

## DEATH OF CLAIMANT ENDS ESTATE FIGHT

T. John McKee, who lived as a white man for forty-five years until last March when he became a claimant to the \$800,000 estate of his grandfather, a wealthy Negro Civil War veteran, died on Aug. 4, it became known yesterday.

Mr. McKee, an attorney, died in a Fort Lee, N. J., convalescent home operated by Mrs. Millie Hart, where he had been a patient for three months. He lived with his wife at 230 East Forty-eighth Street, and suffered from a kidney ailment.

The attorney's grandfather, the late Col. John McKee, who died in 1907, left a will providing that his estate be used to finance a junior Annapolis for 200 Negro and 200 white orphans in Bristol township, Pa. This was to be carried out after the death of his last grandchild.

A routine legal advertisement caused Mr. McKee to reveal that he was a Negro. It was a notice that his grandfather's estate was up for final disposition in the Orphans Court at Philadelphia and a bid for any surviving heirs to come forward. Colonel McKee had made his fortune in Philadelphia real estate.

Mr. McKee, who at that time was in the Lenox Hill Hospital, filed his claim. A special master in the case accepted his evidence as authentic proof of kinship. He proved that he was born Theophilus John Minton Syphax sixty-seven years ago and that he had changed his name to McKee in Hartford, Conn., in June, 1904. He was a former student at Trinity College and Yale University.

Mr. McKee's death, court officials said, may make possible the final distribution of the estate.