

**National Archives & Records Administration
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2 LT John R. McCracken

Class 49-43

ID: O1176723

Branch of Service: U.S. Army

Hometown: Westmoreland County, PA

Status: KIA November 10, 1944



Killed in action serving with the 375th Field Artillery Battalion, 100th Division



From The History of the 375th Field Artillery Battalion

On the 9th the Battalion continued in position in the "soupbowl" as the natural bowl formed by the slopes of several large hills was called by Baker Battery. The mud was so bad that the only method that could be used to get guns into position was by winching them in. Normal firing went on during the day while harassing fires were laid down during the night. The following day news came through that the First Battalion of our Combat Team had pressed forward through Etival, bringing our lines flush on the Meurthe River. It was just north of here that Lt. John R. McCracken, acting as a Forward Observer, was killed by a mine. All day the weather was bad, with a light rain falling.

On Saturday, 11 November, the plans were being made for a flanking attack by the 397th and 399th Infantry Regiments from the vicinity of Baccarat, to seize the high ground north of Raon L'Etape. Corporal Rudolph Kroeger of Baker Battery manned an OP and fired several excellent missions which resulted in the killing of 20 Krauts. Captain Arthur Drew of Able Battery and Staff Sergeant Hathaway went out to take Lt. McCracken's place. The weather turned colder, and sleet and snow fell. The forward observers and their parties were experiencing the hardships of winter fighting, without having blankets or hot food. Their only place to sleep was a cold, wet and very muddy hole.



*Buried in Glenwood Memorial Park Cemetery, New Kensington, Pennsylvania
Section UD-187, Space # 3*