



ARCHIBALD COATS

1910-1915

"ARCHIE" COATS was born August 20th, 1896, at Newport, R. I. He was the only son of Alfred Mainwaring and Elizabeth Barnewell Coats. He prepared for college at St. Paul's School, of which his father and his uncle, Stuart Coats, also are graduates.

Being too young for an officers' training camp Archie left college in his Freshman year to enlist as a private in the Field Artillery, at Providence, May 15th, 1917. He was mustered into service on July 26th, was advanced to Corporal the next day, and was advanced to Sergeant September 7th, at Boxford, Mass. He sailed for France with Battery B., 103rd F. A., October 8th, 1917. At the end of November he was recommended for a commission,

124

but was not sent to the officers' school at Saumur until May 27th, 1918. Meanwhile he had fought continuously from February with the 103rd F. A. After graduating at Saumur with an average of over 82.5 per cent, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant and assigned to Battery D, 19th F. A. Within a week he was appointed Executive Officer of his battery and was in the thick of the fighting until taken ill. He died of pneumonia at Hospital 82, Toul, France, October 25th, 1918.

Lieutenant Colonel William E. Dunn, commanding the 19th F. A., wrote the following appreciation on November 13th, 1918: "Lieutenant Coats was a member of Battery D. and during the short time he had been with the regiment had endeared himself to all who came in contact with him, by his courage, ability and unfailing cheerfulness and good humor, under very trying conditions. While his battery was being heavily shelled he showed his courage and unswerving devotion to duty by caring for wounded men, at a time when the danger was greatest. This service earned for him a recommendation for the Distinguished Service Cross. On October 19th he was evacuated to the hospital with a severe cold, and died very unexpectedly of pneumonia a few days later. His death was a great shock to all who knew him, and his place has been very hard to fill."

On March 27th, 1919, he was awarded a U. S. Army citation signed by General Pershing: "Second Lieutenant Archibald Coats, Bat. D. 19th F. A., for distinguished and exceptional gallantry at Thiaucourt on 26th September 1918, in the operations of American Expeditionary Forces, in testimony thereof, and as an expression of appreciation of his valor, I award him this Citation."

To have died in the defense of any noble cause is glorious, but to have willingly and cheerfully offered one's life in the service of our Country for the protection of the

weak against the strong, in the cause of liberty and freedom, is exceedingly glorious. Archie Coats was brave in life and fearless in death. He travelled the path of duty with a high courage and an undaunted spirit. His name is written among the immortals. He had a big heart—a heart that beat strong in sympathy for the weak, the unfortunate and less favored ones of the world. He served at our School Camp and he never forgot the experience. The first pay he ever received in the army he sent as a donation to help some unfavored lad of the city to the camp and its instructive influence. And ever since his death portions of his money have always come to mark Archie's undying interest in the work for others less fortunate than himself.

What we say about this boy may not long be remembered, but what he did will ever be cherished and remembered as a glorious heritage and inspiration to the succeeding generations of sons of St. Paul's.