

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

KOWALSKI, Edwin Gustav "Erv"

Date of birth

26 May 1914

Age

30

Place of birth

**Wilson Township, Alpena County,
Michigan**

Hometown

Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan

Religion

Protestant

Military service

Service number

36131426

Rank

Technician Fourth Grade

Unit

**G Company,
2nd Battalion,
12th Infantry Regiment,
4th Infantry Division**

Awards

Purple Heart

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

26 November 1944

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Henri-Chapelle

Plot	Row	Grave
D	2	7

Immediate family

Members

**Herman M. Kowalski (father)
Martha L. (Schmoldt) Kowalski (mother)
Theodore Kowalski (brother)
Leonard E. Kowalski (brother)
Myra Kowalski (sister)
Clarence Kowalski (brother)
Arthur Kowalski (brother)
Shirley Kowalski (sister)
Ida C. (Klomp) Kowalski (wife)**

More information

Growing up on the family farm, Erwin worked hard raising sweet corn, potatoes, cattle, chickens, and various other crops and animals that helped support his parents and siblings. He took the responsibility of dividing up the portions of food for each of his siblings at dinner. Erwin was an excellent shot with a rifle and hunted partridge, pheasant, and deer. He was also a master trapper of mink and other game with which he provided a lot of food for his family. He was the only one of his siblings, and the first of his family, to attend high school. He was an innovator and came up with a lot of new ideas that helped the farm and saved the family.

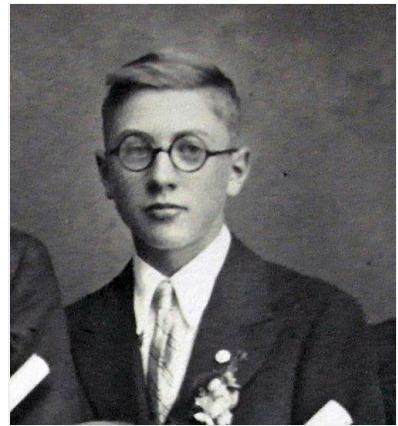
When Erwin was older he went to Detroit where he found work in the auto industry. It was during this time that he boarded in the home of Ida Caroline Zink (Klomp) whom he would marry a few years later on 3 March 1943. Erwin was inducted into the army from Detroit on 24 October 1941 he was then trained as a cook and attached to a medical unit. In the service, he spent time at Camp Barkeley (Abilene, Texas), Camp J.T. Robinson (North Little Rock, Arkansas), Glennan General Hospital (Okmulgee, Oklahoma), and was processed through Camp Reynolds (Pymatuning Township, Pennsylvania) for deployment to Europe. Erwin had been given the opportunity to serve in Alaska but declined in order to stay closer to home for the sake of his wife. However, when the war grew worse his options became more limited and he was soon bound for the European theatre, for which he selflessly volunteered, in order to go in the place of another soldier who had children. Erwin arrived in England late in the summer of 1944 and was in Belgium by October. He described to his mother how much he liked the Belgian people and that they often gave him coffee and apples as he passed through.

What set Erwin apart most was his incredible character. He was easy-going and had a good heart which was reflected by his commitment to his family. Throughout his time in the army, Erwin was always concerned for his other brothers in the war, the well-being of his parents at home, and the affairs of the family farm which was to be his when he returned. Erwin had good control over his temper and thoughts to the extent that it was said of him that his good nature was reminiscent to that of Jesus. Erwin had fond memories of picking blackberries with his mother when he was young and is still remembered as the best loved and admired of all his siblings. Erwin was killed on 26 November 1944 by a mine explosion during operations just inside the German border, near the town of Zweifall, where he was thrust into some of the fiercest fighting of the war. His youngest brother remembered how some of his belongings were sent home filled with holes. After his death, the family farm was sold and forgotten but Erwin Kowalski, who heroically gave up his youth and his life in the cold rain and snow far from his home, will always be remembered.

Edwin G. Kowalski is also known as Erwin G. Kowalski. T/4 Edwin G. Kowalski was a farmer before he enlisted in Detroit, Michigan on 24 October 1941.

Three of his brothers also served in World War II.

Photos



Source of information: Terry Hirsch, www.abmc.gov, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.findagrave.com - William Kowalsky, www.ancestry.com - Headstone and Interment Record / Kowalski Family Tree

Photo source: www.findagrave.com - Des Philippet / William Kowalsky