

CHAPTER 11 – NEVER GIVING UP – A LEGACY OF NO MAN LEFT BEHIND

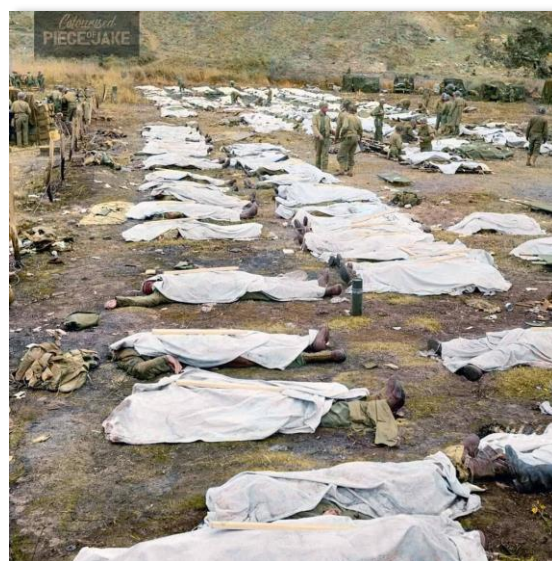
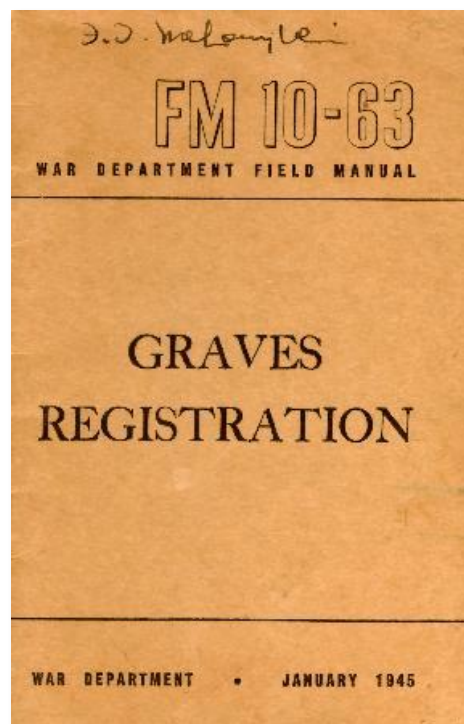
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At the war's end, many American casualties remained unaccounted for around the globe, some where they had fallen, some in the depths of the oceans, and many in temporary cemeteries scattered throughout the world where battles occurred.

Following the war, the United States Government launched a global initiative called, "The Return of the World War II Dead Program," to locate aircraft crash sites, comb former battlefields for isolated graves, and disinter temporary military cemeteries around the globe. The U.S. Army engaged the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) to perform this task¹¹. Once remains had been recovered, they were transported to Central Identification Laboratories (CIL), where technicians confirmed or established identifications of more than 280,000 individuals. The identified missing personnel were then buried according to the wishes of their next of kin. The program operated from 1945 to 1951, working until all known leads were exhausted. The Army program was a worldwide endeavor employing approximately 13,000 personnel, and costing \$163.8 million in wartime dollars.

After the end of the official program for returning the dead of WWII, the U.S. Army Mortuary system continued to recover and identify smaller numbers of WWII missing personnel. These identifications stemmed largely from reports of remains discovered by the citizens of the countries where the casualties occurred. Upon receipt of such a report, a mortuary team would investigate, recover, and identify the remains. As a result, more than 200 additional missing personnel were identified between 1951 and 1976.

Not all Soldier Dead were identified because of the condition of the body when it was received by the AGRS. Unknown Soldier Dead were assigned an X number since there was no serial number by which to identify them. Unknown remains were placed into a mattress cover and the X number was painted on the bag.



¹¹ AGRS was a continuation of the Quartermaster General services to identify and return war dead following the Spanish American War in 1898. A brief history of the founding of those services is given in Appendix D.

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After 1976, the task of recovering and identifying the remains of WWII missing personnel fell largely to the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI). From 1976 to 2003, that organization sent recovery teams into the field using anthropologists and odontologists to identify an additional 346 individuals. In 2003, CILHI merged with Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) to form the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Accounting Command (JPAC). JPAC accounted for an additional 300 individuals.

In 2003, historians at the Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) began to develop a comprehensive database of WWII missing personnel whose remains were not recovered or identified after the war. This database was a significant step in creating a comprehensive plan to research WWII missing personnel.



Historians from DPMO were primarily responsible for answering questions from family members about missing personnel from World War II until January 2010 and the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2010. Responding to this law, the Department of Defense expanded World War II accounting efforts to more proactive case development. Historians and analysts at DPMO collaborated with JPAC in researching, investigating, and nominating for recovery the cases of U.S. casualties still missing from WWII.

The AGRS laid the groundwork for the modern Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), which continues the mission of locating, recovering, and identifying the remains of American personnel from all conflicts. The ethos of "leave no man behind" that was reinforced by these post-WWII efforts is still a core principle in the U.S. military's commitment to its service members.

The dedication and perseverance of these post-WWII recovery teams are a lasting testament to the value placed on honoring those who served and ensuring that they receive a final, respectful resting place.



DPAA - Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency - A U.S. Department of Defense organization dedicated to locating, recovering, and identifying American personnel who are missing or unaccounted for from past conflicts. The DPAA's mission is to provide the fullest possible accounting for missing service members to their families and the nation. Its motto, "Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise," reflects the enduring commitment to recover and bring home fallen military personnel.

The DPAA was officially established in 2015 under the leadership of Kelly McKeague, former United States Air Force Major General, through the consolidation of several existing agencies involved in the POW/MIA recovery mission:

1. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC)
2. Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO)
3. Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL)



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These organizations were brought together to streamline and enhance efforts to locate and identify the remains of American service members lost in conflicts spanning World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and other military engagements.

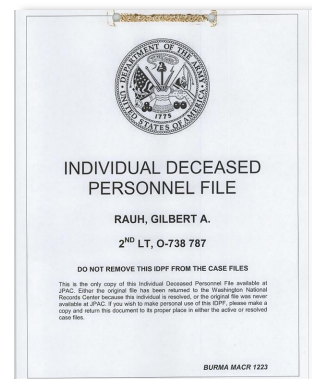
The DPAA's mission covers a broad range of responsibilities:

- Search and Recovery Missions: Deploying specialized teams of historians, researchers, and forensic experts to remote and often hazardous locations worldwide to locate and recover remains.
- Identification of Recovered Remains: Conducting forensic and DNA testing at their state-of-the-art laboratories to establish positive identification.
- Collaboration with Families and the Public: Working closely with families to provide updates, gather information, and offer support throughout the process.
- International Partnerships: Collaborating with foreign governments, local communities, and NGOs to gain access to recovery sites and historical records.

The process of accounting for missing personnel is highly structured and involves two key activities – recovery and identification. Recovery includes three key steps:

1. Research and Investigation:

- DPAA's historians and researchers analyze military records, eyewitness accounts, and other historical data to identify potential loss sites.
- Archival research is often paired with on-the-ground interviews in various countries.



2. Field Investigations:

- When a potential site is identified, an investigation team is dispatched to survey the location.
- Teams may include specialists in unexploded ordnance (UXO), archaeologists, medics, and other field experts to ensure safety and thorough site assessment.



3. Excavation and Recovery:

- Once a site is validated, a recovery team conducts meticulous excavation.
- Any remains or personal effects are carefully documented, mapped, and transported to the DPAA lab.



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The DPAA has two primary laboratories for analyzing remains:

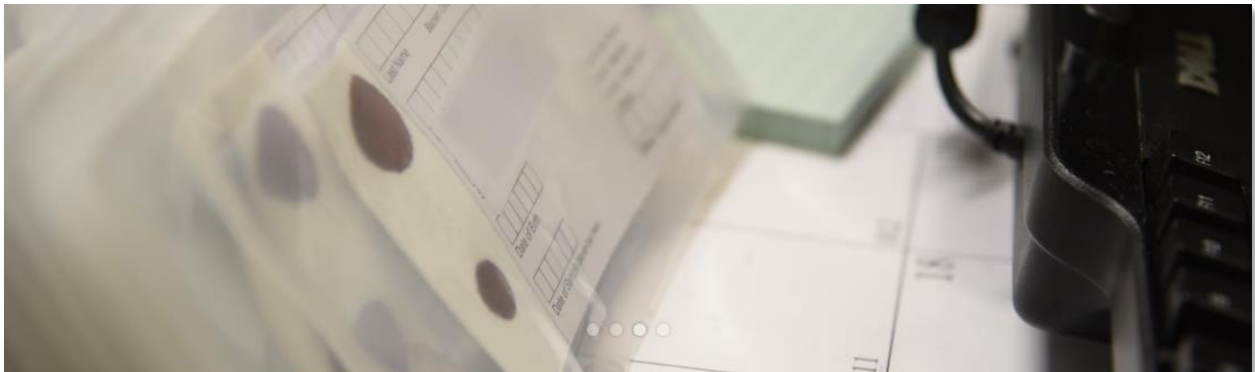
1. Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) in Honolulu, Hawaii: This is the largest and most prominent lab, responsible for conducting advanced forensic work and analyzing remains brought in from Pacific and Asian conflicts.



2. Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR) - DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. -- Millions of blood samples in the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System building serve as an exhaustive and invaluable resource for the identification of fallen service members' remains.



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The labs employ a diverse team of experts, including forensic anthropologists and archaeologists, forensic odontologists (dental specialists), forensic pathologists and DNA analysts and technicians.

A board-certified anthropologist leads each U.S.-led joint recovery effort with host countries. The Central Identification Laboratory – Hawaii (CILHI) anthropologist ensures the scientific integrity of the work, while teams catalogue and transport their findings to forensic scientists in Hawaii. This example Form 044b, illustrates the type of records kept in an Individual Deceased Personnel File.

Expert scientists work in special facilities to identify remains. With common forensic techniques they gain clues by reviewing official records that include military and eyewitness reports along with wreckage and personal items from the sites. The most valuable evidence, however, comes from comparing skeletal and dental remains to the records of missing individuals, Isotope Analysis for dietary and geographic origins and 3D Imaging and Facial Reconstruction.

UNKNOWN X-17

19. BLACK OUT PARTS OF BODY NOT RECORDED

Left side of head missing

DRP 4-171
Thana Cio mial

20. MASS BURIAL CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE)
(Wherein segregation in whole or parts is impossible)

I CERTIFY THAT THE GROUP REMAINS CONSIST OF PARTS OF 3 DECEDENTS BASED ON THE PRESENCE OF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ANATOMICAL PARTS:

One (1) unmatched left ulna } From one man.
One (1) unmatched radius }
One (1) extra left femur } From one man.

Charles E. Snow, SIGNATURE OF MEDICAL OFFICER Anthropologist

21. REMARKS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Picture a tall, young man of 22 with a slender muscular body build and with ash brown hair, fine to medium in texture.

The skull vault is average in size and a rather broad oval in outline with an average amount of backhead protrusion.

The facial proportions were long and narrow with a palate which shows anterior pinching. The lower jaw is quite narrow but deep and appears to have had a rather narrow median point.

Fluoroscopic examination negative. Tooth chart completed.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE PERSONALLY VIEWED THE REMAINS OF DECEASED AND THAT ALL RESULTING INFORMATION HAS BEEN RECORDED TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE

TYPED NAME, GRADE, ARM OR SERVICE, AND ORGANIZATION SIGNATURE
O. W. GREENWOOD, CAPT., QMC
CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY
LAND MAUSOLEUM, APO 957
10 MAR 57 10440

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Some cases require DNA typing. DNA samples are compared against the U.S. Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) database, which contains family reference samples provided by relatives including the two-spot blood sample Jeanne Rauh, Gibby's sister, provided in 2013.

Once officials certify the identity, representatives of the appropriate service and scientific community visit the family to explain their findings. Then the DPAA contacts the service member's family and provides support throughout the process of repatriation and burial.

The DPAA operates globally, with active missions in countries like Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia: Focused on the Vietnam War; North and South Korea: Conducting operations to recover remains from the Korean War; Germany, France, and the Pacific Islands: Searching for WWII casualties; Russia and the Former Soviet Union: Investigating Cold War and WWII losses.

Its work often requires extensive diplomatic coordination, as many loss sites are in remote or politically sensitive areas. In recent years, the DPAA has formed partnerships with various nations, museums, universities, and private organizations to expand its reach.

Impact and Achievements:

The DPAA and its founding organizations have made significant progress in recovering and identifying thousands of American service members over the years. For example:

- Over 1,500 Vietnam War service members have been accounted for since 1973.
- Hundreds of Korean War remains have been recovered and identified.
- World War II recoveries have steadily increased as new technology and historical research uncover long-forgotten sites.

Here are some statistical accomplishments that highlight their efforts:

- **Identifications:**
 - **Record-setting years:** In fiscal year (FY) 2019, DPAA accounted for 217 missing personnel, the highest yearly total achieved by the agency or its predecessors. In FY 2018, they identified 203 individuals, and in FY 2024, they accounted for 172 service members.
 - **Target goals:** DPAA aims to increase identifications and is working towards identifying at least 350 individuals annually by 2025. A provision of the 2010 Defense Authorization Act requires the DoD to fund recovery efforts to account for at least 200 individuals each year.
 - **Conflict-specific identifications:**
 - In FY 2017, DPAA identified 143 individuals from World War II, 42 from the Korean War, and 16 from the Vietnam War according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).
 - In FY 2019, 140 identifications were from World War II, 72 from the Korean War, and 5 from the Vietnam War according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

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- In FY 2024, 135 identifications were from WWII, 33 from the Korean War, and 4 from the Vietnam War according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).
- **Family Reference Samples:** DPAA emphasizes the importance of Family Reference Samples for DNA comparisons, crucial for identifying remains. To do so, they do significant genealogical work to identify kin. They have achieved high coverage: 92% for the Korean War missing, 85% for Vietnam War missing, and 6% for WWII missing.
- **Advanced Technologies:** DPAA leverages advanced scientific methods, including new DNA technologies like Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) capture, to enhance identification capabilities. They have also implemented new higher throughput Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) instruments and optimized DNA processing methods, leading to a 12% increase in DNA analyses reported to DPAA in FY 2024 year-to-date compared to the previous year.
- **Collaborations and Partnerships:** DPAA actively collaborates with foreign governments, Department of Defense and other U.S. agency partners, and private organizations to achieve its mission. These partnerships are crucial to their success. In FY 2024, DPAA established 6 new formal partnerships, bringing the total number of active partners to 106.
- **Operations and Missions:** DPAA conducts field investigations and recovery missions in numerous countries. In FY 2019, they planned 44 missions in 12 countries, executing 33 of them. They also engage in disinterment operations, such as completing 3 disinterment missions at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) and one at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial (MACM) in early 2024, resulting in the recovery of 16 Korean War Unknowns and 6 WWII Unknowns at the NMCP, and 35 WWII Unknowns at the MACM according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

While the DPAA has seen many successes, it faces ongoing challenges:

- **Remote and Hazardous Sites:** Many recovery locations are difficult to access, such as mountain ranges, jungles, or underwater sites.
 - **Degradation of Remains:** In some cases, the condition of remains makes identification extremely challenging, particularly for older conflicts.
 - **Diplomatic and Political Hurdles:** Engaging with countries like North Korea or navigating sensitive historical issues in places like Russia requires careful negotiation.
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