

**Decatur Daily Democrat, Adams Co, IN; Monday, May 14, 2001**

Fred D. Kunkel, 77, Decatur, died at home at 10:55 a.m. Saturday after having been ill for several months.

He was born on June 24, 1923, in Root Township to Sherman P. and Fannie M. McConnell Kunkel and married Ruth El Fuelling on December 10, 1949; she survives.

He was born on and lived on a farm that has been in his family since 1845 and, in 1992, was presented with the Outstanding Tree Farmer Award by officials of the State of Indiana. He was retired from farming and was also a retired North Adams Schools bus driver, having worked in that capacity from 1963-93.

He was a World War II veteran, serving in Europe. Mr. Kunkel was held as a prisoner of war by the Germans after being captured in 1945. He received a Purple Heart for wounds suffered in combat that year.

He was also a member of First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Kunkel also was a member of Masonic Lodge 571, and American Legion Post 43, all in Decatur; the Disabled American Veterans; and Adams County Farm Bureau.

Other survivors are a son, Fred J. Kunkel of rural Decatur; four daughters, Roberta R. Melcher, Mrs. Vernon (Karen M.) Heckman, and Mrs. Ted (Emily R.) Porter, all of rural Decatur, and Mrs. Richard (Nancy J.) Romanow of Wayland, Massachusetts; a brother, David M. Kunkel of New Haven; a sister, Mary Jane Runyon of Decatur; 16 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Two sisters and one great-grandson are deceased.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday in Zwick and Jahn Funeral Home, Decatur, with burial in Decatur Cemetery, including military graveside rites by the color guard from American Legion Post 43.

Visiting hours are 6-8 p.m. today and 2-5 and 6-8 p.m. Tuesday.

Preferred memorials are to Friends of Autism, the Ronald McDonald House, and the donor's choice.