

GEORGE HENRY MALLON, 1877-1934

Born

June 15, 1877, Ogden, Riley County, Kansas

Military Service Record

Spanish-American War

June 18th 1898 – November 4th 1898
22nd Kansas Volunteer Infantry

The Philippines Campaign

January 7th 1899 – January 6th, 1902
12th United States Infantry

World War One

August 15, 1917 at Ft. Snelling, Minnesota
Officers training camp
Commissioned as Captain in the Infantry
Company "E", 132nd Regiment, 33rd Division
September 6th, 1917 – June 20th, 1919

Died

August 2, 1934
St. Cloud, Stearns County, Minnesota



Early Years

George Henry Mallon was born on June 15th, 1877 in Ogden, Riley County, Kansas, the second child of tenⁱ and first son to parents Robert Currie Mallon and Emma L. Stephens. George's father, Robert C. had emigrated at ten years old with his parents and siblings from County Tyrone, Ulster, Ireland in 1850.ⁱⁱ

The War Years

Three days after George Mallon turned 21 years old he joined the military for the first time on June 18th, 1898 as a member of the 22nd Kansas Volunteer Infantry until November 3rd of the same year in the Spanish-American War as a private.ⁱⁱⁱ

His second enlistment was on January 7, 1899 at Fort Riley, Kansas when he enlisted for the Philippine Campaign.^{iv} George was 22 years, 6 months old. His occupation was listed as farmer. He had blue eyes, dark brown hair, a fair complexion and stood 5'8 1/4". George was #17 in the register, 12th U.S. Infantry, Company K and "discharged on January 6th, 1902 at sea on the Warren by expiration of service, [rank] Sergt. [Sergeant]", and notation of his service record was: "Excellent."^v On January 29, 1902, he was listed as an invalid.^{vi}

At age 29 George married Effie Gladys Campbell in Kansas City, Wyandotte County, Kansas on December 22, 1906.^{vii} They moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1907 and George worked installing automatic sprinklers systems for a fire extinguisher company. From May 15th, 1917 to August 15th, 1917 he was in the R.O.T.C. After the U.S. entered WWI, when the government called for candidates for officers' training camps, he volunteered.^{viii} He was 40 years old at the time.

After a three-month training period at the first Fort Snelling camp, he was commissioned a Captain in the infantry section of the National Army. He was assigned to "E" Company, 132nd Regiment, 33rd Division and stationed at Camp Logan, Texas from September 6th, 1917 until May 5th, 1918 when they were sent to Hoboken, New Jersey.^{ix}

They embarked from Hoboken on the ship Mt. Vernon on May 16th and arrived at Brest, France on May 26th, 1918 as part of the American Expeditionary Force.^x Captain Mallon was on the

Western Front in France from June 1918 to August 1918 and first went into battle on July 4th, 1918 at Hamel, France. From August 1918 to October 1918, they were part of the American Front in France.^{xi}

Capt. Mallon participated in battles at Hamel, the Somme Offensive, Boise de Forges and Meuse Argonne.^{xii} “The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, also known as the Mass-Argonne Offensive and the Battle of the Argonne Forest, was a major part of the final Allied Offensive of World War I that stretched along the entire Western Front. The Americans faced the most difficult natural obstacle, the dense Argonne Forest. General John Pershing’s opening surprise attack advanced 5 miles (8 km) along the Meuse River but only 2 miles (3 km) in the difficult Argonne Forest sector. It was fought from September 26, 1918, until the Armistice of 11 November 1918, a total of 47 days. The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the largest in United States military history.”^{xiii}

On the first day of this offensive, September 26th, 1918, “in the Bois-de-Forge campaign at the battle of Forges Woods, 41 year-old Captain Mallon along with nine men became separated from the balance of his company because of a fog. Captain Mallon, with his nine soldiers, pushed forward and attacked nine active hostile machineguns, capturing all of them without the loss of a man. Continuing on through the woods, he led his men in attacking a battery of four 155-millimeter howitzers, which were in action, rushing the position and capturing the battery and its crew. In this encounter Captain Mallon personally attacked one of the enemy with his fists. Later, when the party came upon two more machineguns, this officer sent men to the flanks while he rushed forward directly in the face of the fire and silenced the guns, being the first one of the party to reach the nest. The exceptional gallantry and determination displayed by Captain Mallon resulted in the capture of 100 prisoners, eleven machineguns, four 155-millimeter howitzers and one antiaircraft gun.”^{xiv; xv; xvi}

Five days later on October 1st, 1918, one of the casualties of this battle was Captain Mallon as he was wounded by a high explosive in his right thigh at Meuse River. He was under medical care at Base Hospital 35#, in Mars, France from October 1st to January 14th, 1919. He was not permanently disabled and arrived at Hoboken, New Jersey on May 17th, 1919. He was discharged from service at Camp Grant, Illinois on June 20th, 1919 as a Captain and had turned 41 years old five days earlier.^{xvii} He was placed on the Emergency Officers Retirement List June 11, 1928.^{xviii}

Before Captain Mallon left France, on January 22, 1919, he was named one of General John J. Pershing’s 100 heroes’ of World War I. “On February 2, 1919 General Pershing presented to Captain Mallon the: “Congressional Medal of Honor” for conspicuous gallantry on Sept. 26th, 1918 at the battle of Forges Woods. He received the “French Legion of Honor” and the French “Croix de Guerre with Palm” and decorated by Vice Admiral Mabeau of the French Navy for the above acts.”^{xix; xx; xxi; xxii}

The Post War Years

Captain Mallon returned to Minneapolis, Minnesota but did not resume his former activities in civil life, as his injured leg was not as strong as formerly. Instead he accepted a position with the Building Trades Council of Minneapolis.^{xxiii}

Capt. Mallon also became involved in politics and ran for Lieutenant Governor on the Republican ticket. The Working People’s Non-partisan Political League endorsed him and those on his ballot on June 21, 1920.^{xxiv} Capt. Mallon’s ticket lost the primary by 15% of the vote.^{xxv; xxvi}

The League promoted an alternative veterans organization.^{xxvii} Based in Minneapolis - and sustained by the Nonpartisan League - the World War Veterans hoped to be a more sympathetic version of the American Legion. Capt. Mallon became the most prominent member.^{xxviii, xxix, xxx} Last mention of Capt. Mallon’s political activities for unionizing the common man was when he was manager of the NPL in Kansas and worked to get the farmers to organize.^{xxxi} Captain Mallon was a Hennepin County commissioner for eight years. In December 1920, the commission’s activities organized a strong county war records committee, which included Captain Mallon.^{xxxii}

Early in 1934, Captain Mallon had a stroke and was taken to the Veteran's hospital at Fort Snelling. On March 1st he was transferred to the St. Cloud VA Hospital where he died August 2, 1934 at age 57.^{xxxiii; xxxiv; xxxv} Two different obituaries were published for Captain Mallon's funeral. The first, published on Saturday, August 4, 1934, gave the information that his funeral was on Monday morning, August 6th at St. Ann's Catholic Church and mentioned his wife, Effie Mallon, and two sons, George H. Jr., 14, and Robert, 9. "Captain Mallon belonged to the Russell Gaylord post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and was a member of the Disabled American Veterans. He was a charter member of the order of the Purple Heart."^{xxxvi} This obituary also included these lines: "His heroism in the World war won Captain Mallon the Congressional Medal of Honor, the most distinguished military honor the United States can bestow. He also was honored by England, France, Italy and other countries."^{xxxvii}

The second obituary published on Sunday, August 5, stated: "Captain George H. Mallon will be accorded military honors at funeral services to be conducted Monday under auspices of Gaylord post, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans. Short services will be at 8:30 a.m. in the home, 3601 Washburn avenue north, to be followed by requiem mass at St. Ann's church, 1213 Twenty-sixth avenue north. There will be a firing squad and guard of honor from the Third infantry at the grave in St. Mary's cemetery."^{xxxviii}

The remainder of this second obituary lists the names of the seven active pallbearers, one being a general and another a lieutenant. This is followed by the names of 72 honorary pallbearers. This second list of prominent men included four generals, three colonels, one captain, one lieutenant, three doctors, five reverends, four judges, Mayor Bainbridge of Minneapolis and Minnesota Governor Floyd B. Olson.^{xxxix}

Five years later in 1939, Fort Snelling National Cemetery was established in Minnesota. Captain Mallon's body, which had been buried in a private cemetery, was reinterred. His was the first burial in this National Cemetery on July 5, 1939 with Capt. Mallon being burial #1 and the main street in the cemetery, Mallon Blvd, named after him.;^{xl; xli; xlii; xliii; xliv} Ogden, Kansas honored their native son by naming Mallon Road for Captain George Henry Mallon.^{xlv}

Captain Mallon's wife, Effie Campbell Mallon, died on December 31, 1970 in Johnson County, Kansas at age 82, thirty-six years after her husband's death.^{xlvi; xlvii} Their oldest son, George Henry Jr. died on December 17, 1988.^{xlviii; xlix} Son Robert Currie Mallon died January 14, 2009 in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota.^{l; li}

Captain Mallon's award documents are at the Military Historical Society of Minnesota's Museum at Camp Ripley, Little Falls and have been restored and conserved.^{lii} According to a granddaughter in Kansas, Captain Mallon's medals were on display at Ft. Riley, Ogden, Kansas and were included in a traveling display around the United States some years ago.

Captain George H. Mallon is one of only two WWI Medal of Honor recipients from Minnesota. He is one of General John J. Pershing's top 100 heroes of World War I. Awards:

**Congressional Medal of Honor
Purple Heart
Philippine Campaign Medal
World War I
Legion of Honor (France)
Croix de Guerre with palm**



(Photos from Find A Grave & MN Campaign - see sources.)

Compiled by Joyce Rohloff Gardner
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