

GI's body is recovered 25 years after his death

The body of Butler Rd. soldier has been recovered 25 years and four months after he was killed during World War II. The body is en route to be buried here.

Lt. Col. Richard Fred Albera, officer in charge of recovery of bodies for the Defense Department, visited the family of Pfc. Hugh R. McCormick April 7 to explain the circumstances surrounding the discovery of his body.

Pfc. McCormick, serving with the 289th Infantry was reported missing in action on Feb. 26, 1945, when he failed to return from a reconnaissance patrol mission while crossing the Meuse River between Blerick and Venlo, Holland.

The patrol boat was fired upon by German machine guns at approximately 9:30 p.m., when it was about three-fourths across the Meuse. The boat hit the bridge and capsized. All of the occupants were accounted for except Pfc. McCormick. He was officially declared nonrecoverable on Nov. 22, 1950.

His status remained the same until his skeletal remains were found in a partially dry bed of the Meuse by a Dutch girl on July 27, 1969. The river bed had become partially dry as a result of lowering of the water for inspection of locks by the Netherlands Service Department for the Maintenance of dikes,

wads and bridges.

An Army military team from Germany was dispatched to make the recovery. The remains were then taken to the Army Mortuary in Frankfurt,



Pfc.
McCormick

Germany, for technical processing. After painstaking research of records and scientific processing of the remains, it was determined that this was the recoverable remains of Pfc. McCormick.

The determination was based on the following facts:

—The remains were recovered from the general location where Pfc. McCormick became missing.

—Two identification tags were found near the remains in the river bed bearing the name of McCormick, Hugh 332 99 959, T-43-44 O. C.

—Favorable comparison of dental and physical characteristics.

Pfc. McCormick was inducted into the service Dec. 5, 1942. He was overseas 20 months and served in Iceland, England, France, Belgium and Holland.

The last word received from him was a letter written from Belgium Feb. 18, 1945, eight days before he was killed.

His father, now deceased, received his son's Purple Heart, and a message and a card of sympathy from General George Marshall. The family said it was told by the War Department that it would receive a letter giving further details. Now 25 years and four months later the details have arrived.

Pfc. McCormick was born Aug. 9, 1920, to the late Hugh and Ella (Macentee) McCormick and was the youngest of a family of 13. His mother died Oct. 3, 1942, and his father July 8, 1957.

He was a member of St. Mary Church, attended Princeton High School and was employed at Johnson Bronze Co.

He is survived by four brothers, Raymond, Ellsworth, James and Arthur and four sisters, Mrs. Mary H. Kalajainen, Mrs. Catherine Heichel, Mrs. Gertrude Hester and Mrs. Anna Powell Zurasky, all of New Castle. A sister, Mrs. Virginia Hoover, died April 27, 1957, and another sister, Margie, died in 1903. A brother, Harry, died Feb. 3, 1935 and another brother, Hubert, died in 1910.

The Bradley McGonigle Funeral Home will handle arrangements upon arrival of the body.