

## Korean War Casualty's Body Returned To Native Grinnell for Final Burial

H-R 6-23-55

Graveside rites will be conducted at Hazelwood cemetery at Grinnell Monday afternoon for Pfc. Dale Edwin Van Draska, who died while a prisoner of the Communist North Koreans on May 7, 1951.

The body will arrive in Grinnell Saturday evening and will be at Smith Funeral Home until the Monday services.

Memorial rites for the Grinnell youth were conducted on March 14, 1951 at Grinnell.

Van Draska's body is being returned to his native country for burial under "Operation Glory," an exchange of dead between the Communist controlled North Korea and the Republic of South Korea.

The graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. at Hazelwood cemetery with Rev. E. E. Beatty officiating. The American Legion ceremonial unit will also take part.

Native and lifelong resident of Grinnell, Pfc. Van Draska was born May 20, 1927, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Art Van Draska. He was educated in the Grinnell school system and graduated in 1949. He entered the U. S. Army in August 1945, took basic training at Camp Fannin, Texas and was assigned to the U. S.

occupation forces in Germany and Austria, being discharged in April, 1947, and placed on the reserve list.

He was employed, at Swift and Company in Grinnell until re-enlisting on June 20, 1950. After training at Ft. Riley, Kansas, he was sent to Camp Stoneman, Calif., and from there was sent to Korea, arriving in August, 1950.

One month later, Sept. 4, 1950, he was wounded and was hospitalized in Japan until fully recovered. Oct. 20, he went back to duty with the 21st infantry regiment of the 24th division and on Jan. 3, 1951, was captured by the Communists.

He died in a prisoner of war camp and was buried at Pyok-dong, North Korea.

Van Draska had received a commendation from President Dwight D. Eisenhower for his service and supreme sacrifice for his country.

Surviving are his parents, four sisters, Mrs. Keith (Ruth) Bortell, Mrs. Raymond (Donna) Meldrem, Mrs. Roger (Shirley) Tharp and Mrs. Charles (Helen) O'Brien; two brothers, Richard and Jim; and his grandmother, Mrs. Annie Peterson of Bancroft, S.D.

## Van Draska Rites Held At Hazelwood

H-R 6-27-55  
Graveside Services

Conducted by Local American Legion Unit

Graveside rites were held this afternoon (June 27) at Hazelwood cemetery for Pfc. Dale Edwin Van Draska, who died May 7, 1951, while a prisoner of war in North Korea.

Van Draska, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Art Van Draska, was returned to Grinnell for final burial, through the efforts of "Operation Glory", a mutual agreement between the Republic of South Korea and communist-controlled North Korea, to exchange war dead.

Memorial rites were held for the soldier on March 14, 1951, shortly after it was learned he had died in a prisoner of war camp.

Van Draska was born in Grinnell on May 20, 1927 and attended public schools here, graduating in 1949. He first entered the army in August of 1945 and served with the army of occupation in Europe. After his discharge in April of 1947, he returned to Grinnell where he was employed at Swift and Company.

He reenlisted on June 20, 1950 and was sent to Korea in August of that year. He saw action with the 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, on the Korean front. Taken prisoner by the North Koreans on Jan. 3, 1951, he later died while still a prisoner.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower had awarded a commendation to Pfc. Van Draska for his service and supreme sacrifice for his country.

He is survived by his parents; four sisters, Mrs. Keith (Ruth) Bortell, Mrs. Raymond (Donna) Meldrem, Mrs. Roger (Shirley) Tharp, and Mrs. Charles (Helen) O'Brien; two brothers, Richard and Jim; and his grandmother, Mrs. Annie Peterson of Bancroft, South Dakota.

Jack Day conducted the ritual and Charles Ziegenmeyer was in charge of the American Legion Ceremonial Unit.

Pallbearers were: Robert Jones, Howard Neighbors, Art Risse, George Turney, James Webb and Paul Weber.