

Pvt Ballard McCurley, KIA in WWII

Army Private Ballard McCurley, was a member of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division during the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest in Germany. On November 29, 1944, his battalion went to a reserve position in the woods west of the town of Hurtgen.

Soldiers, including McCurley, were told to clear a field of tree stumps so vehicles could drop off rations and supplies. Witnesses saw that while clearing out a tree stump, McCurley inadvertently set off an enemy anti-personnel mine and was killed instantly. His remains were not immediately recovered.

After the war, McCurley's remains were still missing and the Army declared him non-recoverable.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency studies unresolved American unidentified remain. They were able to identify remains found in 1948 in the Hurtgen Forest as McCurley. The Agency used location of discovery, dental, and DNA analysis as some of the methods of confirmation.

In May of 2021, McCurley was repatriated to be buried in his home town of Pauls Valley. The Choctaw Honor Guard participated in the services.