



**RICHARD NASH McINERNEY**

was buried at West Point on 21 Mar 1967, next to his brother John. He was given a most impressive funeral service with full military honors. His wife, brothers, sister, parents, and parents-in-law, along with numerous friends, attended the services. The Superintendent and Commandant, together with six classmates acting as pallbearers, completed a fitting tribute to Dick's reputation at West Point and as an Infantry officer.

Dick was born to CPT James E. and Rose Adikes McInerney. His early life revolved around the succession of

posts typical of Army life. In July 1955, Dick entered USMA, following in the footsteps of his father and three brothers. While at West Point, Dick played on the 150-lb. football team for four years, lettering each year. Athletics were an integral part of Dick's life, with academics assuming a respectable priority after his efforts on the field of friendly strife.

Following graduation, he was commissioned in the Infantry and proceeded to Ft. Benning, GA, for the Basic Infantry, Airborne, and Ranger Courses; thence to the 82d Airborne Division. While stationed at Ft. Bragg, Dick married Mary Grace LaBuda of Fairfield, CA, whom he met during his Second Class summer. Thus began the brief, wonderful and well-rewarded marriage between Dick and Mary Grace.

The dedication and enthusiasm that Dick had for the Army prompted him to volunteer for Viet Nam in 1962. He arrived there in January 1963, after a succession of schools, and was immediately sent to Dak To—an unknown place in those days as an advisor to an ARVN battalion. A year as battalion advisor completed a very rewarding tour, and Dick returned to Ft. Myer with the Old Guard as the S-4 and, later, as a company commander.

With the growing military buildup in South Viet Nam, Dick recognized the responsibility to return to combat. After an intermediate stop at Ft. Benning to attend the Career Course, Dick proceeded to the 1st Cavalry Division at An Khe. Assigned initially as Headquarters Company Commander for the 2d

Battalion, Fifth Cavalry, Dick persisted in requesting a rifle company, which he received after six months. Company D was to be his command, his pride, his profession, and his life, for the next 21/2 months.

During that time, Dick was extremely enthused with his job, earning the admiration and respect of both his seniors and subordinates. The battalion was conducting numerous search-and-destroy operations against North Vietnamese units in the II Corps area. On 11 Mar 1967, at 1100 hours, Dick's company was called upon to relieve another company pinned down by an enemy force of unknown size. They were heli-lifted into a landing zone adjacent to the beleaguered friendly company. Dick led his men into immediate contact with a Viet Cong force. When one of his platoons became pinned down in an open area by hostile fire, Dick—realizing that a quick fix on the VC emplacements was necessary due to a steadily mounting total of casualties—seized a machine gun and ran forward 25 meters, where he was wounded by a rifle bullet. He asked casualties of his unit in a ditch nearby to indicate the location of the enemy position. His men said the enemy was 20 meters to the front. Ignoring the hostile fire, Dick raised up to throw a grenade and was mortally wounded by enemy fire. For his gallantry in action, Dick was posthumously awarded the Silver Star.

Dick never had the opportunity to see his youngest son, John, who was born after he left for Viet Nam. However, his love for his wife, Mary Grace, and his other two children, Julie and Mike, dictated his responsibility to return to combat. He paid the supreme sacrifice so that hopefully—his country, his wife, and his children can live in peace.

To Mary Grace, Julie, Mike and John, and to our parents and sister who are justly proud of Dick, we offer the consolation that Dick sleeps in his rockbound highland home that was such an important part of his life. Our country has lost an outstanding, dedicated young officer. We have lost part of our life. It will be very difficult for all of us without him.

Rest in peace!

*His brothers, Jim and Tom*

*The memorial article for Richard N. McInerney's father, James E. B. McInerney 24, is on page 144 of this issue of ASSEMBLY.*

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