



The "Hole" at Fort Leavenworth in the sub-basement. Behind the wooden door are bars - the board and blankets are the facilities granted for the sole respite from the monotony of solitary - sleep.

The following excerpt is taken from **Ben Salmon's "An Open Letter to President Wilson,"** written on October 14, 1919, while he was still in prison, after the war had ended.

"Religious objectors are such through their faith in God. They believe the best way to preserve the nation's honor is to avoid dishonoring God; the best way to conquer an enemy is to treat him as God prescribes. The religious objector helps his country more in one hour than a regiment of military men could in a hundred years, for God holds the destiny of nations in the palm of His hand. To serve Him is to ensure the country's future. . ."



Holy Prophet Benjamin Salmon © Patron of Conscientious Objectors
By Father William Hart McNichols

Ben Salmon died in poverty on February 15, 1932. We have identified Ben's unmarked gravesite in Chicago and are working to raise funds for a respectable memorial marker for Ben, the Unsung Hero of the Great War.

Donations can be sent to:

Ben Salmon Tombstone Fund
c/o Jim Clune
89 Pine St.
Binghamton, NY 13905

This pamphlet is the work of **Friends of Franz and Ben**, a group formed to promote the Catholic witness of Franz Jagerstatter, an Austrian executed by the Nazis for refusing to join the killing machine, and of Ben Salmon.

Pamphlet designed by Betty Moore, www.artistinbloom.com

Ben Salmon

AN AMERICAN WAR HERO
WHO FOLLOWED JESUS
IN THE ARMY OF PEACE



Ben Salmon, Aug 16, 1920, 34th day of Liberty or Death Hunger Strike. Under observation at St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the Insane.

Ben Salmon of Denver, Colorado Holy Family Parish was a prolific writer and agitator in opposition to the United States' entry into World War I.

He was one of four Catholic conscientious objectors to the so-called "War to End All Wars" and was identified by Dorothy Day as "one of the unsung heroes of the World War."

From childhood Ben Salmon was infused with a deep and abiding faith developed through weekly attendance at Mass, Catholic grade school, and the witness of his family, which led to his firm belief in Jesus' admonition to love your enemy.

When Ben Salmon refused induction into the Army as a matter of conscience, he was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death by the military.

Ben's crime was his belief that the nonviolent teaching of Jesus Christ was based on love, not killing. Ben Salmon rejected the "Just War Theory". He believed no war could be just. He said he would not cooperate in any way with the war machine.

As a result of his determination to live his faith, Ben suffered physical torture and emotional abuse during his 2 1/2 years in military prison including 4 1/2 months in solitary confinement at Fort Leavenworth.

Ben, considered mentally unfit since most Catholics agreed to do military service, was committed to the criminally insane wing of St Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. Through the work of a Catholic Priest advocate and the newly formed American Civil Liberties Union, he was released from prison on November 26, 1920.

Ben Salmon did not return to Denver because of death threats. In poor physical condition after his release, Ben died a premature death at age 43.



The "Hole" at Fort Leavenworth, twenty solitary cells in the sub-basement. Behind each wooden door, kept shut night and day, is a human being full of vitality and energy - alone with his thoughts.

In spite of all he suffered, Ben's devotion to the Church never wavered and he worked hard to express to his beloved Church his understanding of overcoming evil with good and of Christ's commandment to love your neighbor.

We believe that Ben was a hero of his Catholic faith. We urge Catholics of the United States to support Ben Salmon in the process of beatification and eventual canonization.

We have launched the Ben Salmon website at www.bensalmon.org, and will be adding to the site in the coming months and years. We ask you for assistance in spreading the wisdom and witness of this man's faith, courage, and morality.

For more information:

www.bensalmon.org

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