FROM DAYS PAST

Ernest A. Love
...a Hometown Hero

PRESENTED BY SHARLOT HALL MUSEUM

The "war to end all wars" was halted at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 -- one hundred years ago this month. As we remember those who served *"Over There!"*, let's pull ***From Days Past*** the story of one of Prescott's memorable sons. Today, we know he is honored in the ***"Arizona and the Great War"*** exhibit currently at Sharlot Hall Museum, and the Prescott Municipal Airport was named **E.A. Love Field** in his honor.

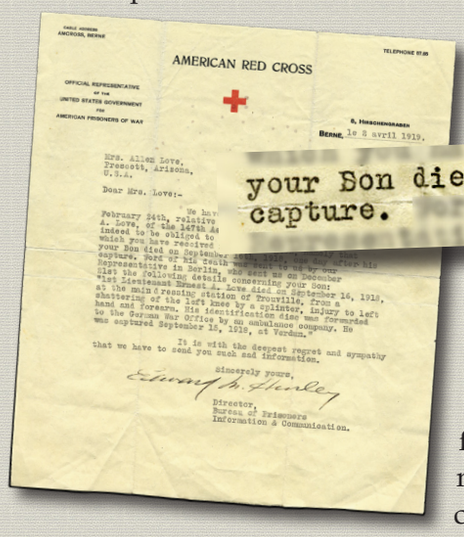
The story of Love, however, goes well beyond his being a hometown hero ...a combat pilot with the 147th Aero Squadron flying his Spad XIII on 22 sorties... or his being listed as missing in action on September 15, 1918.

It begins in Prescott... as an exceptional young man... a popular student and stand-out player for the Prescott High School football team... and as president of his senior class and an active Boy Scout.

Love attended Stanford University to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering, but left in his junior year to join the U.S. Army Signal Corps. From his class of 15, he was the only one who qualified for pilot training, and was sent to flight school in France and aerial gunnery training in Italy. He was ultimately stationed in France at the height of American involvement in war-torn Europe, mid-1918.

His correspondence home was frequent and detailed, including illustrations and photos of the planes he flew. Letters began, "My Dear Mother and Father," and ended with "Lots of Love" ...and were consistent, dating from February 1917 to September 12, 1918, after which the letters ceased.

His parents worried, waited and wondered. Officially listed as M-I-A missing in action), they held out hope. After the Armistice of Nov. 11, 1918, they were in constant contact the War Department for news.



AMERICAN RED CROSS

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

Berne, le 8 avril 1919.

Mrs. Allen Love,
Prescott, Arizona,
U.S.A.

Dear Mrs. Love:-

We have received from the Central Office at Washington the following details concerning your Son 1st Lieutenant Ernest A. Love died on September 16, 1918, at the main dressing station of Trouville, from a shattering of the left knee by a splinter, injury to left hand and forearm. His identification disc was forwarded to the Persons War Office by an ambulance company. He was captured September 15, 1918, at Verdun."

It is with the deepest regret and sympathy that we have to send you such sad information.

Sincerely yours,
Edward N. Hinkley
Director,
Bureau of Prisoners
Information & Communication.

your Son died on September 16th, 1918, one day after his capture.

The letter from the American Red Cross station in France arrived in Prescott in April 1919.

The letter did not share the story of a French priest who rescued the mortally wounded pilot from the burning plane, nor his combat wounds, nor his simple burial the following day in the church cemetery. That information came to light in 1921 when his family arranged for Love's body to be disinterred from the church cemetery and reinterred) at Arlington National Cemetery, with a gravesite inscription that states:

"If I am to give my life for this cause, I am satisfied. There is no way I would rather go than serving my Country."

Arizona and the GREAT WAR

NEXT MONTH: *"The Traditions of a Frontier Holiday in the Arizona Territory, c.1870s"*