

He'll walk after slaying, 75

"Richette Tells Killer to get religion"

Daily News- Dave Racher

The 25-year-old decorated war hero told the judge he didn't mean to cause the death of a 75-year-old South Philadelphia man last year. "I am sorry somebody died," said Patrick Meeink. "I am not a violent person." Meeink, of Germantown, who was decorated for pulling a wounded soldier 175 yards to safety in Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm, was told to find religion by Common Pleas Judge Lisa A. Richette.

"Go to church," the judge told Meeink this week while placing him on five years' probation for involuntary manslaughter. "You have to be kind and polite." Assistant District Attorney Randolph Williams said Edwin Tustin died after striking his head in the street after he was beaten, kicked and stomped when he went to the aid of his 48-year-old wife, Janice, outside his home on Tree Street near 4th, on July 9 1994.

"This was a tragedy", said Williams. The incident began when Meeink got into an argument with Janice Tustin. He slapped her in the face and neck and shoved her to the ground, according to testimony. Her husband came to her aid and was fatally injured in a scuffle. Defense lawyer A. Charles Peruto Jr. claimed another man had done the beating, and said his client "didn't want to say anything' against the man. "You have to learn how to be tolerant with people," Richette told Meeink. "You just can't blow up at people.