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# ◆ THE CALVARY CHRONICLE ◆

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Volume 12, Issue 2

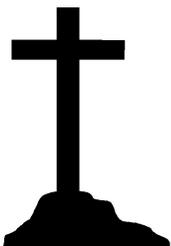
NEWSLETTER FOR CALVARY CEMETERY

Summer 2010

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## **IT IS TIME TO PLAN FOR THE HISTORY TOUR!**

**Make plans  
to attend our  
tenth annual  
history tour  
on Sunday,  
October 10,  
2010 at 2:00  
p.m. The  
theme this  
year is  
military  
figures. The  
walk will last  
about one  
hour. Meet  
at the  
Memorial  
Chapel. Plan  
to attend  
this popular  
walking tour  
about our  
local history.**



## **1918**

### **SPANISH FLU EPIDEMIC and WWI**

The year 1918 was a sad time in U.S. History. We were in the midst of WWI and autumn brought a worldwide flu pandemic.

The flu, called the Spanish Flu, was a virulent strain causing death in days and sometimes within hours. Over 60 million died worldwide and about 500 million were afflicted by the disease. At least 600,000 died in the United States. Unlike most flu the hardest hit were the young adults with a strong immune system. The first outbreak in the spring was a mild form. By summer the symptoms worsened with bronchial pneumonia and systemic blood poisoning. This strain caused a sizable number of deaths. By autumn the epidemic spread to the United States as well as over the world. This strain was much deadlier. It often started with a brief fever followed by an abrupt cruel death. It overwhelmed the body's immune system causing massive hemorrhages that filled the lungs. Patients died drowning in their own body fluids with blood coming from various parts of the body. The sheer numbers of deaths and the way it happened caused panic.

In Dayton the schools, theaters and churches were closed on October 8<sup>th</sup>; saloons and poolrooms were closed the next day. Calvary Cemetery buried 634 people in 1918 with 138 of those in the month of October. It was common to have between 10-13 burials in one day! Surely many died from the flu. Funerals of influenza victims were private with only family members attending. Before that time wakes were routinely held in the family's home. This was now discouraged because officials thought the disease would spread easier in the close confinement within the home. Even though churches were closed, they were permitted to open for funerals. The caskets had to remain closed unless a glass shield was used to protect mourners. The ban on congregating in public places was finally lifted on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Schools reopened on November 11, 1918, but immediately closed because celebrations started as word spread of the signing of the armistice ending WWI. Schools closed again in December to prevent further spread of the disease and remained closed until after the Christmas holiday. By the end of the year health officials said Dayton had 572 flu deaths between October and December and over 40,000 cases of flu reported – nearly a third of the population of Dayton.

The war did not cause the flu, but hastened the pandemic because of troops being transported all over the world and the close living quarters of the troops. Conditions on some fronts were terrible and there was no chance of getting immediate help in a hospital. If soldiers did not die from flu, many died from infection caused by their wounds. Military casualty reports were reported daily in the newspaper. The flu took many soldiers lives. Wright Field had 355 reported cases of flu. Nations tried to conceal the losses due to the virus because reports would make them more vulnerable to the enemy.

Calvary buried 22 soldiers who died during WWI. We know of only four that were killed in action. The others died of flu, pneumonia or from wounds that caused infections.

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The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, or Battle of the Argonne Forest, was the deadliest battle of WWI. The effort took place north of the town of Verdun between September 26 and November 11, 1918. By the end of October, U.S. troops cleared the Argonne Forest.

Reports about the soldiers were often conflicting which was hard on the families, as was in the case of Pvt. Lawrence E. Burgmeier. Burgmeier was a member of the Dayton Fire Department from January 11, 1916 until September 12, 1917 when he enlisted in the Army. He was stationed at Camp McArthur in Waco, Texas and sailed to France on May 1, 1918. Word came to his parents in October that Burgmeier was killed in action. Lawrence's father, Philip, owned a barber shop on Fifth Street. Joe Shell, phoned the barber shop and said his brother had just seen Burgmeier and that he was alive. In fact Shell wanted to pay him five francs his brother had borrowed from Burgmeier. The parents welcomed the joyous news. The father contacted Lawrence's captain. In November Philip received a reply from the captain saying that Lawrence was lost from their battery. He joined another where he was wounded and taken to the hospital in France. The captain reported he heard Burgmeier was doing nicely. But as it turned out Pvt. Lawrence Burgmeier had indeed died from the wounds he received. As with many soldiers, Burgmeier was buried in France. In 1921 his body was returned to the United States for burial. Lawrence is buried in Section 1 by his parents, Philip and Mary J. Burgmeier.



Gravesite of Pvt. Lawrence Burgmeier.

Most of the soldiers that died in France were buried in 1921. Calvary buried eleven returned soldiers that year.

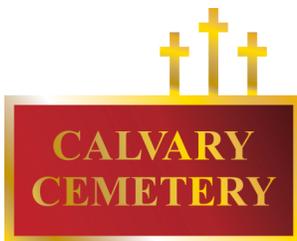
### FALL GRASS SEEDING BEGINS

August 15th through September 15th provides the necessary time window for establishing new turfgrass for the Fall season. "This is the optimum time in order to allow root systems to develop before freeze sets in," says Rick Meade, Superintendent. Meade estimates over 300 graves will be raked level and seeded during this time period.

Calvary applies approximately 25,000 gallons of hydroseed mix to its grounds annually, which includes over one ton each of grass seed and pin mulch.



Calvary employee, Bill Roberson, applying hydroseed



For more information contact:

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Calvary & S. Dixie Aves.  
Dayton, OH 45409

Phone: 293-1221  
Fax: 293-7316

Visit our website at:  
[www.calvarycemeterydayton.org](http://www.calvarycemeterydayton.org)

### MILITARY INFORMATION

Calvary Cemetery is interested in finding out information about military heroes and especially those killed in the line of duty.

If you would like to share your family history as well as personal remembrances about that hero, contact Judy Pavy at [www.calvarycemeterydayton.org](http://www.calvarycemeterydayton.org) or send to Calvary Cemetery, Att: Judy Pavy, 1625 Calvary Dr., Dayton, OH 45409.