

## HENRY J. GUDEMAN

### KILLED IN ACTION – WORLD WAR II

Henry J. Gudeman was born in 1920, the son of Henry and Mary (Ahrens) Gudeman of St. Anthony. He was the fourth of six children: John (who died in infancy), Bill, Ben, Henry (Jr.), Mary (Herx) and Herman. All three brothers, Bill, Ben and Henry, served in the U.S. armed forces during WW II.

Henry was a corporal in the Army Field Artillery, serving with the Headquarters Battery, 231<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Armored Division. He was commended for his valor during combat in France on September 25, 1944, when he repaired a vital telephone line to a forward observation post while he was under constant enemy fire.

Henry was killed by hostile fire on November 16, 1944, while working on a communications line. The 6<sup>th</sup> Division had just crossed the Nied River four days before, fighting its way against strong opposition through the Lorraine region of France.

Cpl. Henry Gudeman is buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery at St. Avold, France, Lot C, Row 20, Grave 104. The Lorraine American Cemetery covers 111 acres and contains 10,481 American service members who were killed in that region in WW II. It is the largest American military cemetery in Europe. <https://www.abmc.gov/Lorraine> This is the same cemetery where another soldier from the community killed in action in WWII, Edwin Schwieterman, is buried.

Henry Gudeman was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart medal on January 20, 1945. The war in Europe ended four months later. His brothers Bill and Ben made it safely home.

**Americans in World War II.** World War II began in September 1939 when the German army attacked Poland and Britain and France declared war. The United States was brought into the war on the Allied side with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941. America mobilized, and 16 million Americans were either drafted or volunteered for service during the war: 405,000 were killed, 671,000 wounded.

**European Theater.** Two million American soldiers served in the European theater of operations. Between the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944, and the end of the war in Europe on May 8, 1945, 104,812 were killed in action. Henry J. Gudeman was one of them.

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