



Paul Edward Piskla

Paul Edward Piskla

Born July 26, 1923

Killed in Action September 11, 1944

Paul E. Piskla was born on July 26, 1923, the son of Paul and Margaret Y. Piskla and the middle child of their five children. Paul had two older sisters, Annie and Lillian, a younger sister, Emily, and a younger brother Milton. The senior Paul Piskla had immigrated to America at age 17 in 1905 from Luboka, Hungary, coming in through New York, probably through Ellis Island, along with his mother, Christina. Paul's mother, Margaret Yandrick, immigrated from Austria. The Piskla family lived on a farm on Middle Road in Prince George in 1920, and by 1930 had moved to 12th Avenue in Hopewell. At this time Mr. Piskla worked at Tubize. Unfortunately, Mr. Piskla died in 1931 as result of an accident at Tubize, leaving Mrs. Piskla to raise the five children.

The Piskla family attended Nazareth Lutheran Church and Paul attended school in Hopewell, graduating in 1940 from Hopewell High School. After graduating, Paul was employed at the Naval Air Station in Norfolk, along with his sister, Annie, before he was inducted into the Army on November 6, 1943.

Paul was trained at the Armored Replacement Training Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and was assigned to an armored infantry unit upon completion of his training. He was sent overseas in June 1944 and took part in the hard fighting through France following the D-Day invasion, serving in the 23rd Infantry Battalion, 7th Armored Division. In a telegram dated September 29, 1944 to Mrs. Piskla, Paul was reported as missing in action as of September 11, 1944.

Nearly a year later, the August 12, 1945 bulletin for the Nazareth Lutheran Church stated,

“On July 20th, just as the sun was setting, Mrs. Margaret Piskla, received a telegram from the War Department saying that her son, Paul, had been killed in action in France last September 11th.”

That telegram read,

“I am deeply distressed to inform you corrected report just received states your son, Private Paul E. Piskla, who was reported, missing in action, was killed in action on 11 September in France. The Secretary of War asks that I express his deep sympathy in your loss and his regret that unavoidable circumstances made necessary the unusual time in reporting your son's death to you. Confirming letter follows. Edward F. Witsall, Acting Adjutant General.”

Following this a Memorial Service was held at the church. The church bulletin on September 9, 1945 included the following:

“A memorial service for Pvt. Paul E. Piskla who was killed in France on Sept. 11, 1944 was held in the church on Aug 26, at 8 p.m. The church was filled to overflowing. It was a fine tribute to a good soldier of Jesus Christ and a good soldier of the United States army. The sermon text was “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

At the time of the notice of Paul’s death, his 18 year old brother, Milton, had recently been sent overseas to the Pacific. Ironically, a just few hours before receiving the telegram on that Friday, July 20th about Paul’s death, Mrs. Piskla had received the first letter in three weeks from Milton stating that he was in Manila, Philippine Islands. One can only imagine the emotions the Piskla family felt having received the letter from Milton, then the telegram stating Paul had been killed in action.

Several years after the war was over, the government offered to bring Paul’s remains home. Mrs. Piskla wanted to see her son, however the funeral director said that was not possible. Mrs. Piskla said “If I can’t see his face, let him rest in peace.” As she wished, Paul was left in France where he is buried at Lorraine American Cemetery and Memorial, Saint Avold, Lorraine, France.

After Paul arrived in France in June 1944, he met and became friends with William J. “Billy” Boles. Although Billy had been in the Army for several years by then, they were the same age and spent a lot of their spare time together. Many years later Billy was able to contact Paul’s sister, Lillian, and told her that he was serving in the same squad when Paul was killed. Several times Billy had flowers placed on Paul’s grave in France as pictured below and visited the Lorraine American Cemetery in 2007 where he took pictures of Paul’s cemetery marker, also included below. In April 2014, when asked about Paul, Billy said he remembered Paul as being a nice, clean cut guy and they had a close friendship from serving together.

The collection of mementos and pictures included in this document were provided by Paul’s sister and nephew.

Two Local Boys Are Reported As Missing In Battles Of France

War Department Sends Wires On Paul E. Piskla, Norman Davis

Two local boys, Private Paul Piskla, an infantryman, and Corporal Norman Davis, a Medical corpsman, were reported missing in action over the weekend by the War Department.

Private Piskla, son of Mrs. Margaret Piskla of 131 South 12th Avenue, has been missing since September 11 in France, according to a telegram received last Friday.

The 21-year-old soldier has been overseas since June with an armored infantry unit. He was inducted into the Army on November 6, 1943 and trained at the



PVT. P. E. PISKIA

Armored Replacement Training Center at Fort Knox, Ky. He was assigned to combat service on completion of his training there.

Graduate HHS

A graduate of Hopewell High School, class of 1940, Private Piskla, worked at the Naval Air Station in Norfolk before going into the Army.

A younger brother, Milton, who is just 18, is now awaiting to be called into service. He also has three sisters, Miss Lillian Piskla, who works in the office at Hercules, Miss Annie Piskla, who is employed at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk, and Miss Emily Piskla, who works at Grant's.

The family received a letter from Paul two weeks ago yesterday, written September 4.

Missing Sept. 13

Corporal Davis, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Davis, moved to Norfolk about two years ago, has been missing since September 13 in France. They received a telegram yesterday morning.

He went overseas in June and is with the Army Medical Corps. Corporal Davis has been in service about two years. He received his training at Camp Forrest, Tenn., Kansas, Texas and Fort Dix, N. J., from which point he left for France.

A graduate of Hopewell High School, Corporal Davis worked at Hercules before entering the service.

His parents lived in Woodlawn for several years and later made their home in this city.

JULY 24, 1945

Paul Piskla Is Killed In Action

Was Reported As Missing In France Sept. 11

Pvt. Paul E. Piskla, who was reported as missing in action in France last September 11th, was killed in action on that date, according to a telegram from the War Department received by his mother, Mrs. Margaret Piskla of 131 S. 12th Avenue, last Friday evening. The telegram read:

"I am deeply distressed to inform you corrected report just received states your son, Private Paul E. Piskla, who was previously reported missing in action, was killed in action on 11 September in France. The Secretary of War asks that I express his deep sympathy in your loss and his regret that unavoidable circumstances made necessary the unusual lapse of time in reporting your son's



PVT. PAUL E. PISKLA

death to you. Confirming letter follows. Edward F. Witsall, Acting Adjutant General."

22 Years Old

Paul Piskla would have been 22 years old on July 26th. He graduated from Hopewell High School with the class of 1940 and was employed at the Naval Air Station in Norfolk before he was inducted into the Army on November 6, 1943.

He was trained at the Armored Replacement Training Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and was assigned to combat service on completion of his training there. He was assigned to an armored infantry unit and was sent overseas in June, 1944. He took part, with his outfit, in the hard fighting through France following the invasion.

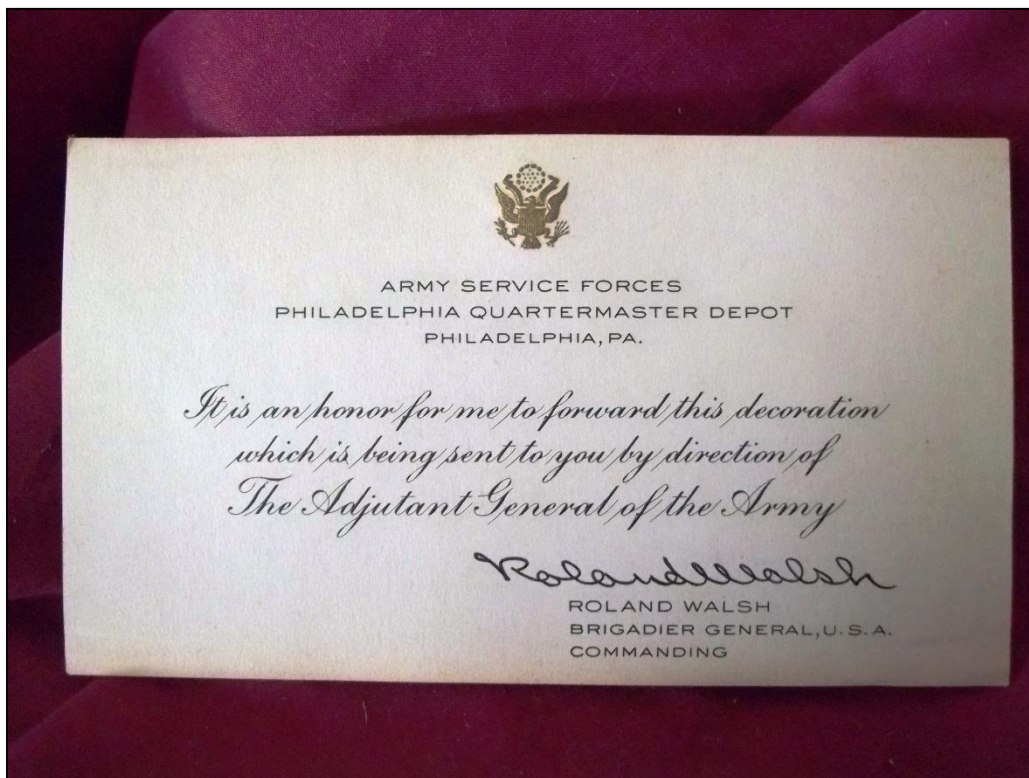
Brother In Pacific

A younger brother, Pvt. Milton Charles Piskla, an infantryman, was just recently sent overseas in the Pacific. His mother received her first letter from him in three weeks last Friday afternoon, a few hours before she received the War Department telegram. In this letter Milton stated he was now in Manila, Philippine Islands.

He also has three sisters, Miss Lillian Piskla, who works in the office at Hercules; Miss Annie Piskla, who works at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk, and Miss Emily Piskla, who works at Grant's.



Paul Piskla's Purple Heart Award (above and next two pages)





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY VESTED IN HIM BY CONGRESS
HAS AWARDED THE

PURPLE HEART

ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782
TO

Private Paul E. Piskla, A.S.No. 33543449,
FOR MILITARY MERIT AND FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED
IN ACTION
resulting in his death September 11, 1944.

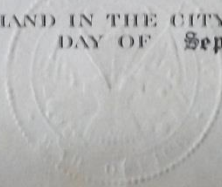
OFFICIAL:

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

THIS 4th DAY OF September 1945

Alfred O. White

MAJOR GENERAL,
ACTING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.



Henry L. Stimson

SECRETARY OF WAR



IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF

Private Paul E. Piskla

WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY

in the European Area, September 11, 1944.

HE STANDS IN THE UNBROKEN LINE OF PATRIOTS WHO HAVE DARED TO DIE

THAT FREEDOM MIGHT LIVE, AND GROW, AND INCREASE ITS BLESSINGS.

FREEDOM LIVES, AND THROUGH IT, HE LIVES—

IN A WAY THAT HUMBLER THE UNDERTAKINGS OF MOST MEN

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Harry Truman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

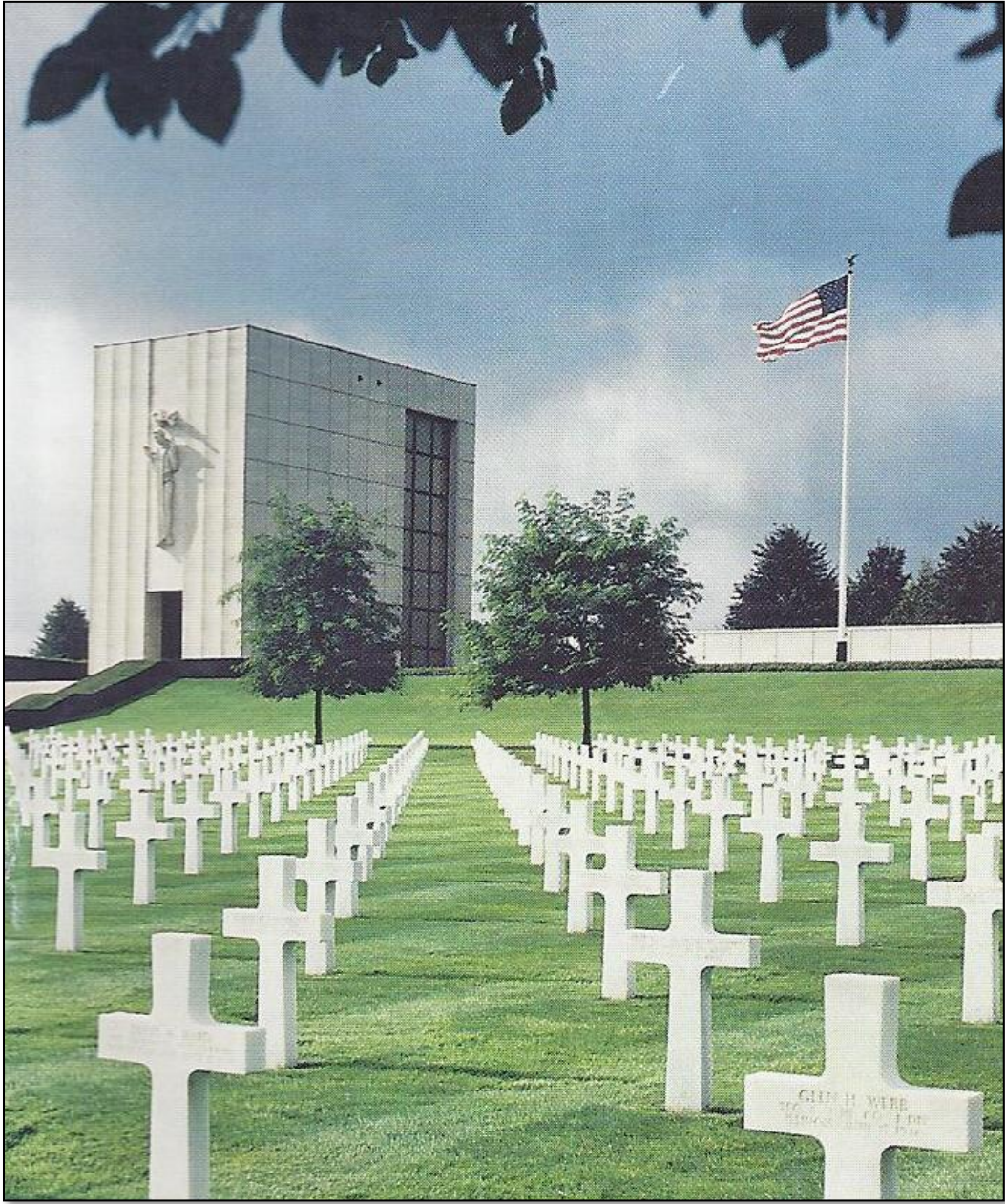
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Paul's final resting place. Photograph above by Paul's service friend Billy Boles in May 2007.

Below: Flowers on Paul's grave that Billy Boles had placed there.





Lorraine American Cemetery, St. Avold, France

May 2014

This memorial tribute can be obtained by contacting:

The Prince George Regional Heritage Center

P.O. Box 452

Prince George, VA 23875

804-863-0212

pghistory@aol.com