

Son "Coming Home"

Muncie Woman, Happy Over Army Word, Dies Suddenly

A Muncie woman died of a heart attack yesterday a few hours after making arrangements for the funeral of her war-killed son, and double funeral services for the two will be conducted Friday afternoon. Mrs. Iva O'Brien Smith, of 338 Kilgore Ave., widow of Russell L. Smith, Sr., died at 1 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Her son, Russell L. Jr., about 32, was wounded in action in Germany in World War II and died February 21, 1945, at a base hospital in France.

Dies Three Hours Later

Mrs. Smith died about three hours after she had told Earl K. Parson, mortician, that she had known for several weeks that her son's body was being returned to Muncie and that word yesterday morning that the body will arrive here at 3:55 o'clock Wednesday afternoon was the "happiest" news she had ever known.

"No one can know how happy I am, and what a relief it is going to be to me to have my son home," she told Mr. Parson. He said that he talked to Mrs. Smith, who had been under a doctor's care recently for heart trouble, about 9 o'clock in the morning.

"At the time of her husband's death in July, 1946, Mrs. Smith had told me that she wanted me to make arrangements for returning her son's body from Europe," Mr. Parson said. "We discussed the arrangements from time to time, and five weeks ago she received a telegram from the government advising that her son's body was on the way to America. The telegram told her that I would be notified by the government the exact date of arrival, and as soon as I received notification yesterday I went to see her."

Mr. Parson said he found Mrs. Smith raking leaves in her back yard when he called. It was at this point that she expressed her happiness at the word her son's body would arrive tomorrow.

Mr. Parson said he made arrangements for the funeral services with her, and that she then went into the house to telephone the Rev. Evan Bergwall of the High Street Methodist Church to ask him to officiate at the services.

At 1 o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Parson recounted, an unidentified neighbor of Mrs. Smith's called him to say that Mrs. Smith had suffered a heart attack a little while before and died. The doctor had just left the residence, the neighbor said, and told Mr. Parson

that Mrs. Smith had always said that if anything happened to her that Mr. Parson and her attorney were to be notified.

Resident Here 35 Years

A native of Randolph County, Mrs. Smith was born near Lynn in 1896. She had resided in Muncie for 25 years. Her husband, Russell L. Sr., who died July 6, 1946, was a native of Jay County and had served as ticket agent here for the New York Central Railroad for 27 years. He retired shortly before his death.

Mrs. Smith was a member of High Street Methodist Church.

Her son, Russell L. Jr., was born in Portland and graduated from Central High School here in 1932. He was employed at the A.J. Glaser Company before he entered service in January, 1941. He received his basic training at Fort Custer, Mich., and after 14 months was sent overseas. He arrived in Iceland in May, 1942, with the rank of sergeant. Shortly afterwards he was sent to England, and thence to fighting on the continent.

Surviving Mrs. Smith are a sister, Mrs. Ella O'Brien Wells of Dayton, O., and a brother, Alva O'Brien of Cambridge City.

The double funeral services will be conducted at 1:30 o'clock Friday afternoon at the Parson mortuary by the Rev. Evan Bergwall. Burial will be in Hill Crest Cemetery at Redkey after a family mausoleum has been constructed there in accordance with instructions Mrs. Smith left with her attorney.

Friends may call on the mortuary after noon on Thursday.

Sandi E Koscak note: There is no date on this article, but I thought it was interesting, anyway. Cemetery records indicate that Iva died in 1949.