in the rear, and I learned that it had been erected by the G.A.R. in the 1870's, and now turned over to the Legion. My brother's casket was in the center of the hall, draped with the American flag and flowers. Fifteen members were present, and every man was so sincere in his sympathy and desire to do honor to a departed comrade that it made the deepest impression on me.

"They had a young chaplain, who stated that he was not eligible to belong to their post, but he had served four years with the Canadian forces. He was wonderful and his remarks were the most beautiful I have ever heard on a like occasion. Following his talk, eight of the comrades acted as bearers and escorted Herb to the small country-town hearse. Four then marched in front, two color bearers with the American and Legion flags, and two guards with rifles. The eight bearers marched four on a side, and the three remaining men marched in the rear. Although we had but a block and a half to the station, they had an auto for me to ride in.

"The sight of the colors, the 15 comrades, all wearing Legion caps, their real sincerity and absolute lack

of 'being on parade' was something to make one's throat lumpy, and was above all, a real evidence of a true fraternal spirit. As the train bearing Herb and me pulled out of the station, the 15 of them stood at salute. Just before we departed, I told them that I had the honor of being commander of my post in Washington.

"I hope I may be pardoned for inflicting on you an account of a purely personal matter, but I did want you to know what my Legion membership meant to me — and to my brother — in this instance."

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