

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
SAN ANTONIO DIVISION

JOHN A. PATTERSON, et al.,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	No. 5:17-CV-00467
)	
DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING)	
AGENCY, et al.,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

THIRD DECLARATION OF GREGORY J. KUPSKY

I, Dr. Gregory J. Kupsy, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I am currently a historian in the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency’s (DPAA) Indo-Pacific Directorate, and have served in that position since January 2017. Among other things, I am responsible for coordinating Directorate manning and case file preparation for Family Update conferences, and I am the lead historian for all research and casework on missing servicemembers from the Philippines. I also conduct archival research in the Washington, D.C. area to support DPAA’s Hawaii-based operations.

2. The statements contained in this declaration are based on my personal knowledge and DPAA records and information made available to me in my official capacity.

Qualifications

3. I have been employed by DPAA or one of its predecessor organizations, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), since May 2011. I served as a historian for JPAC from May 2011 to July 2014, and was the research lead for the Philippines, making numerous



trips to the Philippines to coordinate with government officials, conduct research and witness interviews, and survey possible burial and aircraft crash sites, along with investigations and trips to other countries. From July 2014 to October 2015, I served as the World War II Division Supervisor (spanning the transition from JPAC to DPAA), overseeing research, interviews, field investigations, and reporting on the search for over 73,000 missing World War II servicemembers worldwide. From October 2015 to December 2016, I served as Case Support Manager for the Asia-Pacific Directorate, overseeing a disinterment program aimed at identifying unknowns from the Pacific and China-Burma-India Theaters of World War II, along with setting and enforcing research standards, processes, and formats for the multidisciplinary teams.

4. I received a Ph.D in Modern U.S. History from The Ohio State University in 2010. In February 2010, I was selected for a research fellowship by the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), and served with JPAC in Hawaii from April 2010 to May 2011, writing an in-depth study of the Philippines and proposing strategies for recovering remains of missing U.S. service members from World War II from that country. My awards, membership in professional organizations for historians, published articles, and presentations to professional audiences are reflected in my curriculum vitae. See Exhibit 1.

Disinterment Research

5. DPAA's standard procedure for disinterment research is to compile a "short list" of candidates for each unknown set of remains. Historians compile a candidate list, conducting historical analysis to identify possible candidates based on the location from which the remains were recovered, known circumstances of the loss, and information about how the remains were processed over the years.

6. DPAA forensic anthropologists and odontologists then go through the candidate list, comparing the personnel files and medical records of the candidates—if available—to the X-file. Scientific and medical records, such as dental records, are evidence that may rule out certain candidates.

7. The “short list” of final candidates based on historical analysis and scientific evidence is used by DPAA in making its recommendation for or against a specific disinterment, and it is also used to guide the Service Casualty Offices in requesting DNA family reference samples to support a disinterment.

8. Servicemembers who are mentioned in an X-file or other associated historical records are weighed seriously as potential candidates and are often prominent on the “short list.” But mere mention in the records is insufficient to propose disinterment because all candidates need to be considered. After all, postwar investigators made those initial associations but ruled them out, often for valid reasons. Many disinterments have occurred in which an unknown was ultimately identified as someone other than the individual(s) mentioned in the file. It is not reasonable to assume that an initial association was made on the basis of reliable evidence that was never recorded. Indeed, during AGRS’s recovery efforts after World War II, they often had less information at the time they were collecting remains and witness statements than could be later gathered and assessed when proposed identifications were being reviewed.

9. DPAA’s analytic process does not rely on one-to-one comparison of just one servicemember to one set of unidentified remains, nor does it contemplate disinterment to provide negative proof that a specific set of remains is not a specific servicemember. Either approach would be inefficient and counterproductive. By definition, research centered on one individual excludes evidence pointing to other, possibly better, candidates. Because DPAA aims

to account for as many servicemembers as possible, it is inefficient to pull remains from the ground before appropriate preparations have put DPAA in the best possible position to identify those remains. To serve the agency's mission to provide the fullest possible accounting for unidentified remains, DPAA only recommends disinterment when it has a reliable list of candidates based on historical and scientific evidence and when DoD has received sufficient DNA family reference samples or other medical means of identification to support the identification effort once disinterment occurs. A "negative proof" disinterment is even more counterproductive, in that it would likely neither resolve the missing individual nor aid in the identification of the unknown.

10. Historical research is a valuable and reliable piece of the identification process. While the relevant historical records contain various types of errors, appropriate historical research can limit the effect of such errors. Historians can weigh assumptions in the records against the balance of other available evidence, and set aside those determined to be invalid. An excellent example is a historical record's association of a specific servicemember with an unknown. Other evidence can sometimes prove the assumption underlying the association to be wrong; or, at the very least, suggest other candidates for comparison to the unknown *in addition to* the named individual, *in case* the assumption was wrong.

11. Admittedly, historical research cannot completely eliminate the possibility of errors in the records. This is part of the reason why DPAA requires a list of possible candidates, and not just the likeliest candidate, in a disinterment case. A broader list, with DNA samples collected, prepares DPAA to make an identification if the portions of the record DPAA found most reliable in selecting the likeliest candidate turn out to be inaccurate.

12. The same historical analysis is also used after disinterment to assist in the

identification process. While forensic analysis takes the lead post-disinterment, it is always analyzed in light of the historical information regarding the loss of the servicemember(s) and the recovery of the remains.

American Graves Registration Service

13. After World War II, the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), a branch of the Office of the Quartermaster General, was tasked with searching throughout dozens of Pacific islands and territories for tens of thousands of remains. In support of this mission, the War Department created the “American Graves Registration Service Area Command – Pacific Theater” in May 1946 with the purpose to “maintain existing cemeteries, provide searching operations, and supervise repatriation of war dead” from that area. See Exhibit 2, Eric Klinek, Manila American Cemetery and Memorial at 2 & nn. 5-6 (Mar. 10, 2014). In March 1947, the AGRS command responsible for the Philippines became AGRS-Far East Zone (FEZ). See *id.* at 3 & n.9.

14. The AGRS “Return of World War II Dead Program” was structured to include four phases: Search and Recovery; Concentration; Identification; and Repatriation. See *id.* at 4. Prior to March 1947, the AGRS did not systematically conduct area searches. Instead, it had conducted spot searches and recovery operations in 1945 and 1946, while focusing on concentration and identification aspects of the program. See *id.* at 5 & n.18.

15. In particular, there had been a series of recovery efforts on Bataan, beginning as early as March 1945 when Gen. Douglas MacArthur personally assigned Master Sergeant (M/Sgt.) Abie Abraham, a former POW and Death March survivor, to retrace the Death March and help AGRS locate and disinter isolated graves. See *id.* at 6, 7 & n.33. It was difficult locating individual burial sites “due to the chaotic nature of the army’s fighting withdrawal down

the Bataan Peninsula,” in which battle lines changed quickly and deceased servicemembers were buried in shallow graves near where they died. See *id.* at 6. AGRS also believed that its efforts were handicapped by the illiteracy of native informants, who “had little or no comprehension of dates, circumstances, or distance.” See *id.* at 7 & n.31. An AGRS map from this era reflects the efforts to gather leads throughout the region. See Exhibit 3. The AGRS began a final, more systematic, sweep of Bataan in January 1947, and made more than 200 recoveries along the route of the Death March between July and October 1947. See Klinek Memo. at 8.

16. The concentration process involved disinterring battlefield cemeteries and moving the remains to larger temporary cemeteries before shipment of the remains to the Nichols Field Mausoleum in Manila, where AGRS-FEZ was headquartered. See *id.* at 10-12. For remains from Bataan and Cabanatuan, this generally meant that after initial disinterment, remains were promptly reinterred at the U.S. Armed Forces Manila No. 2 Cemetery, and later disinterred and sent to the Mausoleum for identification efforts. See *id.* at 12, 23.

17. For the identification stage, AGRS analysts at the Mausoleum reviewed biological and material evidence. Each time they reviewed remains, they created tooth and dental charts. See *id.* at 28-30. AGRS would propose an identification to an AGRS Board of Review consisting of three commissioned officers. If the Board signed off on the recommendation, AGRS Headquarters would forward the proposed identification to the Memorial Division of the Office of the Quartermaster General (OQMG). The OQMG had final authority to make an identification decision. OQMG could approve or disapprove a proposed identification, and determine a servicemember to be non-recoverable or an unknown remains to be unidentifiable. See Exhibit 4 at 625-26. As noted by the official OQMG history of the World War II recovery effort, “the Memorial Division often possessed important information, unavailable to overseas

commands, which could establish identity,” or, by extension, refute a comparison. See *id.* at 634.

Cabanatuan Common Graves

18. At Cabanatuan POW Camp #1, fellow POWs buried their comrades who died during roughly the same 24 hour period in a common grave. Efforts to document these burials were initially spotty and hindered by the Imperial Japanese.

19. After the war, the AGRS began disinterring remains from the common graves and reinterring those that were not immediately identified at U.S. Armed Forces Manila #2 Cemetery. In the fall of 1947 the remains were disinterred again and moved to an AGRS Mausoleum for examination. Many remains deteriorated from remaining in wet ground for several years and from being repeatedly handled. A review conducted in 1951 concluded that the various well-intentioned identification efforts had left the remains “jumbled beyond belief.” In January 1952, DoD concluded that the unknown remains were unidentifiable and should be buried at Manila American Cemetery.

20. DPAA has an ongoing project to account for the unidentified service members who died at Camp Cabanatuan. It began around 2004 with historical research and assessment of all available documentation. A sustained disinterment effort began in 2015. The project seeks to disinter at one time all unidentified remains associated with one Cabanatuan grave, with allowances for demonstrated discrepancies in grave and date associations. Analyzing each grave in turn allows DPAA to ensure that historical and scientific evidence and DNA family reference sample collection efforts are adequate to support identification after disinterment. DPAA recommends disinterment only when this evidence has been compiled and sufficient DNA family reference samples or other medical means of identification have been received.

21. DPAA's current identification effort must contend with numerous factors inhibiting identification. Among these are: (1) the primary record regarding the original burials, Captain Robert Conn's "Death Report, Cabanatuan," is incomplete and known to be inaccurate in certain respects; (2) the initial AGRS disinterments may not have precisely conformed to the graves as they were originally dug; (3) early identifications by dog tags or other personal items (whether at the time of initial burial or at the initial disinterment) may have been inaccurate (e.g., because the service member was holding the item for someone else); (4) remains from a common grave were likely to be inherently commingled when initially recovered; (5) repeated handling before final burial in 1952 likely led to additional commingling, and may have caused commingling of remains drawn from different common graves; (6) records indicate that, by 1952, remains had significantly deteriorated due to burial conditions and repeated handling. See Exhibit 5, Heather Harris & Lisa Beckinbaugh, Historical Report, U.S. Casualties and Burials at Cabanatuan POW Camp #1 (May 2017).

22. As a result of any number of these factors, during this project DPAA has found individuals in common graves other than those suggested by the records, and has found a substantial amount of commingling to have occurred, including mixing of portions of previously identified individuals with the remains of those still unidentified. For all of these reasons, DPAA does not consider association of a servicemember with a particular Cabanatuan common grave or unknown (whether by Robert Conn's Death Report or otherwise) to provide any certainty about where the servicemember's remains are currently located.

23. In its systematic approach to this project, DPAA is currently processing remains from 25 Cabanatuan common graves. In November 2018, remains associated with Cabanatuan Common Graves 704 and 822, among others, were disinterred after DPAA's recommendations

were approved. Because the threshold for family reference samples was recently met for Cabanatuan Common Grave 407, DPAA is currently in the process of finalizing its recommendation for disinterment of remains associated with that common grave.

Association Between 1LT Nininger and X-1130

24. *Abucay Recovery Efforts.* I am conducting DPAA's comprehensive study of remains recovered from the Abucay area, the temporary cemeteries on Bataan, and the missing individuals who may be associated. This requires the ordering and examination of thousands of personnel files to reconstruct Bataan cemetery maps. The goal is to determine burial patterns in those cemeteries to support the drafting of short lists for recovered unknowns. In my review of the recovery effort from the Abucay area, I have reached several conclusions from a large collection of Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs), X-Files, AGRS records, maps, and documents from the Philippine Archive Collection at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

- a. In December 1945 and January 1946, AGRS personnel disinterred at least 13 remains from the "Soldiers Row" of the Abucay village cemetery. Shortly before that, M/Sgt. Abie Abraham had taken the statement of a gravedigger who said that he helped bury five Americans at that cemetery in January 1942. See Exhibit 6. One of these sets of remains, labelled X-1130, came from Grave No. 9 in this row, and was tentatively associated with 1LT Nininger as discussed below.
- b. Separately, in May and June 1946, AGRS personnel disinterred 14 remains from an "Army Personnel Row" outside the south wall of the Abucay churchyard. In May 1946, M/Sgt. Abraham had taken the statement of someone who stated that Philippine Scouts and two American soldiers were buried in this row outside the church in January 1942. See Exhibit 7.
- c. While these two locations, which are about one half mile apart, were later confused with each other in the effort to identify 1LT Nininger, the locations were consistently distinguished from each other by name and map coordinates in the disinterment documentation. See Exhibit 8.
- d. In addition to these 27 disinterments in the town of Abucay, of whom 8 remain unidentified, AGRS disinterred 43 additional sets of remains from the

Abucay town area that have not been identified. One set of remains was disinterred from the Abucay churchyard itself. On February 3, 1948, AGRS disinterred remains that were identified as 1LT Ira Cheaney on the basis of testimony by COL George Clarke which is now considered inaccurate. See Exhibit 9.

- e. Another 21 unknowns came from the Abucay Hacienda area, along the battle line that extended approximately 3-5 miles west of the town area. One of these sets of remains, labelled X-3629, was associated with COL Stewart, as discussed below.
- f. There are a total of 41 missing individuals believed lost in the fighting around Abucay from 9-12 January 1942, when 1LT Nininger was killed. In addition, one missing servicemember died during an appendectomy in December 1941 and was reported buried in the Abucay churchyard, and another missing servicemember's IDPF reports that he was buried in the churchyard on January 23, 1942. Any attempt to identify remains recovered from this area should consider these additional servicemembers.
- g. Some members of the 57th Infantry Regiment killed in January 1942 were buried at U.S. Army cemeteries in Limay, Cabcaban, Mariveles #3, and Guitol. It is thus possible that 1LT Nininger's remains were transferred to one of these locations.

25. *Basis for Association to X-1130 Manila #2.* On February 20, 1944, COL George Clarke, former 57th Infantry commander, wrote a letter to 1LT Nininger's father at the request of the U.S. Army Adjutant General to answer questions the father had posed. Exhibit 10. A copy of the letter was retained by the Adjutant General. Exhibit 11. COL Clarke claimed that 1LT Nininger was buried "in grave No. 9 behind the South wall of the Abucay church." This statement appears to be the sole or primary basis for the association between X-1130 and 1LT Nininger. I further note:

- a. It is unclear precisely when the remains designated X-1130 were first associated with 1LT Nininger. It appears, due to differences in color and typeface, that both the file copy of the original Report of Disinterment (January 8, 1946) and the original Report of Internment (February 13, 1946) were subsequently typed over at some point after their creation to include information about 1LT Nininger. *See* Exhibits 12, 13.
- b. Regardless of when this occurred, the reference to an "attached letter" in that subsequent typeface suggests that the basis for association was COL Clarke's

February 1944 letter. *See* Exhibit 13. At any rate, the association was made in early 1946 because it was referenced in correspondence between an active servicemember's mother and 1LT Nininger's father between February and June 1946. *See* Exhibits 14, 15.

- c. Multiple witnesses recall that 1LT Nininger was buried in or around the church yard. *See* Exhibit 9 at DPAA0004447 (MAJ John Olson stating that he "remembers Nininger's death and was informed that Nininger's as well as several other officer's remains were recovered and buried in or near the Abucay Church Yard"); *id.* at DPAA0004449 (MAJ Cecil Sanders stating that the "remains of Lt. Nininger were brought back to the Church Yard and turned over to Father Scecina who assumed charge of burying all remains" and that he was "quite certain that Maj. [Garnett] Francis attended the internments in Abucay Church Yard"); Exhibit 16 (MAJ Harold Imerman stating "I do not think that Lieutenant Nininger was buried in the Abucay cemetery and I am quite certain that he was buried in the vicinity of the church yard."); Exhibit 17 (Lt. COL John Raulston stating that the chaplain "established a little graveyard in the plot of ground within the five foot wall around the church" estimating that "about six burials were made there"); Exhibit 18 (COL Garnett Francis stating that burial occurred immediately across the river from the church). No witnesses suggested that he was buried in the village cemetery.
- d. Apart from COL Clarke's reference to a "Grave No. 9," nothing in the records indicates that there was any other reason for the association between 1LT Nininger and X-1130, and no evidence made it a better candidate than other graves from the church yard or Abucay cemetery. The specificity of Grave 9 comes only from COL Clarke, who had departed Bataan before the burials occurred and has been shown to have given false information to other families. For instance, COL Clarke told another family that their loved one was buried in Grave 6, but Grave 6 at both the "Army Personnel Row" and the "Soldiers' Row" were identified as someone else.

26. *Efforts to Identify X-1130.* Beginning in December 1948, AGRS repeatedly sought identification of X-1130 as 1LT Nininger, relying primarily on COL Clarke's letter. The Office of the Quartermaster General (OQMG), which had final say regarding identifications, was not satisfied and ultimately disapproved the proposed identification due to witness testimony suggesting that 1LT Nininger had been buried in the churchyard rather than outside the wall or in the village cemetery and the significant height discrepancy. In September 1950, OQMG approved X-1130 as unidentifiable and 1LT Nininger as unrecoverable. More specifically:

- a. On December 8, 1948, AGRS first recommended identification of X-1130 as

1LT Nininger, relying primarily on the internment reports and Clarke's letter. See Exhibit 19. The AGRS Board of Review approved the recommendation and it was forwarded to OQMG.

- b. In February 1949, OQMG suspended board proceedings for responses to questions regarding the burial location and height discrepancy. See Exhibit 20.
- c. On April 26, 1949, AGRS renewed its recommendation with some additional information. See Exhibit 21. The AGRS Board of Review approved the recommendation and it was forwarded to OQMG.
- d. On September 28, 1949, OQMG suspended board proceedings while it conducted its own effort to obtain additional information, contacting COL Clarke and several other potential eyewitnesses. See Exhibit 22. On November 28, 1949, OQMG disapproved the recommendation, forwarding new information from its correspondence and instructing AGRS to reinvestigate the facts of the case. See Exhibit 23.
- e. On March 7, 1950, AGRS requested reconsideration, claiming that "the agreement in grave number is sufficient basis to establish the association." See Exhibit 24. On March 24, 1950, OQMG responded, pointing out that prior recovery efforts did not occur in the area of the churchyard reported as 1LT Nininger's burial location. OQMG asked for a further search and recovery operation in the churchyard itself. See Exhibit 25.
- f. After AGRS forwarded the results of the excavation in June 1950, which located only remains that appeared to be Filipino, on August 30, 1950, OQMG finally disapproved the recommendation for identification of X-1130 as 1LT Nininger. See Exhibit 26, 27.
- g. Thereafter, the AGRS Board of Review recommended that X-1130 be classified as unidentifiable and 1LT Nininger be determined nonrecoverable, See Exhibits 28, 29. OQMG approved those recommendations on September 23 and 26, 1950. See Exhibits 30, 31; *see also* Exhibit 32 (Oct. 5, 1950 Resume of Record).

27. After concluding that 1LT Nininger could not be recovered, OQMG apparently tasked Captain Joseph Vogl with following up with COL Clarke and others to see if any additional leads could be developed. He recorded his conversations between October 16 and 31, 1950 in a nine page document captioned "SUBJECT: Nininger, Alexander R. 2/Lt O-23761." See Exhibit 9. On October 16, 1950, Capt. Vogl contacted COL Clarke to inquire about the

location of 1LT Nininger's burial. On October 23, 1950, in a conversation with Lt. COL Franklin Anders, he first learned that COL Clarke might not be a reliable witness. And on October 24, 1950, in a conversation with Major John Olson, he first learned that 1LT Cheaney could not have been recovered from the Abucay churchyard because he died after the area was lost to the Japanese. His subsequent conversations confirmed the unreliability of COL Clarke and that 1LT Cheaney could not have been buried in Abucay. There is no indication in the record that anyone at AGRS or OQMG was concerned about the identification of 1LT Cheaney before October 23, 1950. Therefore, Mr. Eakin's theory that concern about 1LT Cheaney's misidentification caused OQMG to disapprove identification of X-1130 as 1LT Nininger—which occurred between February 1949 and September 1950—lacks any support in the record.

28. *Misidentification of 1LT Cheaney.* The Identification Branch of OQMG's Memorial Division concluded on the basis of Captain Vogl's investigation that the remains buried in 1948 at West Point could not be 1LT Cheaney. See Exhibit 33. It recommended comparison of another set of unknown remains to 1LT Cheaney's records and disinterment of the remains at West Point for comparison to 1LT Nininger and a fellow servicemember if 1LT Cheaney could be identified elsewhere. But the other remains could not be matched to 1LT Cheaney. Following that analysis, OQMG ultimately approved the finding that 1LT Nininger was unrecoverable on June 28, 1951. See Exhibit 34. The U.S. Army recently approved the disinterment of the remains identified as 1LT Cheaney on the basis of the misidentification. The remains have been transferred to DPAA for analysis.

29. *Prospects for Resolving 1LT Nininger and X-1130.* DPAA will compare the remains previously identified as 1LT Cheaney to 1LT Nininger and other servicemembers lost in the Abucay area. DPAA's comprehensive study of the losses around Abucay is ongoing.

Because there is evidence that 57th Infantry officers killed on the same date as 1LT Nininger were reburied in other temporary cemeteries, DPAA considers this the best avenue for finding the remains of 1LT Nininger and his fellow officers. The comprehensive cemetery study also includes the reconstruction of the “Soldiers’ Row” of the Abucay village cemetery, from which X-1130 was recovered. Once complete, a plot map of that burial area will allow the creation of short lists to support the case for disinterment of associated unknowns, including X-1130.

Finally, as noted by the OQMG, the Abucay churchyard was “subjected to heavy artillery firing both during the time it was in the hands of our forces and after its capture by the Japanese,” and Japanese soldiers were believed to have unearthed graves in the area. See Exhibit 35. Both raise the possibility that graves in the churchyard were disturbed to the point of preventing recovery.

Association Between COL Stewart and X-3629

30. *Basis for Association Between COL Stewart and X-3629 Manila #2.* The remains designated X-3629 Manila #2 were disinterred from an isolated grave near Abucay Hacienda in January 1947. The sole basis for associating X-3629 with COL Stewart is a December 1946 statement by Ruben Caragay, resident of Abucay. He told an Army team that he saw members of the Philippine Scouts’ 57th Infantry Regiment “carrying [a] deceased American” and “they said the deceased is an American Colonel.” See Exhibit 36. The disinterment report states that the remains are those of “STUART, Colonel 57th Inf.” M/Sgt. Abie Abraham, who headed recovery efforts in the Bataan area for a time, explained in 1981 that he drew this tentative association based on the fact that COL Stewart (misspelled in 1946) was the only Colonel missing near Abucay. See Exhibit 37.

31. While COL Stewart’s name is misspelled where the association appears in the file for X-3629, nothing in the record suggests that AGRS or OQMG were unaware of the

association with COL Stewart. In fact, an AGRS compilation of “Known Officer Dead & Buried [sic] Locations” lists “Loren Stuart” as missing in the Abucay Hacienda area, suggesting that the association had been made despite the misspelling. See Exhibit 38. No other Colonels are missing from the area, and there is no serviceman named “Stuart” missing from the area. COL Stewart was determined to be non-recoverable in April 1950.

32. *Prospects for resolving COL Stewart.* DPAA’s comprehensive study of remains recovered from the Abucay area, the temporary cemeteries on Bataan, and the missing individuals who may be associated may lead to unknowns for which COL Stewart is a reasonable candidate. Incomplete recordkeeping makes it difficult to reconstruct exact times and places of individual losses along the battle line near Abucay Hacienda between January 9 and 25 1942. Based on unit and the timeframe of the larger battle, between 100 and 350 Americans and Philippine Scouts may have died along this battle line, along with an unknown number of Philippine Army enlisted men. Few of these servicemembers have been identified, leaving between 90 and 320 unresolved Americans and Philippine Scouts associated with this battle.

33. *Prospects for disinterring X-3629.* In response to a family disinterment request, DPAA carefully examined the potential connection between X-3629 and COL Stewart. DPAA created a short list of 21 officers who died in the area for comparison to X-3629, on the possibility that Mr. Caragay was correct in recalling that a U.S. officer was buried there but wrong about the officer’s rank. COL Stewart was included as a candidate on the basis of historical analysis. However, analysis of personnel and medical records by DPAA’s forensic anthropologist and odontologist led to exclusion of nineteen individuals, including 1LT Nininger and COL Stewart, leaving two other candidates. DPAA is pursuing DNA reference samples for the remaining candidates on the short list to support a recommendation for the disinterment of X-

3629.

Association Between Brig Gen Fort and X-618

34. *Potential Relationship to X-618 Leyte #1.* In response to a family disinterment request, DPAA carefully examined the potential connection between X-618 and Brigadier General Guy Fort (Brig Gen Fort). In August 2018, DPAA recommended against disinterment because it was unlikely that an identification could be made as a result of disinterment. See Exhibits 39, 40. On November 28, 2018, the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs concurred and denied the request. See Exhibit 41.

35. The remains designated X-618 Leyte #1 were provided to AGRS on July 14, 1947, along with the statement that they were disinterred from the grounds of a school near Cagayan on the island of Mindanao. The association of X-618 to Brig Gen Fort rests on the secondhand testimony of Ignacio Cruz, governor of the province where the remains were recovered. See Exhibit 42.

- a. While a POW, Governor Cruz heard that the Japanese took Brig Gen Fort to the town of Dansalan in September, 1942, but subsequently flew him to Cagayan (the recovery area of X-618).
- b. Different witnesses told Governor Cruz of the execution and/or burial of “an American officer,” “an American,” “an important officer,” or “a big American” in the vicinity of the X-618 recovery site.
- c. Only one individual, “a Filipino soldier whose name [he] cannot now remember,” named the victim as Brig Gen Fort.
- d. As a result, Governor Cruz referred to X-618 as “the *supposed* remains of Gen. Guy O. Fort” in his written statement (emphasis added).

36. Multiple records agree in part with Governor Cruz—the Japanese brought Brig Gen Fort to Dansalan around October 1942 to order the surrender of guerrillas in the area. But records do not support the idea that he was subsequently flown to Cagayan. Instead, when Brig Gen Fort refused, he was executed. Beginning in June 1948—nearly a year after the recovery of

X-618—U.S. Army investigators conducted interrogations for the war crimes trial of Lt Col Yoshinari Tanaka, commander of the Japanese garrison in Dansalan. Tanaka and three other Japanese officers all testified that they executed Brig Gen Fort in the vicinity of Dansalan, approximately 45 miles from Cagayan. Not surprisingly, the Japanese officers gave conflicting testimony about who ordered the execution, but were consistent in locating the execution in Dansalan. It is unlikely that they would falsely claim responsibility for his execution while being investigated for war crimes. Guerrilla intelligence reports and a Filipino civilian also pointed to Dansalan as the site of the execution. See Exhibit 43. As a matter of historical analysis, it is difficult to understand Mr. Eakin’s decision to credit Governor Cruz’s speculation over the Japanese officials’ admissions against their own interests, the firsthand account of a Filipino witness, and wartime guerrilla intelligence.

37. While the July 1947 recovery team had associated X-618 with Brig Gen Fort based on Governor Cruz’s testimony, after the Tanaka investigation, AGRS concluded in June 1949 that Brig Gen Fort “was executed by the Japanese on 11 November 1942 in or around the vicinity of the City of Dansalan.” See Exhibit 44. In its final assessment of X-618 in September 1949, OQMG noted further that teeth present in X-618 were recorded as extractions on Brig Gen Fort’s dental chart. See Exhibit 45.

38. DPAA’s reexamination of the association between X-618 and Brig Gen Fort reached similar conclusions. In addition to historical evidence that Brig Gen Fort is unlikely to be buried in Cagayan, there are significant differences between the remains designated X-618 and Brig Gen Fort’s biological profile. The AGRS forensic anthropologists in 1950 concluded that X-618 appeared to be an individual in his 20s at the time of his death and probably Filipino, while Brig Gen Fort was 63 and Caucasian. The measurements of the femur, fibula, and

humerus, reanalyzed using modern methodology, indicate a stature between 5 feet 1.2 inches and 5 feet 6.6 inches, while Brig Gen Fort was 5 feet 8.5 inches tall. And X-618 is recorded as having a tooth present where Brig Gen Fort's records indicated his tooth had been extracted.

39. *Prospects for Resolving Brig Gen Fort.* DPAA has researched three fragmentary unknowns collected on three separate occasions across the Agus River from Camp Keithley, near Dansalan. That camp is the location where a Filipino last saw Brig Gen Fort alive, and the area from which the Japanese officers said they took Brig Gen Fort. DPAA composed a list of candidates including Brig Gen Fort and three other individuals known to have been taken across the river and executed in July 1942. DPAA is awaiting collection of DNA family reference samples for the other three individuals before submitting a joint disinterment proposal for X-629 Leyte #1, X-633 Leyte #1, and X-3815 Manila #2.

40. *Prospects for Disinterment of X-618 Leyte #1.* X-618 presents several difficulties in building a short list. Prisoners from the Dansalan area, including Brig Gen Fort, moved through Cagayan in July-August 1942 on their way to Malaybalay POW camp, but there is no record of any POW being held there beyond that point, and only Brig Gen Fort was brought back to Dansalan in late October. There is thus a distinct possibility that X-618 is associated with a guerrilla or a civilian, and could be either American or Filipino, in which case records are extremely sparse or nonexistent.

* * * * *

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 19th day of April, 2019.

KUPSKY.GREGORY.J
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Gregory J. Kupsy, Ph.D.
Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency

Gregory James Kupsky

6918 Sydenstricker Road
Springfield VA 22152
Cell: (314) 707-4059
Email: gjkupsky@yahoo.com

Education

- 2010 Ph.D. in Modern U.S. History, The Ohio State University
Dissertation: “‘The True Spirit of the German People’: German-Americans and National Socialism, 1919-1955”
Advisor: Professor Kevin Boyle
Committee: Professor Alan Beyerchen
 Professor Peter Hahn
- 2004 M.A. in U.S. History, The University of Tennessee – Knoxville
Thesis: “Making the Most of a Bad Situation: Coddling, Fraternization, and Total War in Camp Crossville, Tennessee”
Advisor: Associate Professor G. Kurt Piehler
- 2002 B.A. with Honors in History, Cum Laude, Knox College
Thesis: “Wartime America: A Case Study in Oral History”

Professional Experience

- Jan 2017 – Present Historian, Research Support Division, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), Arlington, VA
- Oversee all research support for Family Update conferences
- Conduct research and casework on missing servicemembers in the Philippines and other Pacific countries
- Conduct archival research in the Washington DC area to support research projects in Honolulu, HI
- Oct 2015 – Dec 2016 Case Support Manager, DPAA, Honolulu, HI
- Set and enforced research standards, processes, and formats for multidisciplinary teams
- Conducted recruitment and mentoring of postdoctoral fellows
- Coordinated researcher participation in Family Update conferences
- Oversaw a disinterment program aimed at identifying unknowns from the Pacific and China-Burma-India Theaters of World War II
- Jul 2014 – Oct 2015 WWII Division Supervisor, DPAA (previously the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command), Honolulu, HI
- Acted as supervisor and rater for a team of 24 civilian and military personnel
- Oversaw research, interviews, field investigations, and reporting on the search for over 73,000 missing World War II service members worldwide

- May 2011 – Jul 2014 Historian, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), Honolulu, HI
- As Philippines research lead, made eight trips to the Philippines to coordinate with government officials, conduct research and witness interviews, and survey possible burials and aircraft crash sites
- Made four trips to Germany, two to the Netherlands, and one to Indonesia to conduct research and investigations related to missing U.S. service members
- Apr 2010 – May 2011 ORISE Fellow, JPAC, Honolulu, HI
- Set up research tools for compiling information on World War II air losses
- Wrote an in-depth study of the Philippines and proposed strategies for recovering remains of missing U.S. service members from World War II
- Sep 2004 – Mar 2010 Graduate Associate, The Ohio State University, Columbus
- Led discussion sections; designed and taught nine survey courses
- 2006 - 2008 Research Project with Professor Lewis Gould, University of Texas - Austin
- Collected resources for *The William Howard Taft Presidency* (University of Kansas Press, 2009) and for an edition of William McKinley's letters
- 2006 Research for the Opper Project, Goldberg Center, The Ohio State University
- Compiled turn-of-the-century political cartoons for secondary education
- Aug 2002 – May 2004 Assistant Director, Center for the Study of War and Society, University of Tennessee - Knoxville
- Managed the Veterans' Oral History Project
- Staff member at the Society for Military History Meeting, May 1-4, 2003

Courses Taught

- American Civilization to 1877 (Ten Weeks) – Spring 2007; Fall 2007; Winter 2009
American Civilization from 1877 (Ten Weeks) – Fall 2006; Winter 2007; Winter 2008;
Spring 2009; Winter 2010
American Civilization from 1877 (Five Weeks) – Summer 2007

Awards Received

- February 2010 Research Fellowship to Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education
- May 2009 Humanities Summer Fellowship, The Ohio State University
- Fall 2008 Doctoral Fellowship, German Historical Institute, Bonn / Washington, DC
- August 2008 Humanities Research Small Grant, The Ohio State University
- May 2008 Humanities Summer Fellowship, The Ohio State University
- April 2008 Balch Institute Fellowship, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
- April 2008 Lubin-Winant Research Fellowship, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute

April 2008 Horner Library Fellowship, German Historical Institute, Bonn / Washington, DC
August 2007 Richard S. Brownlee Grant, The State Historical Society of Missouri
June 2007 Humanities Research Small Grant, The Ohio State University
May 2003 Bernadotte Schmitt Research Grant, The University of Tennessee – Knoxville
May 2002 Szold Prize for Excellence in the Field of History, Knox College
May 2002 David R. Arnold Prize for Outstanding Honors Research, Knox College

Peer-Reviewed Publications

“Gustav Oberlaender.” *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, Vol. 4: The Age of the World Wars, 1918-1945*. Washington: German Historical Institute: <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org>, 2012.

“Germanness and Jewishness: Samuel Untermyer, Felix Warburg, and National Socialism, 1914-1938.” *American Jewish Archives Journal*, Vol. 63 No. 2 (December 2011), 24-42.

“‘We, Too, Are Still Here’: German-Americans in St. Louis, 1919-1941.” *Missouri Historical Review*, Vol. 103 No. 4 (July 2009), 212-225.

Professional Presentations

“Policing Spheres: Japan-U.S. Prisoner Exchanges during World War II.” Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, June 24, 2017.

“‘Too Many Unknowns’: The Search for the Missing of Bataan.” Society for Military History Annual Meeting, Montgomery, Alabama, April 11, 2015. Panel Organizer.

“Until They Come Home: Historians and the U.S. Military’s Search for the Missing.” Binalot Talks Series, University of the Philippines - Diliman, February 29, 2012.

“The Bataan Death March and Public Perception.” American Popular Culture Association Meeting, Honolulu, HI, May 27, 2011.

“‘Self-Defense and Self-Expression’: The Steuben Society and Assimilation, 1919-1970.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, April 7-10, 2010. Panel Organizer.

“Against All Fascist Tendencies: The German-American Left, 1933-1945.” Ohio Academy of History Annual Meeting, Columbus, OH, March 26, 2010. Presented by Hunter Price.

“‘To Unify German-Americans on American Principles’: The Steuben Society, Nazism, and Ethnic Politics, 1919-1955.” Ohio Academy of History Annual Meeting, Akron, Ohio, April 3-4, 2009.

“German-Americans and National Socialism, 1933-1945.” German Historical Institute Research Seminar, Washington, DC, October 8, 2008.

“George Sylvester Viereck and the Struggle against British Re-Colonization, 1914-1945.” Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Annual Meeting, Columbus, Ohio, June 28, 2008.

“German-Americans and National Socialism.” German Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 20, 2008.

“To Even Old Scores: George Sylvester Viereck and the Battle for the Past, 1914-1947.” Paul Lucas Conference in Cultural History, Indiana University – Bloomington, March 1, 2008.

“What, No Swimming Pool?: ‘Coddling’ and the German POW.” Society for Military History Annual Meeting, Bethesda, Maryland, May 20-23, 2004. Panel Organizer.

“Denazification and the German POW.” Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference, Cleveland, Tennessee, February 2004.

“‘To Win Our War with Butter and Beefsteaks’: Camp Crossville and the Treatment of Axis Prisoners of War.” TRACES Conference on Prisoners of War, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, May 31, 2003.

Other Scholarship

“Fear and Loathing around the World: The Rise of the New Populism,” co-authored with Marc Horger and Zoltan Adam, *Origins*, August 15, 2018, <http://origins.osu.edu>.

“A Sea of Troubles: The Philippines and Pacific Geopolitics,” *Origins*, July 15, 2015, <http://origins.osu.edu>.

“Milestones: The Battle for Manila,” *Origins*, February 2015, <http://origins.osu.edu>.

“Geneva Conventions,” in G. Kurt Piehler, ed., *Encyclopedia of Military Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013.

“Responses to Immigration.” Multimedia Project for eHistory, The Ohio State University, Spring 2007, <http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/mmh/response>.

Review of Kuklick, Bruce. *Blind Oracles: Intellectuals and War from Kennan to Kissinger*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006. Reviewed for eHistory, The Ohio State University, May 2006, <http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/reviews/reviewview.cfm?id=21>.

“Prisoners of War, U.S.,” in John P. Resch, ed. *Americans at War: Society, Culture, and the Homefront*. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005.

Professional Affiliations

Organization of American Historians
Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations
Society for Military History

Research Languages

German: Good reading and speaking.

Tagalog/Filipino: Basic reading and speaking.

Training

Asia-Pacific Orientation Course, Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies,
September 2016.

Academic Service

Mentor for Post-Doctoral Fellows, Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education

- Dr. Maureen Justiniano, 2017

- Dr. Brian Price, 2017

- Dr. Dawn Berry, 2016-2017

- Dr. Eric Klinek, 2016-2017

Special Skills and Qualifications

Top Secret (SCI) security clearance.



JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND

310 WORCHESTER AVENUE
JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, HI 96853-5530

10 March 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Eric W. Klinek, ABD, Historian

Subj: Manila American Cemetery and Memorial

Overview of United States Military Operations in the Philippines, 1941 – 1945

At 0230 local time on the morning of 8 December 1941, United States forces in the Philippines learned of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. American units in the islands immediately went on full alert and anticipated a strike within the coming hours and days. At 1220 that afternoon, enemy planes appeared in the skies above Clark Field in central Luzon and caught the majority of the American B-17s and P-40s on the ground. The destruction was almost total.¹ These air raids continued for the next two weeks while the Japanese military prepared to invade the island. The main Japanese landings occurred on 22 December at Lingayen Gulf, on Luzon's west coast. The underequipped, undermanned, and undersupplied Americans and Filipinos soon began a fighting withdrawal southward into the Bataan Peninsula, where they held out against all odds until 9 April 1942. At that point, the haggard, ill, and starving survivors began the torturous 65-mile "Bataan Death March" northward to prison camps in central Luzon. The first portion of the trek concluded at San Fernando. Japanese soldiers next forced the American and Filipino Prisoners Of War (POWs) into crowded, stiflingly hot box cars for a 25-mile train journey to Capas. The captives then walked nine additional miles to Camp O'Donnell, where the Japanese imprisoned them. The island fortress of Corregidor, just off the southern tip of the Bataan Peninsula, succumbed on 6 May. The Philippines were firmly in Japanese control.

It was not until September 1944, when the Third Fleet's planes began targeting Japanese military installations in the Philippines, that U.S. forces renewed combat operations in the islands. Then, on 17 October 1944, two and a half years after the American surrender, U.S. Navy carrier planes launched air strikes against northern and central Luzon. Over the next several days they hit air fields and enemy shipping in and around Manila. The Far East Air Forces (FEAF) simultaneously carried out bombing raids on Mindanao from Morotai, Biak, and New Guinea.² On 18 and 19 October 1944, planes from the U.S. Seventh Fleet's carriers attacked Cebu, Negros, and Panay Islands. The U.S. Army 6th Ranger Battalion assaulted the smaller islands around Leyte, and on the night of 19–20 October, American destroyers shelled Leyte proper. The official return to the Philippines occurred on 20 October 1944, when several Army divisions landed on Leyte Island's east coast.³ The Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle of the Second World War, raged during that week as well. By mid-December, American forces had begun operations on the island of Mindoro. Then, on 9 January 1945, army units

"Until They Are Home"
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Subj: Manila Cemetery

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landed at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, where the main Japanese invasion had occurred three years earlier. Between 3 February and 3 March, American and Japanese forces battled block-by-block for control of Manila. This intense, brutal fighting destroyed the majority of the city and resulted in nearly 100,000 civilian deaths.⁴ Just as the U.S. Army was securing Manila, the Japanese capitulated on Corregidor. American ground forces conducted clearing and patrolling operations throughout the Philippines until the Japanese surrendered on 15 August 1945.

History of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) in the Pacific and the Far East Zone (FEZ)

At war's end, the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) had to search for and recover tens of thousands of remains scattered throughout dozens of Pacific islands and territories. War Department General Orders 138 of 10 May 1946 established "the American Graves Registration Service Area Command, Pacific Theater (Short Title AGRS-PATA) with Headquarters at Manila."⁵ Its purpose was to "maintain existing cemeteries, provide searching operations, and supervise repatriation of war dead from areas under WESPAC [Western Pacific], MIDPAC [Middle Pacific], and JAP-KOR [Japan-Korea] Sectors."⁶ Two separate AGRS commands, AGRS-Far East Zone (FEZ) and AGRS-Pacific Zone (PAZ) subsequently replaced AGRS-PATA.⁷ Figure 1 below illustrates the AGRS-PATA organizational structure.

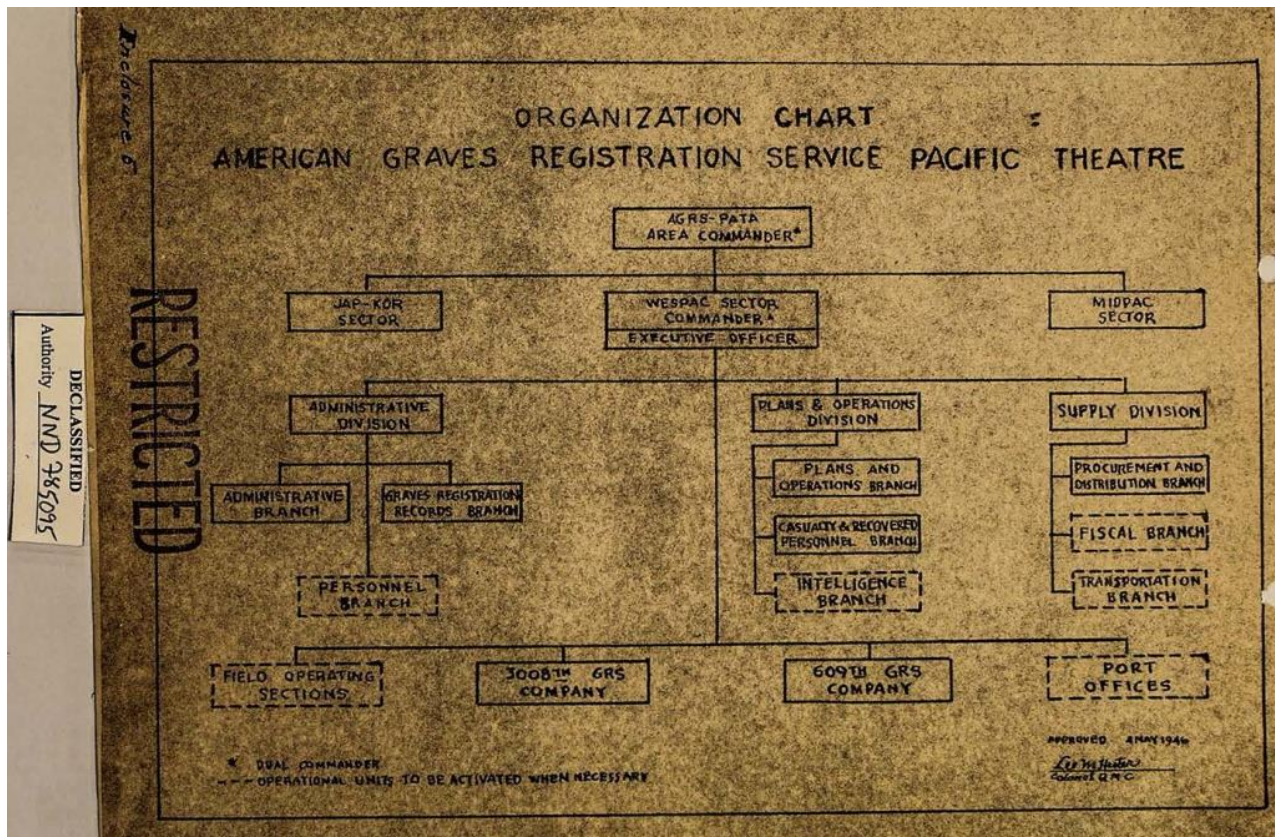


Figure 1. AGRS-PATA organizational chart.⁸

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The AGRS-FEZ is the primary focus of this memo. According to the History of AGRS-PATA, "General Order Number 34, PHILRYCOM [Philippines-Ryukyus Command], dated 22 March 1947, (Incl. 9) was published to establish formally the Far Eastern Zone with three Sectors, effective 5 March 47, and to discontinue AGRS-PATA same date."⁹ The American Graves Registration Service-Far East Zone (AGRS-FEZ) consisted of the Japan-Korea Zone (JAP-KOR), the Mariana Islands-Bonin Islands Zone (MARBO), and the Philippines-Ryukyus Zone (PHILRYCOM), which included Palau and New Guinea. Figure 2 below depicts the three FEZ sectors. The concentration point for PHILRYCOM, excluding Okinawa, would be the yet-to-be constructed AGRS Mausoleum at Nichols Field, Manila. Saipan would be the concentration point for MARBO Sector deceased, with Okinawa remains eventually transferring there as well. The Mausoleum at Yokohama, Japan, would be the consolidation point for the remains of those who died in the JAP-KOR Sector. China remains would move to Hawaii, and those from the India-Burma Zone would transfer to the Barrackpore Mausoleum near Calcutta.¹⁰

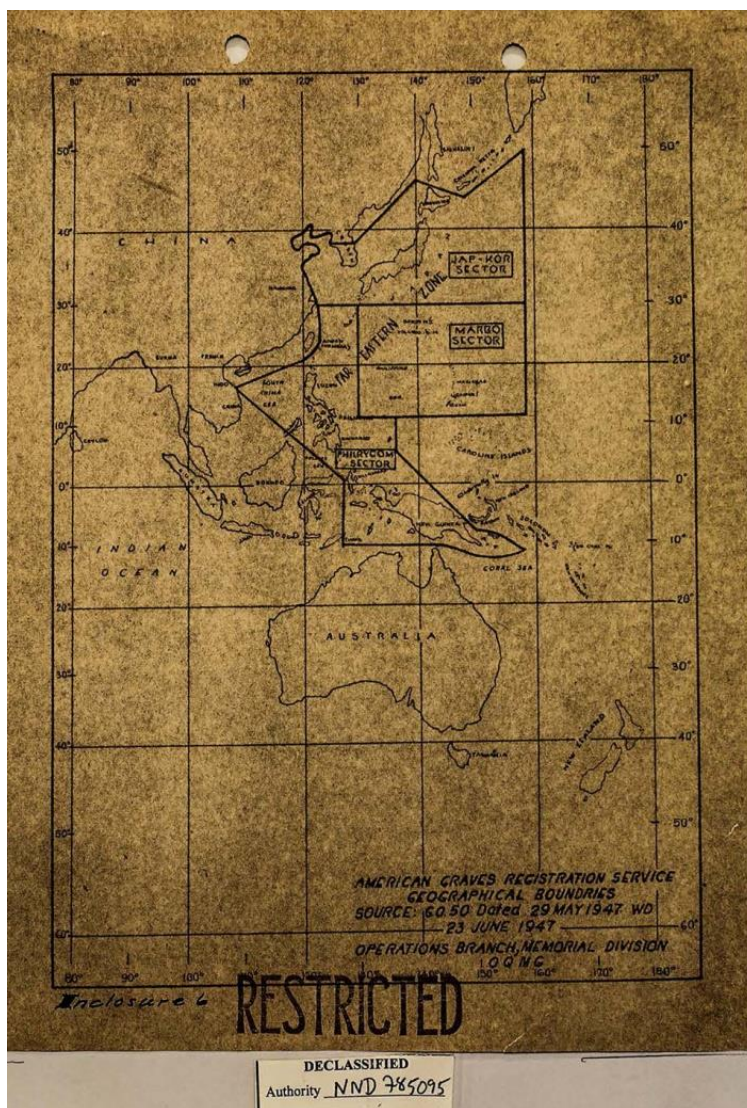


Figure 2. Geographical areas of responsibility for JAP-KOR, MARBO, and PHILRYCOM Sectors.¹¹

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Colonel James A. Murphey arrived in Manila on 12 March 1947 to lead AGRS-FEZ and PHILRYCOM. According to Edward Steere and Thayer M. Boardman, “PHILRYCOM was considered so important that the Commanding Officer, AGRS-FEZ (Col. Murphey) assumed its command as an additional duty.”¹² The Quartermaster Service, PHILRYCOM, controlled graves registration activities. In October 1947, Maj Lloyd M. Fellbaum, executive officer, Quartermaster Corps (QMC), became commander of AGRS-RYCOM; Maj Fellbaum controlled operations in that zone, including Okinawa.¹³ The AGRS remained a sub-section of the Quartermaster Service, PHILRYCOM, as of 1 October 1947. The subordinate commands on that date appear in Table 1.

Organization	Location
609th QM Graves Registration (GR) Company	Lingayen, Pangasinan
583rd QM GR Company	Okinawa
8122nd Service Detachment (PS)	Nichols Field, Manila
1st Platoon, 583rd QM GR Company	Leyte Island
AGRS Detachment No. 2	Finschhafen, New Guinea
AGRS Search and Recovery Bases	Island south of Luzon

On 15 November 1947, PHILRYCOM General Order No. 122 made AGRS-FEZ a special Staff Section of Headquarters, PHILRYCOM; this directive, however, did not institute any changes in operations or responsibilities. On 3 March 1948, Lt Col Willard L. Smith became AGRS-PHILRYCOM’s new commanding officer.¹⁵ On 1 April, the commanding general, PHILRYCOM, assumed control of AGRS activities in the Burma-India Zone, while the Eighth Army commanding general gained control of similar operations in China.¹⁶

Search and Recovery Operations in PHILRYCOM

Headquarters, AGRS-FEZ, was located at Nichols Field, Manila. The AGRS “Return of World War II Dead Program” consisted of four phases: Search and Recovery; Concentration; Identification; and Repatriation. In *The Final Disposition of World War II Dead, 1945–1951*, Steere and Boardman discussed how the geography and scale of the Pacific campaign, as well as the type of operations the U.S. military conducted in that theater, impacted AGRS search and recovery operations:

The very nature of amphibious warfare further differentiated graves registration in the Pacific, making for a wide distribution of burial places that did not prevail in the tremendous land combats of continental Europe, where the co-ordinated efforts of collecting point systems attained remarkable efficiency in the removal of battlefield fatalities to centrally located Army cemeteries.¹⁷

The immense size of the Pacific Theater made search and recovery, concentration, and repatriation activities more difficult here than in other theaters. This meant more cemeteries, more concentration points, and more shipments of remains, which also meant greater possibility for error. The mountainous terrain and dense jungles of many Pacific islands hampered recovery efforts, and the tropical climate caused remains and material evidence to decay

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quickly. The AGRS also would never be able to locate the remains of the thousands of sailors and airmen who were presumed lost at sea.

Prior to January 1947, the AGRS did not systematically conduct area searches. This was the result of personnel and equipment shortages, poor organization and procedures, insufficiently trained AGRS staff, transportation issues, difficult terrain and weather, and a focus on the concentration and identification aspects of the AGRS World War II program. Though the AGRS had conducted spot search and recovery operations in 1945 and 1946, it was only in March 1947 that it dedicated additional resources to the systematic closing of search areas.¹⁸ Previously, the commanding officer of a United States Armed Forces (USAF) cemetery planned and directed search and recovery operations in the region served by his installation. Such activities were often poorly coordinated.¹⁹ According to AGRS records, when combat operations ended in a particular area, searchers looked “almost wholly for specific individuals (rather than to close out entire areas), and the number of persons and amount and type of equipment engaged in Search and Recovery were inadequate to accomplish anything but individual searches in areas reasonably accessible to the USAF Cemeteries.”²⁰ Consequently, “All areas that were covered in individual case searches had to be re[-]searched.”²¹ Figure 3 illustrates estimated burials and Missing In Action (MIA) in the Pacific Theater. The AGRS would have to search these areas systematically.

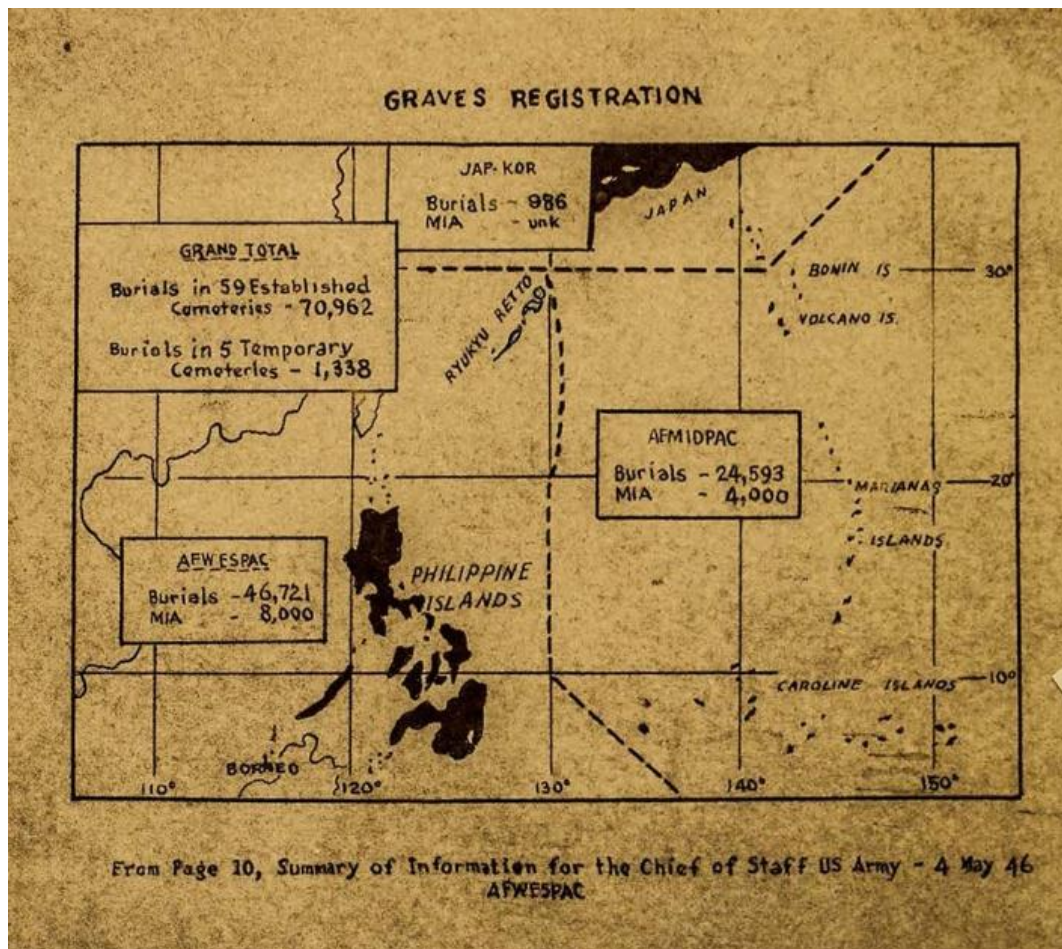


Figure 3. Estimated number of burials and missing in AGRS-PATA as of 4 May 1946.²²

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In April 1947, PHILRYCOM established its Search and Recovery Section. Its job would be difficult. Clues and evidence might have disappeared or become useless in the period between the cessation of hostilities and the beginning of systematic searches.²³ The AGRS divided the FEZ workload as follows: 80 percent PHILRYCOM; 15 percent MARBO; and 5 percent JAPKOR. An AGRS Staff Study explained, “The disproportionately heavy load upon the PHILRYCOM Sector is due to the extensive Search and Recovery operations which were necessary, coupled with the fact that an estimated 75% of the casualties in the Far Eastern Zone occurred in this Sector.”²⁴ The Graves Registration Service figured that there were 6,000 sets of remains in the JAPKOR sector and 14,000 in MARBO. The report further indicated that the Repatriation Program would concentrate roughly 24,000 remains on Saipan.²⁵ In total, AGRS estimated that PHILRYCOM had to concentrate, identify, and store 52,000 sets remains. The Quartermaster General, Washington, D.C., and the Zone Commander set a target date of 31 December 1948 for completion of the search and recovery phase.²⁶

The AGRS divided PHILRYCOM into four areas: Ryukyus; Northern Philippines Area; Southern Philippines Area (which included Palau); and New Guinea and Surrounding Island Area (including the Admiralty Islands, New Britain, New Ireland, other groups in the Bismarck Archipelago, and the Solomon Islands). It further subdivided the PHILRYCOM Sector into 82 search areas.²⁷ The AGRS cautioned its field teams to execute thorough searches of grave sites: “Care should be exercised, when recovering remains, that all bones in a grave are recovered in the first attempt. It is possible that in cases of isolated burials a team on a special mission may pick up a few bones left by a preceding search team. These few bones could then be turned in as an unknown, making two unknowns out of one remain.”²⁸ It is difficult to determine how often this phenomenon occurred.

Several AGRS units had already begun work on Bataan (Search Area 17, Northern Philippines Area) and at the Philippines POW camps shortly after the Japanese surrender in 1945.²⁹ The AGRS had a tough time locating individual burial sites due to the chaotic nature of the army’s fighting withdrawal down the Bataan Peninsula between December 1941 and April 1942. Battle lines changed by the hour, and many interments occurred under combat conditions. There were few grave plots, and soldiers buried the fallen in shallow graves close to where they fell.

As many as 10,000 American POWs endured the Bataan Death March, and perhaps as many as 600 men died while en route to prison camps.³⁰ Figure 4 below is a map of the Death March. Japanese soldiers habitually bayoneted and beheaded soldiers who lagged behind or dropped out of formation. These atrocities may account for headless unknowns, which complicated the identification process after the war. The Japanese did not allow their captives to stop and inter their comrades. In many instances, Filipino civilians buried the dead in isolated or small group graves along the Death March route, in local cemeteries, or in their own yards. When AGRS personnel returned post-war, Filipinos directed search teams to burial sites. But some civilians had forgotten the supposed identity and burial location of the remains. Though these civilians may have recovered identity tags from deceased POWs, they often disposed of them for fear of retribution from Japanese soldiers. The AGRS, at times, was unable to locate remains at sites where Filipinos claimed to have buried American dead. Grave markers were either very rudimentary or nonexistent, and many had disappeared by the time AGRS began its

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investigation. The AGRS, moreover, believed, “The illiteracy and ignorance of native informers, who had little or no comprehension of dates, circumstances, or distance, constituted still another handicap for Bataan’s searchers.”³¹

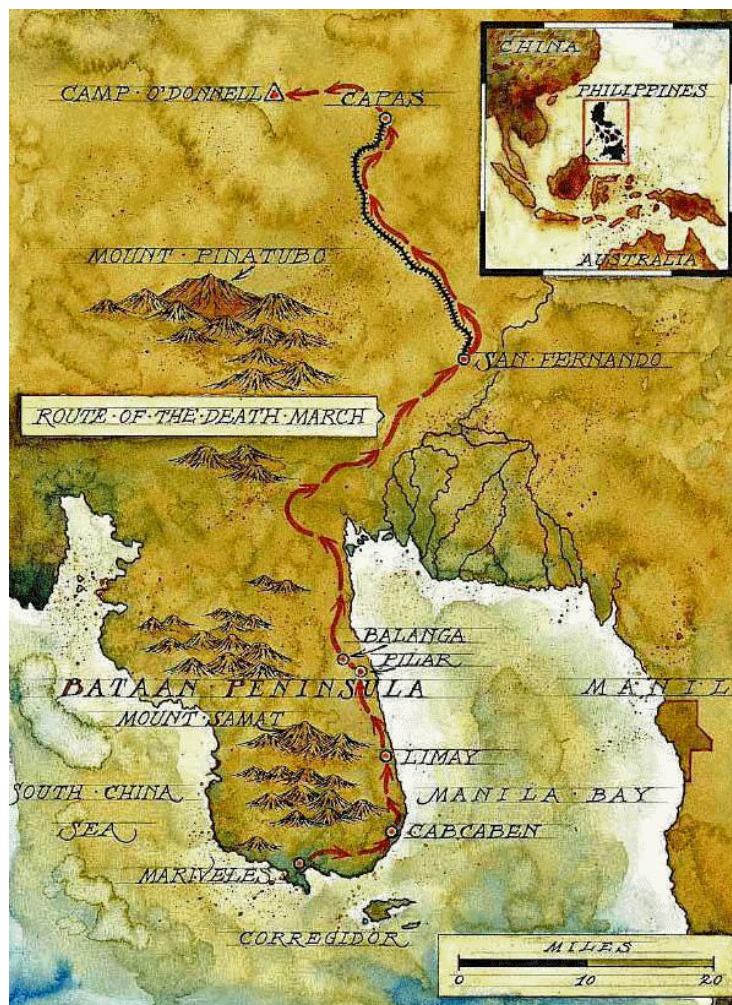


Figure 4. Map of the Bataan Death March route.³²

In March 1945, Gen Douglas MacArthur personally assigned M/Sgt Abie Abraham, a former POW and Death March survivor with extensive knowledge of the Philippines, to retrace the Death March and help AGRS locate and disinter isolated graves. Master Sergeant Abraham also surveyed and disinterred the various POW camps, such as O’Donnell, Cabanatuan, and Bilibid. He began work with the 601st Quartermaster Graves Registration Service Company in June 1945.³³ In July 1945, AGRS surveyed the Death March route.³⁴ While disinterring burial sites there in November 1945, the unit lamented:

The period of time which has elapsed since the Death March, combined with the hurried burials which were made at the time, has made the job of recovery and identification extremely difficult. In addition, the investigating unit has been working under instructions to *disinter deceased only when identification is*

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positive. Individual identification, in most cases, cannot be established even though all available means of identification and testimony of interested civilians have been utilized. Among the activities which have been undertaken in order to aid identification of deceased, have been the interviewing of public officials and priests in the Death March, and the dissemination of [*sic*] the general public of requests for information through the pulpit, public officials and barrio lieutenants. In spite of these efforts, only 61 bodies have been recovered. Of these, only 17 could be identified. Upon disinterment, the remains will be forwarded to USAF Cemetery, Manila #2. It is recommended that no disinterment be attempted until the water table has lowered sufficiently to insure [*sic*] adequate and complete removal of the remains.³⁵

Graves Registration units failed to locate and disinter dozens, if not hundreds, of isolated plots. Moreover, nobody can say for certain how many men died on the Death March. The likelihood of determining an accurate number of missing and dead for this atrocity is quite slim.³⁶

The AGRS also searched for and recovered the remains of Philippine Scouts, as they were technically members of the United States Army. It did not search for Philippine Army (PA) soldiers or guerrillas. Americans, guerrillas, scouts, and Philippine Army regulars, however, all fought side-by-side, and in some instances in mixed units, during the Battle of Bataan. They marched together after the surrender. Therefore, just as AGRS failed to recover all American remains in Bataan, it undoubtedly unintentionally recovered numerous sets of Filipino remains. Some of these deceased were probably scouts and within AGRS's purview, while others most certainly were not.

The AGRS began its final sweep of Bataan on 20 January 1947, and the 609th Graves Registration Company participated in most of these activities. Steere and Boardman noted, "At the close of operations in this region, the searchers had recovered 2,264 sets of remains, which included 121 Americans and 139 Philippine Scouts. The large remaining number of deceased belonged to the regular Philippine Army."³⁷ These recoveries occurred nearly five years after the Death March, meaning that the remains were likely skeletal. Yet AGRS did not indicate how it determined which remains were American and which were Filipino. Between 1 July 1947 and 1 October 1947, AGRS made over 200 recoveries along the Death March route. It also established self-sufficient Field Operating Detachments [FODs] in October 1947.³⁸ Search and Recovery operations ceased in November 1950. At that point, AGRS estimated that there were 14,108 unrecoverables in PHILRYCOM.³⁹ The following map (Figure 5) depicts AGRS recovery efforts on the Bataan Peninsula. The clustered recoveries across the center of the peninsula illustrate the successive battle lines as the American and Filipino forces retreated in early 1942. The disinterments along Manila Bay indicate the route of the Bataan Death March.

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Figure 5. Bataan Peninsula recovery and disinterment map.⁴⁰

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FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**Cemetery Concentration Activities**

In March 1946, the Memorial Division, Office of the Quartermaster General (OQMG), estimated that in Asia and the Pacific there were “65,487 U.S. burials, scattered through 201 cemeteries. Of this total, 61,656 rested in 133 Pacific area cemeteries, 2,801 in 59 burial points in the India-Burma Zone, and 1,030 in 9 cemeteries in the China Zone.”⁴¹ As many as 40,000 servicemen died in the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) alone. The dead in this sector were interred either as isolated battlefield burials or in base command cemeteries. Battlefield interments were often done hastily; remains became scattered, and records were incomplete or missing.⁴²

The first phase of the AGRS-FEZ concentration program consisted of moving remains recovered from isolated burials and local battlefield cemeteries into temporary USAF cemeteries. An AGRS staff study reported, “The Concentration program . . . encompasses the disinterment of 48,800 bodies in temporary cemeteries at Finschhafen, Leyte, Luzon and Okinawa and shipping some 34,000 of them to Manila for processing and storage in the mausoleum.”⁴³ It set a 31 December 1947 deadline for completion of this phase of the AGRS World War II program.⁴⁴

The AGRS initiated cemetery consolidation while Search and Recovery Operations were ongoing. In late 1945, USAF area commanders began consolidating cemeteries and records, as well as rehabilitating pre-war cemeteries.⁴⁵ After gaining control of an area, surplus combat and support troops—soldiers not needed for combat or patrol duties but also not trained in the recovery and handling of remains—consolidated “the hundreds of small cemeteries into the various temporary USAF Cemeteries;” they also searched for air and ground losses.⁴⁶ The lack of mortuary supplies, however, meant burials were “of the simplest nature.”⁴⁷ The Graves Registration Service’s description of these simple burials, combined with the utilization of soldiers with little to no graves registration training, raises concerns about the thoroughness and accuracy of early search, burial, and consolidation activities.

The AGRS was clearly worried. It explained, “All such activities were looked upon by the various units as unpleasant assignments. Also, the average soldiers on such missions were so anxious to return home that little was written of an historical nature. The forms were completed for each ‘case’ as adequately as possible, and the mission reported complete to the next higher headquarters promptly and briefly.”⁴⁸ The AGRS further cautioned, “The exacting requirements in the operation of disinterment dictate a slow and deliberate handling to obviate mixing parts of bodies or losing track of identities.”⁴⁹ The concentration program was a monumental task. Graves Registration teams had to disinter dozens of temporary cemeteries throughout the theater. The AGRS advised its Cemetery Maintenance Teams to “maintain accurate plot maps of the cemeteries and during this phase (concentration) of the operation constant changes occur due to disinterment and interment.”⁵⁰

The remains from the numerous battlefield cemeteries in the PHILRYCOM Zone would ultimately move through larger USAF cemeteries prior to their final interment in the Manila American Cemetery, the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Honolulu, Hawaii, or a cemetery in the United States. The USAF cemeteries were: Rookwood No. 1 and

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Ipswich No. 1 in Australia; Finschhafen No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5 in New Guinea; Leyte No. 1, Leyte Island, P.I.; and Batangas No. 1, Santa Barbara No. 1, Manila No. 1, and Manila No. 2, Luzon Island, P.I.⁵¹ The American Graves Registration Service completed concentration activities in PHILRYCOM (except Ryukyus) into these aforementioned cemeteries by April 1946.⁵²

The AGRS had already accomplished much in the way of cemetery consolidation by October 1945. It had concentrated cemeteries in British New Guinea—except for Port Moresby—into Finschhafen; it was also in the process of moving remains from Dutch New Guinea to that same installation. The AGRS would eventually consolidate the Netherlands East Indies cemeteries into Finschhafen as well, while those in Port Moresby would move to Australia. Temporary cemeteries in Australia would relocate to either Rookwood or Ipswich, and AGRS would subsequently concentrate remains from the Northern Solomon Islands at New Georgia Cemetery No. 1 before ultimately sending them to Finschhafen. Steere and Boardman referenced an 11 October 1945 report from the Commander-in-Chief, Armed Forces, Pacific (AMPAC) to the Quartermaster General, noting, “Of the 52 listed cemeteries in the Philippines, 26 had been closed to burial and . . . 3—Manila No. 1, Manila No. 2, and Santa Barbara No.1—had been designated as concentration points for Luzon, with Leyte No. 1, near Tacloban, serving for all temporary cemeteries in the southern islands of the Philippine Archipelago.”⁵³

At a 5 February 1947 conference in Tokyo, AGRS representatives determined the following: the Finschhafen and Palau Cemeteries would be concentrated into Manila; Ie Shima and Zamami Shima would go to Okinawa; Tinian and Iwo Jima would move to Saipan; and Korea would relocate to Yokohama.⁵⁴ In May 1947, control of the Australian cemeteries transferred to the Pacific Zone (AGRS-PAZ) in Honolulu, while the Palau cemeteries went to the FEZ (Manila No. 1 and Manila No. 2).⁵⁵ By 11 August, all remains in AGRS-PAZ had been concentrated in Hawaii, on Guadalcanal, and in Australia. As noted above, the deceased from AGRS-FEZ would move to the Manila Mausoleum, which held all PHILRYCOM remains except for Okinawa. The MARBO remains, including those from Okinawa, would move to the Saipan Mausoleum, and remains from the JAP-KOR sector would enter the Yokohama Mausoleum. Remains recovered in the China Zone went to Hawaii, and those in the India-Burma Zone ended up in the Barrackpore Mausoleum near Calcutta. The Ipswich and Rookwood Cemeteries in Australia concentrated their remains in Hawaii.⁵⁶ Table 2 below tracks the movement of remains throughout the Pacific Theater.

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Table 2. Movement of Remains in the Pacific Theater.					
Loss Location	Temporary Cemetery Locations	USAF Cemetery	Mausoleum	Final Cemetery Knowns	Final Cemetery Unknowns
Philippines	Luzon (Northern Philippines)	Batangas No. 1	Manila	Manila	
		Manila No.1			
		Manila No. 2			
		Santa Barbara No. 1			
	Leyte (Visayas And Mindanao)	Leyte No. 1			
Palau (Peleliu, Angaur, And Ngesebus)	Palau	Manila No. 1 and Manila No. 2			
Solomons (New Georgia, Bougainville)	Solomons, Celebes, New Britain, Wewak	Finschhafen			
Celebes, New Britain, Wewak					
New Guinea					
Guadalcanal	Guadalcanal		Schofield	Hawaii	
Guam	Guam	Saipan	Saipan (all)/ Manila (unknowns)	Hawaii	Hawaii/Manila
Okinawa	Okinawa				
Iwo Jima	Iwo Jima				
Saipan	Saipan				
Tinian	Tinian				
Korea	Korea	Yokohama No. 1	Yokohama (all)/ Manila (unknowns)	Hawaii	Manila
Japan	Japan				
Australia	Australia	Rookwood No. 1		Hawaii	
		Ipswich No. 1			
China	China			Hawaii	
Burma-India	Burma-India		Barrackpore	Hawaii	

Though AGRS was disinterring all of its cemeteries simultaneously, the PHILRYCOM concentration program was only 10 percent complete on 1 October 1947. It set a 1 January 1948 deadline for concentration of all remains into the Nichols Field Mausoleum, Manila.⁵⁷ On 31 December 1947, however, AGRS still had to move 10,200 remains from Okinawa to Saipan, transfer pre-World War II remains from the Fort McKinley Post Cemetery to the Clark/Stotsenburg site, move remains from Manila No. 2 to the Nichols Field Mausoleum or new Manila American Cemetery, and inter remains from the Mausoleum in their final resting place in the Manila American Cemetery.⁵⁸ On 15 January 1948, AGRS had closed all cemeteries on Luzon except Manila No. 2 and the Bataan Memorial Cemetery.⁵⁹ Ultimately, nearly all unknowns from the Pacific Theater would end up in Manila. Known remains would be in both the Punchbowl and Manila, depending on loss location. Remains from CBI would go to Punchbowl.

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USAF CEMETERY LEYTE #1
Visayan Mindanao Sector
LIST OF INACTIVE USAF CEMETERIES CONCENTRATED TO AGRS MAUSOLEUM, MANILA

ORIGINAL BURIAL	RE-INTERMENT	CONSOLIDATION POINT	PRESENT STORAGE
ANONANG #1, Leyte	-----	Leyte #1, Leyte	AGRS MAUSOLEUM, MANILA
BACOLOD #1, Occ. Negros	-----	" " "	" "
LAYBAY #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
BURAUEN #1, Leyte	Dulag #1, Leyte	" " "	" "
BURI #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
CAMP DOWNES #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
CARIGARA #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
CEBU #1, Cebu	Cebu #2, Cebu	" " "	" "
CEBU #2, Cebu	-----	" " "	" "
DAPICOL NAT'L CEM. DAVAO	Talomo #2, Davao	" " "	" "
DEL MONTE #1, Bukidnon	-----	" " "	" "
DEPOSITO #1, Leyte	Camp Downes #1, Leyte	" " "	" "
DULAG #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
DUMAGUETE #1, Or. Negros	Cebu #2, Cebu	" " "	" "
ILOILO #1, Panay	-----	" " "	" "
IPIL #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
J... #1, Mindanao	Zamboanga #1, Mind.	" " "	" "
KALOGBAGAN #1, Leyte	Carigara #1, Leyte	" " "	" "
LIMON #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
LUBUAN War Cem. BNB	-----	" " "	" "
MAHONAG #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
MALAYBALAY #1, Bukidnon	Tankulan #2, Cotabato	" " "	" "
MANARAWAT #1, Leyte	-----	" " "	" "
MARAMAG #1, Bukidnon	Parang #1, Cotabato	" " "	" "

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Figure 6. AGRS tracking sheet showing consolidation of temporary cemeteries into USAF Cemetery Leyte No. 1 and closing out of Leyte No. 1 into the Nichols Field Mausoleum.⁶⁰

By 31 March 1948, AGRS had completed 64 percent of its concentration operations in PHILRYCOM. The other 36 percent consisted of remains still on Okinawa that were destined

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for Saipan and the remains in Manila No. 2.⁶¹ Figure 6 above is a partial list of the temporary cemeteries concentrated into Leyte No. 1 and ultimately the Manila Mausoleum. Manila No. 2 became the primary concentration point in the FEZ. The AGRS would then move them to the Nichols Field Mausoleum for identification, processing, and storage. If the remains were already known and final disposition had been determined, it might move them directly to the Manila American Cemetery for burial. From the Mausoleum, AGRS would either inter remains in the Manila American Cemetery or repatriate them to the United States, depending on the final disposition ruling. In total, AGRS concentrated more than 70,000 remains in the Pacific. There were 123,493 dead and missing from the Pacific Theater. This included 76,900 resolved individuals and 46,593 missing.⁶² Table 3 shows the number of remains in each installation at the end of the concentration program and prior to repatriation:

Manila Mausoleum	30,387
Saipan (including 10,243 from Okinawa)	23,132
Honolulu (including 2,583 from China)	14,206
Yokohama	2,027
Barrackpore Mausoleum, Calcutta	3,500
Total	73,252 (approximate)

Partial List of Battlefield and Temporary Cemeteries in the Philippines⁶⁴

Cebu

Cebu No. 1

Jolo

Jolo No. 1

Leyte

Anonang No. 1

Baybay No. 1

Buri No. 1

Camp Downes No. 1

Carigara No. 1

Dulag No. 1

Ipil No. 1

Kalogbacon No. 1

Leyte No. 1 (USAF Cemetery)

Limon No. 1

Lubi Airstrip No. 1

Mahonag No. 1

Manarawat No. 1

Palo No. 1

Palo No. 2

Palo No. 3

Palo No. 4

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Palompon No. 1
Pinamopoan No. 1
Rock Hill No. 1
San Jose No. 1
Tacloban No. 1
Tacloban No. 2
Valencia No. 1
Villaba No. 1

Luzon

Bamban No. 1
Bataan Memorial Cemetery (Philippine Army and Philippine Scouts)
Batangas No. 1
Bayambang
Binalonan No. 1
Binloc No. 1
Binmaley No. 1
Cabanatuan
Camp O'Donnell
Canlubang (Enemy Dead)
Corregidor
Clark Field
Culayo No. 1
Del Carmen Airfield
Fort Stotsenburg
Legaspi Port No. 1
Lingayen No. 1
La Loma No. 1
Limay No. 1
Manila No. 1(USAF Cemetery)
Manila No. 2(USAF Cemetery)
Mariveles No. 1
Nasugbu No. 1
Olongapo No. 1
Olongapo No. 2
Nichols Field Mausoleum
Rabon No. 1
Rosales No. 1
San Fabian No. 1
San Fernando No. 1
Santa Barbara No. 1(USAF Cemetery)
Santiago No. 1
Tarlac No. 1
Tayabas Road Detail

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Mindanao

Del Monte No. 1
Malaybalay No. 1
Parang No. 1
Sanipon No. 1
Santa Cruz No. 1
Talomo No. 1
Tankulan No. 1
Zamboanga No. 1

Mindoro

San Jose No. 1

Negros

Bacolod No. 1
Dumaguete No. 1

Palawan

Palawan No. 1

Samar

Samar No. 1

Sanga Sanga

Sanga Sanga No. 1

Panay

Iloilo No. 1

United States Armed Forces (USAF) Cemeteries

Australia

Rookwood No. 1
Ipswich No. 1

New Guinea

Finschhafen No. 1
Finschhafen No. 2
Finschhafen No. 3
Finschhafen No. 4
Finschhafen No. 5

Philippines

Batangas No. 1
Leyte No. 1

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Manila No. 1

Manila No. 2

Santa Barbara No. 1

Concentration of Individual Cemeteries in the FEZ

The following sections will only discuss concentration activities in the major temporary/battlefield cemeteries and in the USAF cemeteries in the FEZ, with a primary focus on operations in the Philippines. This is due, in part, to source limitations. The AGRS archival materials currently available at JPAC provide information on these select burial sites. Figure 7 depicts the three geographical regions (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao) of the Philippine Islands.



Figure 7. Map depicting the three geographical divisions of the Philippine Islands.⁶⁵

Leyte, Philippine IslandsLeyte No. 1

Ground combat operations on Leyte Island began on 20 October 1944. Though Gen MacArthur declared an end to organized resistance on the island on 25 December 1944, the army conducted patrols over the next several months. In total, the army sustained 3,504 Killed

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In Action (KIA) on Leyte.⁶⁶ During the campaign, the Third and Seventh Fleets provided naval and naval air support, while FEAF's Fifth and Thirteenth Air Forces provided air cover. Leyte Cemetery No. 1, located near Tacloban on the island's east coast, opened on 15 March 1945 and began receiving remains from the various battlefield cemeteries and collection points around the island. Phase 1 of concentration activities on Leyte lasted from 15 March 1945 to 8 October 1947. American Graves Registration personnel moved remains from the Visayan Islands (including Negros, Samar, Cebu, Panay, and Masbate), Mindanao Island, and the Leyte cemeteries to Leyte No. 1.⁶⁷ The AGRS began disinterment of Leyte No.1 in fall 1947, and it made its first shipment of 570 remains to Manila on 15 November.⁶⁸ When Phase 2 began on 8 October 1947, Leyte No. 1 contained 9,996 remains. Of this total, 8,569 were American military personnel, 22 were categorized as Allied dead, 154 were Philippine Army, 2 were general prisoners, 1,240 were enemy dead, and 9 were American civilians. In the morgue were also the 26 remains recovered from isolated burials.⁶⁹

Concentration activities between 8 October and 27 December 1947 consisted of disinterment, casketing, and storage.⁷⁰ A personnel shortage meant that AGRS was only able to disinter 570 sets of remains, 368 of which were American, between 8 October and 7 November 1947.⁷¹ By 18 November, additional personnel and supplies permitted AGRS to disinter 300 sets of remains each day. November, however, marked the start of the rainy season. According to the AGRS history, "Graves were often full of water and had to be pumped out. On some days weather was so inclement that disinterment was impossible."⁷² The second shipment of remains from Leyte No. 1 to the Manila Mausoleum occurred on 21 December 1947, and it included 3,214 American dead and 1 Merchant Marine dead.⁷³ The History of the PHILRYCOM sector noted, "Disinterment, casketing and storage were completed 27 December 1947."⁷⁴ The third and final shipment moved to the Nichols Field Mausoleum, Manila, on 14 January 1948. The Leyte concentration program terminated the following day.⁷⁵ Figure 8 shows the location of temporary cemeteries in the Visayas and on Leyte.

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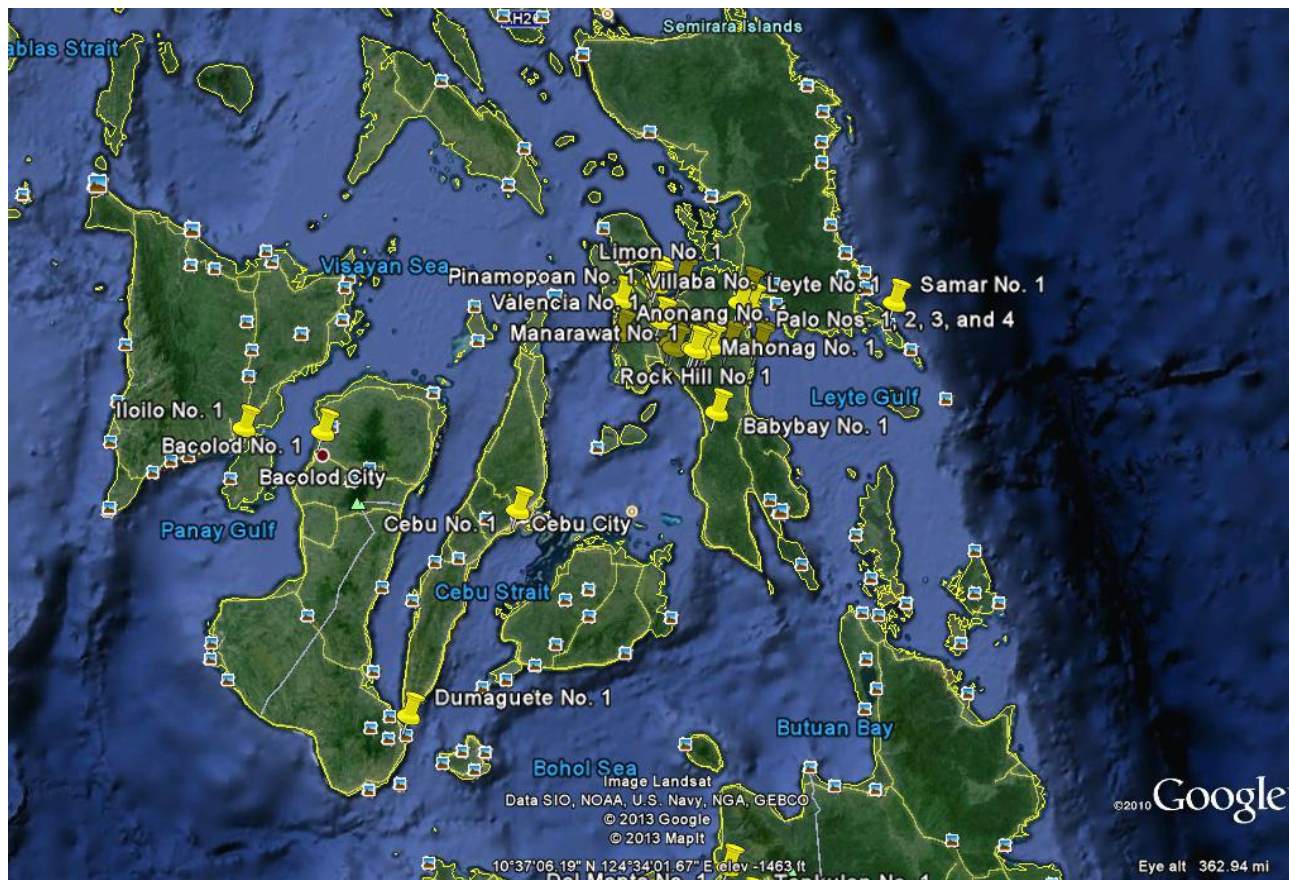
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Figure 8. Google Earth map of temporary cemeteries in the Visayan Islands. Leyte Island, in the center of the map, contains most of the battlefield cemeteries and the one USAF cemetery in this region.

Luzon, Philippine Islands

Bataan Memorial Cemetery

The Bataan Memorial Cemetery, located in Bataan Province, four miles southwest of Balanga, held the remains of Filipino nationals and Philippine Army (PA) soldiers. The AGRS reported that, by the end of 1946, it had removed the remains of Americans who had been buried in Bataan. This requires further clarification, however. The AGRS removed all *discoverable* burials in Bataan by that point since search and recovery teams were unable to locate all isolated burials on the peninsula. The AGRS also recovered Filipino nationals at many of the sites where it disinterred Americans. Most burial locations were overgrown with vegetation, and many grave markers had fallen over, were disarranged, or were missing. There was evidence of grave robbing, particularly at Cabcaban. The AGRS followed the same SOP for the handling of Filipino remains as for American remains, and it attempted to identify some of these unknowns as well. Steere and Boardman explained that the AGRS erected “standard crosses and metal plate grave markers, and a complete record of all burials was kept and delivered to the Philippine Army. The project ended early in July 1947, with the reinterment of 2,103 deceased.”⁷⁶ The AGRS subsequently transferred control of the cemetery to the Philippine Commonwealth.

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The AGRS disinterred 441 remains from Batangas Cemetery No. 1 between March and April 1947 and moved them to Manila No. 2.⁷⁷

POW Camp Cemeteries: Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan

On 11 April 1942, the first POWs to complete the Death March arrived at Camp O'Donnell. On 4 June, the last of roughly 9,000 POWs arrived at the installation. The prisoners usually surrendered any personal items, which could include dog tags, upon capture or entrance into the camp. The first recorded death at O'Donnell occurred on 14 April 1942. The Japanese guards permitted the Americans to bury their dead outside the main gate and north of the road to Capas. The burial grounds were roughly 800 yards from Zero Ward, which housed the sickest prisoners. When this cemetery filled by May 1942, the POWs created another one. Men who died while on work details outside of the camp, however, were often interred by comrades where they perished—as was the case with the May-July 1942 Tayabas Road detail in Camarines Norte Province, Luzon.⁷⁸ Prisoners on work details occasionally returned to their original camp after several months. Other POWs went to an entirely different camp. The Japanese Army transferred POWs to different permanent and temporary camps throughout the Philippines, and it also shipped thousands of them to the Asiatic mainland and Japan later in the war. The constant movement of POWS makes it difficult to compile reliable camp rosters and death lists.

Captain A. L. Fullerton, United States Army Quartermaster Corps, performed graves registration duties while imprisoned in Camp O'Donnell. The acting graves registration officer at the camp morgue processed bodies before burial details interred them. Fullerton kept one identification tag for his records and placed the other one on a wooden cross above the grave. Many remains, however, lacked dog tags. He recorded any and all available information for the deceased, as well as burial plot, row, and grave and date of interment; he then made three copies of the document. Graves were typically ten feet by six feet and four feet deep or shallower. In the early days of the camp, burial details took great care when lowering bodies into the graves and interred the remains side by side. But as the death rate increased at Camp O'Donnell in May and early June 1942, burial details often resorted to interring men in mass graves. According to researchers Michael and Elizabeth Norman, by May “the burial parties tossed the bodies into the holes as if they were piling up firewood, one recumbent form pitched on top of another.”⁷⁹ The camp ceased admitting inmates on 16 May 1942, and Japanese guards moved POWs to Cabanatuan and other camps in early June. An estimated 1,547 American POWS died at Camp O'Donnell, and it closed on 20 January 1943.⁸⁰

American Graves Registration Service personnel disinterred the Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan cemeteries between December 1945 and February 1946. According to the history of the AGRS-FEZ, “When [the POWs] had strength they prepared single graves; later, when they became weaker, a single grave held a day's toll of the dead. Because of these mass graves, identification in many cases was difficult but was attempted as the remains were reinterred into USAF Cemetery No. 2 at Manila.”⁸¹ International News Correspondent Clark Lee visited

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Camp O'Donnell in January 1945 and described the cemetery in great detail. It was overgrown with vegetation and was roughly "100 by 150 yards with grass covered grave mounds separated from each other by about a foot. It is a mass of tangled graves completely untended and some graves are still unfilled."⁸² Mr. Lee observed broken, charred, and rotted crosses scattered across the cemetery grounds. Many graves were unmarked, and "the crosses had apparently been ripped from the graves which they marked and thrown deliberately into the underbrush. A few of them had identification tags attached to the nails and were lying nearby. These crosses appeared to have been broken off as if torn from the earth."⁸³ Mr. Lee suggested that Japanese "sightseers," or possibly Japanese soldiers, were responsible for removing the crosses. Since grave markers would be of little use in the identification effort, AGRS personnel interviewed Japanese soldiers, surviving POWs, and Filipino civilians in an effort to locate burial sites. Tooth charts would also aid in the identification process.

When Corregidor capitulated on 6 May 1942, Japanese forces captured an additional 9,000 POWs. These prisoners eventually moved to Bilibid Prison on Luzon and then Cabanatuan Prison Camp—which was actually three separate camps—60 miles north of Manila.⁸⁴ Initially, Cabanatuan burial details interred all POWs who died on a given day in one mass grave. Between 2 June 1942 and 26 September 1942, one burial day was defined as occurring from noon until the following noon. Thereafter a burial day lasted from 5:00 PM one day until 5:00 PM the next. Japanese guards at Cabanatuan did not initially allow POW burial details to erect grave markers, nor did the captive Americans inter remains in any organized plot structure or particular order. Many of the graves were shallow. According to Lisa Beckenbaugh and Heather Harris, Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) analysts, "Because of the disorder in the camp and the high death rate, it is also very likely that many graves went unregistered, particularly during the first few weeks at Cabanatuan."⁸⁵

Major Robert E. Conn, who served as Graves Registration Officer at Cabanatuan, created "The Cabanatuan Death Report." As Ms. Beckenbaugh and Ms. Harris explained, the report "is a numerical listing of camp deaths with unit, date of death, time of death, cause of death, birth date, age, and next of kin information. Grave number is NOT listed. Grave associations were made by using the date of death."⁸⁶ Successive investigations, both by POWs during the war and AGRS after the Japanese surrender, had a difficult time locating and delineating the boundaries of specific burial plots. After August 1942, Japanese guards allowed the Americans to bury their dead in a systematic order; they also permitted them to erect grave markers. Major Conn explained that very few men in Cabanatuan possessed identification tags or personal items. Many dying prisoners gave their tags to their friends in the hopes that they would return them to their families; the same was true of prisoners in Camp O'Donnell. Consequently, some dead POWs had several sets of tags on their person; in other cases, they possessed only one tag, wallet, or paybook—albeit a tag, wallet, or paybook that did not belong to them. Most commonly, however, men perished with no distinguishing form of identification on their person. This phenomenon increased the likelihood of misidentification or precluded surviving POWs—and subsequently AGRS—from positively identifying the deceased. If remains lacked a tag, prisoner burial details placed a slip of paper with information on it into the dead man's mouth or between his fingers. But most pieces of paper had disintegrated by the time AGRS disinterred the sites several years later.⁸⁷

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In June 1943, Cabanatuan burial details began interring remains individually, and they also beautified the cemetery. Any POW buried before this time, however, was likely interred in a mass grave. Major Conn and his men attempted to identify previous gravesites and recall those dates of interment, but they met with limited success. They had trouble locating graves because the overgrowth of vegetation obscured many portions of the cemetery.⁸⁸ When the AGRS disinterred Cabanatuan between December 1945 and March 1946, it discovered that the camp cemetery was situated in an area with a high water table. The condition of the remains, consequently, was extremely poor. Graves Registration personnel reviewed camp death reports and determined that, after the first round of disinterments, they could not account for 56 sets of remains out of the estimated 2,763 American POWs who perished in Cabanatuan. The AGRS moved remains to Manila No. 2, which was located 12 miles north of Manila.⁸⁹ By February 1946, most O'Donnell and Cabanatuan remains were in this temporary cemetery. From there they would move to the Manila Mausoleum.⁹⁰ Figure 9 shows the location of the POW camp cemeteries in relation to Manila No. 1, Manila No. 2, and the Manila Mausoleum. Camp O'Donnell is approximately 80 miles northwest of Fort McKinley, Manila.

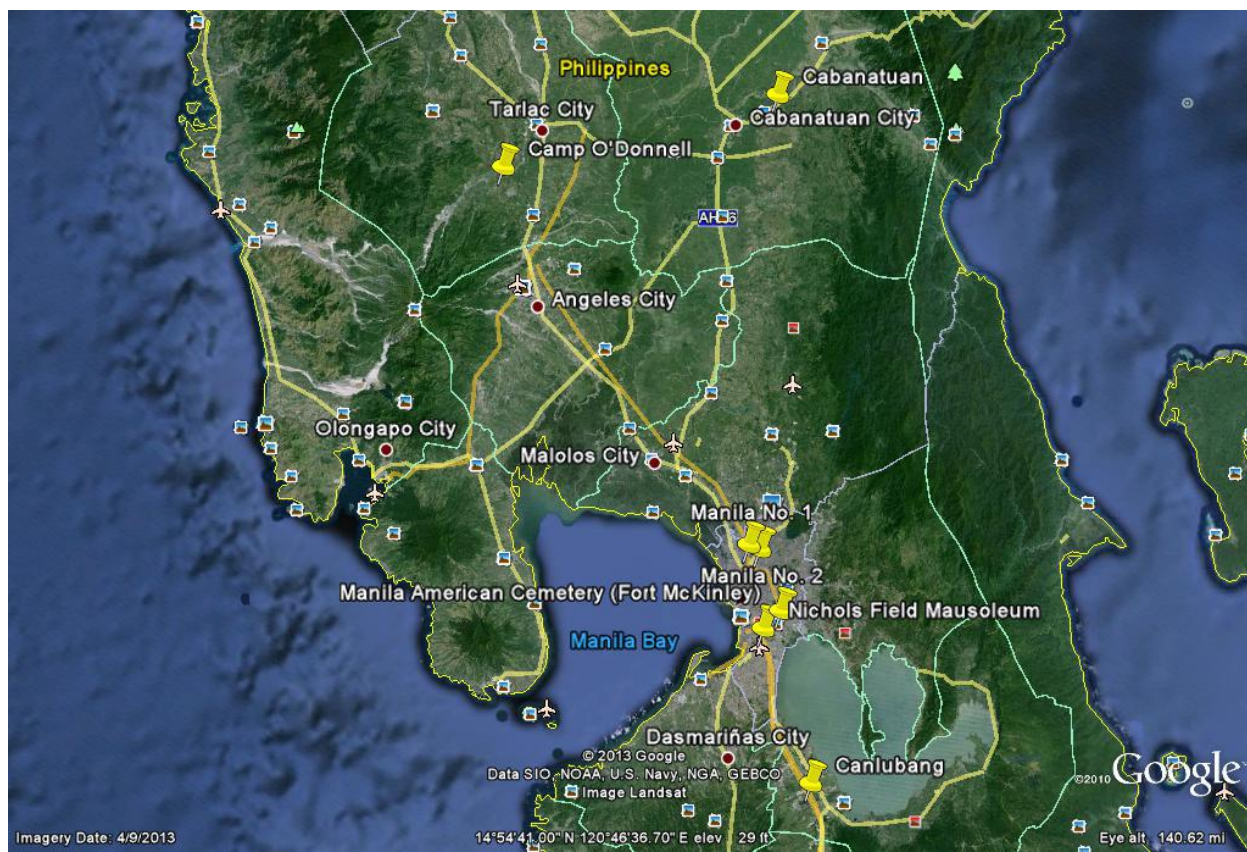


Figure 9. Google Earth map of Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan, and Canlubang cemeteries in relation to the Manila cemeteries and mausoleum.

Canlubang

The AGRS concentrated PHILRYCOM enemy dead, except for Okinawa, at Canlubang, roughly 30 miles south of Manila. Between September and 18 October 1947, AGRS disinterred

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enemy remains from Santa Barbara No. 1, moved them to Manila, and then buried them at Canlubang. The History of AGRS-PATA noted, “As of 1 October 1947, 2985 had been concentrated with an additional 1632 to be concentrated. The ultimate disposition of this category will be decided at the Japanese Peace Conference.”⁹¹

Manila No.1

Manila No. 1 was located 2.5 miles north of the city, just off Highway 54. American forces established the cemetery shortly after they entered Manila on 3 February 1945. The first interment occurred on 8 February 1945, and the site held casualties from the area surrounding the city.⁹² According to Steere and Boardman, 1,481 Americans were interred at Manila No. 1.⁹³ Graves Registration Service teams concentrated these remains into the Nichols Field Mausoleum, Manila, between 22 September and 3 November 1947. Bulldozers leveled the area on 30 November 1947.⁹⁴

Manila No. 2

Manila No. 2 was situated 12 miles north of Fort McKinley and several miles southeast of Manila No. 1. In late 1945, AGRS decided to consolidate Manila No. 1 and Batangas No. 1 into Manila No. 2. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) had initially selected Manila No. 2 as the site for a permanent national overseas cemetery. It soon became apparent, however, that the grounds were not large enough to meet ABMC’s requirements. The AGRS temporarily interred many of the FEZ dead in Manila No. 2. It disinterred the cemetery between fall 1947 and spring 1948 and moved the remains to the Nichols Field Mausoleum. Manila No. 2 was the last of the PHILRYCOM cemeteries that AGRS disinterred. The AGRS temporarily halted disinterment activities in November and December 1947 to reduce the fire hazard risk caused by above-ground storage and to beautify the cemetery grounds and paint the temporary crosses. By early 1948, AGRS had completed its concentration of Philippine Island cemeteries—with the exception of Manila No. 2—into the Nichols Field Mausoleum. Exhumations at Manila No. 2 ended on 20 July 1948, and the last of the remains moved to the mausoleum the following day. This action signified the closing of all PHILRYCOM temporary burial sites.⁹⁵

Santa Barbara No. 1

American forces established Santa Barbara No. 1, near Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, on 20 January 1945. It was located in Barrio Gueguesangen, Sta Barbara, Pangasinan Province. According to AGRS records, it was “four (4) kilometers north of the Urdaneta-Dagupan Road . . . [and] was to provide for a burial place for the casualties from the area from Tarlac Province to the northern end of Luzon Island. First interment was made 27 January 1945.”⁹⁶ During AGRS’s cemetery consolidation phase, Santa Barbara No. 1 accepted remains from the following battlefield cemeteries in Pangasinan Province: San Fabian, Binloc, Bayambang, Binalonan, Binmaley, Rosales, and Lingayen. Santa Barbara No. 1 also took in remains from the following cemeteries in Tarlac Province: Santiago, Bamban, and Tarlac. Santa Barbara No. 1 contained the remains of 5,196 U.S. Armed Forces Personnel, 311 Allied dead, 43 civilian remains, and 531 enemy dead.⁹⁷

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The AGRS disinterred enemy remains between 15 September and 18 October 1947 for shipment to Canlubang. It began disinterring American remains on 20 October 1947. On 31 October, Graves Registration Service personnel shipped the first group of remains to the Nichols Field Mausoleum. They averaged 147 disinterments per day after the first week of November. But, according to the AGRS history, "Operations were interrupted by typhoon and heavy rains from 7 November 1947 to 10 November 1947. Water pump and buckets proved ineffective in removing water from the graves."⁹⁸ A 15 November typhoon halted AGRS work for five additional days. The AGRS completed exhumations on 24 December 1947 and bulldozed the cemetery on 15 January 1948.⁹⁹

New Guinea

Finschhafen

The Finschhafen consolidation program was the largest in the FEZ because AGRS had to move more than 11,000 remains from New Guinea to Manila. Most of these servicemen had died in New Guinea and the Admiralty Islands.¹⁰⁰ Some remains from the Solomons—particularly New Georgia and Bougainville—Celebes, New Britain, and Wewak also moved to Finschhafen. On 15 May 1947, AGRS began disinterring the Finschhafen cemeteries. It was the rainy season, and the region received as much as 15 inches of precipitation each week. An AGRS memo explained, "Water tables in the cemeteries were very high during disinterment; water continually flowed into the graves, which had to be bailed or pumped out. . . . At times the body handlers were up to their necks in water and mud while removing the remains from the graves."¹⁰¹ Such conditions made it difficult for AGRS personnel to ensure that they recovered entire sets of remains from a given location—which could account for some of the discrepancies between Finschhafen and Manila interment reports. Supply difficulties also hampered the concentration process because AGRS teams received all of their equipment from AGRS HQ, Manila, which was 2,500 miles away. On 21 May, AGRS sent the first 105 sets of remains from Finschhafen to Manila. Seven additional shipments occurred between 2 July and 7 December 1947. When Finschhafen concentration activities concluded on 5 December 1947, AGRS had disinterred 11,701 remains from the five cemeteries for shipment to the Manila Mausoleum. Of this total, 11,292 were U.S. Armed Forces, 109 were Allied, and roughly 300 were enemy remains. The Finschhafen cemeteries officially closed on 22 March 1948.¹⁰²

Palau Islands

The American Graves Registration Service reinterred all 1,667 Palau remains (Peleliu, Angaur, and Ngesebus) in Manila No. 2 by the end of June 1947.¹⁰³

RYCOM

Saipan

At a February 1947 Conference in Tokyo, the Far East Command took control of MARBO from MIDPAC. In the MARBO Sector were 12,000 dead buried in 10 cemeteries on Guam,

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Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Tinian. Graves Registration Service teams completed 627 disinterments on Tinian and transferred these remains to Saipan between November 1947 and January 1948.¹⁰⁴ They concentrated the three Guam cemeteries (Agana, Asan, and Agat) in November and December 1947. Since Guam lacked suitable above-ground storage for remains, the War Department granted the commanding general, MARBO, permission to ship the Guam dead to Saipan.¹⁰⁵ But several issues arose during Guam exhumation activities. Steere and Boardman reported, “In several cases [at Agat], the dog tags on the deceased did not coincide with the grave markers or the alphabetical rosters.”¹⁰⁶

In April 1947, MARBO and PHILRYCOM outlined plans to move remains from Iwo Jima to Saipan between May and October 1947. The AGRS constructed a large mausoleum on Saipan for the above-ground storage of remains. Disinterment activities on Iwo Jima began in June 1947 at the 5th Marine Division Cemetery. According to Steere and Boardman, “The workers were generally untrained for their task, and recent typhoons had shifted the terrain of the cemeteries.”¹⁰⁷ The landscape of the “sulfur island” complicated exhumations. The ashy, soft soil had caused some remains to sink as deep as 8 to 10 feet below the surface during the three-plus years between initial burial and disinterment. The sides of the graves tended to cave in while AGRS personnel excavated them. By mid-September 1947, AGRS had exhumed over 5,000 bodies on Iwo Jima.¹⁰⁸

Okinawa’s six USAF cemeteries held 10,243 remains, and AGRS first processed them for identification on Okinawa before moving them to the Saipan Mausoleum.¹⁰⁹ According to Steere and Boardman, “Some officials favored moving the Okinawa dead to Manila, while others preferred an Okinawa-to-Saipan concentration. Colonel James Murphey, Commanding Officer, HQ AGRS-FEZ, favored Saipan as the concentration point for the Okinawa deceased.”¹¹⁰ Colonel Murphey reasoned that he could better utilize his limited personnel if he eliminated Manila as an additional repatriation point. Furthermore, Okinawa lacked suitable facilities for the above ground storage of remains, while the Saipan Mausoleum could readily accommodate the Okinawa dead.¹¹¹

In mid-March 1948, AGRS began concentrating remains on Okinawa for shipment to Saipan.¹¹² Table 4 below shows the distribution of Okinawa remains:

Table 4. Distribution of remains on Okinawa. ¹¹³	
Cemetery	Number of Remains
Island Command Cemetery (including remains from Ie Shima and Zamami Shima Cemeteries)	3,969
6th Marine Division Cemetery	1,698
77th Division Cemetery	770
96th Division Cemetery	875
7th Division Cemetery	1,453
1st Marine Division Cemetery	1,478
Total	10,243

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Between May and mid-August 1948, AGRS moved these remains in four shipments to the Saipan Mausoleum, where they would stay until repatriation or final disposition in Manila, the Punchbowl, or elsewhere. Steere and Boardman noted, "Of the more than 10,000 remains transferred, 9,888 were identified and 342 were unknowns."¹¹⁴ Steere and Boardman's numbers here add up to 10,230, not 10,243 as indicated in Table 4. This could be a simple arithmetic error on their part, or it could further illustrate how dates and statistics often contradicted each other in various AGRS reports.

In October 1948, the Memorial Division, OQMG, informed the commanding general, MARBO, of the disposition of remains on Saipan. Those deceased servicemen who had been identified would be repatriated to their families in the United States upon request. Known deceased whose families had requested that their loved ones be buried overseas would be interred at the Punchbowl. The Punchbowl would also receive "all 'known' dead for which no disposition instructions had been received by AGRS-MARBO, and all 'unknowns' on which current action for final resolution still pended, or which were in some way associated with other remains."¹¹⁵ Finally, "those unknown deceased for which no current resolution or action pended" would be interred at the Manila American Cemetery at Fort McKinley.¹¹⁶ Identified deceased from Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa would rest in Hawaii. The AGRS would bury the unidentified deceased from these islands in Manila.

Japan-Korea

USAF Cemetery Yokohama No. 1 (Honshu)

American deaths in the JAP-KOR Sector consisted of air losses and POWs who perished in Japanese prison and work camps. By June 1947, when AGRS had concentrated all Korea deceased in Yokohama, the cemetery held an estimated 2,027 remains.¹¹⁷ On 10 November 1947, a Mobile Identification Team from HQ, AGRS-FEZ, on orders from HQ, Eighth Army, began disinterring the Yokohama Cemetery. It initially intended to ship 610 unknown, 1,140 known, and 336 cremated remains to Manila, but, as AGRS explained, "This plan was altered upon advice from the Office of the Quartermaster General that the Cemetery would not be concentrated at Manila but would either be concentrated at Saipan or the remains returned to the U.S as originally scheduled, in January 1949."¹¹⁸ The AGRS stored these remains above ground in a temporary mausoleum at Yokohama pending a final OQMG ruling. It offered no explanation for this change in concentration locale, but Steere and Boardman believed that ABMC's "abandonment of Guam as a possible national cemetery may have been related to this action."¹¹⁹

Japanese forces cremated some of the remains they recovered from American air crash sites and from POW camps. The cremated remains made "processing for identification impossible and special processing for storage above ground unnecessary."¹²⁰ Enlisted men from the 108th Quartermaster Graves Registration Company served as assistants in the Yokohama processing and identification laboratory. The AGRS completed its exhumation of Yokohama on 3 January 1948 after receiving 1,115 disinterment directives (395 for knowns and 720 for unknowns) from Repatriation Branch, AGRS, OQMG. Analysts discovered 14 additional sets of remains during the processing stage of operations, raising the count to 1129. Though AGRS

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did not explain this discovery in any detail, it is likely that processors segregated 14 extra sets of remains out of the original 1,115. In total, AGRS stored 397 knowns and 640 unknowns “above ground in a temporary tent mausoleum.”¹²¹

Disinterment operations and processing at Yokohama terminated during the first week of January 1948. The AGRS stored the remains in the Yokohama Mausoleum until October 1948 when the USAT *Dalton Victory* transported 1,272 of them to their final burial locations. The ship sailed from Japan on 1 October 1948, and among its cargo were 50 unknown sets of remains. It stopped first in Saipan, where it took onboard an additional 218 unknowns. It then sailed for Manila to deliver these JAP-KOR and MARBO unknowns for interment in the Manila American Cemetery. Then, as Steere and Boardman observed, “After leaving the Philippines, the [USAT] *Dalton Victory* proceeded to Hawaii and discharged those deceased whose next of kin indicated preference for overseas burial.”¹²² The remainder went to San Francisco, and from there they moved to numerous cemeteries in the continental United States. There were, however, still 986 remains, including 247 cremated sets, at Yokohama. The AGRS “subsequently repatriated [them] on cargo vessels in small increments as identification was completed and as ship space became available.”¹²³ Known JAP-KOR Sector deceased, upon request of family or next of kin, were interred in Hawaii. The AGRS interred unknowns from this sector in Manila.

The AGRS identified some cremated remains sent from Japan to Manila by the name on the envelope. This occurred with remains from the “hell ship” *Enoura Maru*, which was damaged in a bombing raid while transporting American POWs to Formosa. The Memorial Division, OQMG, decided to bury cremated remains as a group. It interred them at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and in British War Cemeteries in Japan. Since some families and next of kin received cremated remains, not all of the cremated remains are unknowns.

Nichols Field Mausoleum and Identification of Remains

To facilitate the identification process in the FEZ, AGRS constructed its headquarters, Central Identification Point (CIP), and Mausoleum at Nichols Field, Manila. Beginning in March 1947, AGRS moved into the base’s hangars as U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF) units vacated them. Space, though, soon became an issue. According to the AGRS history:

A minimum of twelve (12) hangars was requested in March 1947, on the basis of the Palau Islands and Finschhafen concentration operations alone. As AGRS operations expanded, it was apparent that some nineteen to twenty-one hangars would be required to store the expected 40,000 remains to be concentrated at the Mausoleum and to provide storage space for the repatriation caskets as they arrived.¹²⁴

At the end of March 1948, the Identification Unit, Remains Depot, and Mausoleum were utilizing nine hangars at Nichols Field. Six were for remains storage, one held empty caskets, one served as the Remains Depot, and one functioned as the CIP and Mausoleum Processing Section.¹²⁵ To accommodate all of the remains, AGRS staff constructed triple-deck storage in

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hangars 802, 810, 812, and 813.¹²⁶ The Mausoleum had adequate space for the deceased from Okinawa and Yokohama.¹²⁷

On 15 April 1947, HQ-PHILRYCOM created one mobile processing and identification unit for each sector in an effort to “accelerate the identification program within the Far East Command.”¹²⁸ The Command also decided that all isolated remains, both known and unknown, would go to the CIP for processing and identification unless AGRS determined otherwise. It stressed, “The practice of processing remains at graveside, unit, group, field command, or cemetery points, will be discontinued immediately.”¹²⁹ A processing unit began operating at Manila No. 2 in July 1947. It served as the nucleus for the Mausoleum’s CIP, and in September it moved into hangars adjacent to the Remains Depot and Mausoleum at Nichols Field. During July and August 1947, the mobile unit processed special unknown cases at Manila No. 1 and Manila No. 2. It also trained a mobile processing team that traveled to the Yokohama Cemetery and Mausoleum in November.¹³⁰ The AGRS, however, would make identifications at the Nichols Field CIP. It estimated, “There are 4,420 [unknown bodies now interred in temporary cemeteries of PHILRYCOM]. In addition, the estimated 10,000 bodies that will be recovered will necessarily have to be positively identified.”¹³¹

The AGRS intended the Mausoleum, CIP, and Remains Depot to work together. According to the AGRS history:

Original plan for operation of the Mausoleum had been set up for an extremely simplified operation; namely, the receiving of remains, processing of the remains, assignment of crypt numbers and storage. . . . It was soon discovered that because of many discrepancies in the reports of storage made by cemeteries, reports of interment or reports of reinterment, discrepancies in toothcharts, etc., the Mausoleum would have to act as the final corrective checkpoint for all discrepancies occurring in the actual remains or in the papers pertaining to the remains. In addition, all discrepancies on the reports of interment had to be checked with the Central Records Section. By the end of February 1948, over 1,000 reports of major discrepancies had been forwarded to Records Section for checking.¹³²

The Mausoleum sent unknown remains to the CIP hangar. Staff there evaluated various lines of biological and material evidence in their identification attempts. They analyzed bone and skull structure, completed tooth charts, and took fingerprints, if possible. They examined clothing and uniforms, equipment, and personal effects. The CIP staff also made use of chemical and photographic laboratories.¹³³

On 15 May 1947, AGRS outlined the procedure for handling and processing remains from the moment a casket or box entered the lab. It explained, “Personnel employed in the processing are normally embalmers with an Sp-8 rating. However, the title ‘embalmer’ is misleading; in reality they are identification analysts. Identification analysts are required to be familiar with procedures and techniques in processing the deceased for identification.”¹³⁴ Identification analysts had to demonstrate knowledge of anatomy, the ability to segregate remains, the ability to reconstruct and articulate a skeleton, the ability to identify anatomical

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abnormalities or scars, the ability to complete a tooth chart, and the ability to take fingerprints. The SOP outlined the steps for examining remains and completing the anatomical chart. It further stipulated that a person with dental training would create the tooth chart.¹³⁵

Headquarters, AGRS, also codified its procedures for utilizing material evidence to identify remains. These guidelines are shown in Table 5 below. The AGRS explained, “The following means of identification may be considered as conclusive if no contradictory evidence, such as personal papers or other articles or belongings not in accord with the name found on the identification tag, exists”:¹³⁶

One of the Following	Two of the Following
Identification tag around neck	Identification tag not around neck and more than one grave or set of remains in the area
Identification tag in location other than neck (i.e. in pocket or clothes; on grave marker if it is an isolated grave with no other graves in area)	Driver’s license
Paybook in pocket	Personal papers or letters
Emergency medical tag	Engraved jewelry
Identification bracelet on wrist	Clothing marks containing first letter of last name and last four digits of serial number
Personal identification cards or forms	Signed statement from someone who could positively identify the remains

The AGRS additionally ruled, “When any group of bodies is found with a tank, aircraft, or other vehicle, the names of the crew or passenger list may be obtained. If all remains but one are identified, the identity of the unknown can be established by elimination.”¹³⁷ The above identification guidelines are problematic. Soldiers, sailors, and airmen oftentimes swapped clothing and uniforms, either intentionally or unintentionally. Dying men occasionally gave their identification tags to their comrades for safe keeping and to ensure that their families received them. Thus a deceased man might be wearing someone else’s clothes or carrying someone else’s identification. The reliability of the “identification by elimination” process for tanks, aircraft, and other vehicles can also be called into question. Rosters and manifests could prove inaccurate if an aircraft flew with undocumented crew members. In addition, crew members listed as having been on a specific aircraft might not have actually flown on that particular mission. Soldiers might switch tanks during an action if theirs became unserviceable, or they might fight with another crew if their crewmembers became casualties. It is assumed, but not always certain, that AGRS analysts sought to corroborate material evidence with biological, anthropological, and dental evaluations. It is not always clear, however, which documentary sources—i.e. burial rosters, an individual’s complete and updated dental chart, Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs) for associated individuals—were available to analysts during examination.

If analysts were unable to make a positive identification based on material, biological, or dental evidence, they processed the body for storage in the Manila Mausoleum. Analysts might re-examine a set of remains several times over a three to four year period. In each instance they

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created new dental and skeletal charts. These reexaminations typically occurred when the Identification Section's workload diminished and it had spare time to review old cases.¹³⁸ If it still could not determine the identity of the remains, AGRS recommended to the Quartermaster General in Washington, D.C., that they be ruled "unidentifiable." If the Memorial Division accepted the recommendation, AGRS interred the unknown in the Manila American Cemetery.

Analysts based positive identifications on where AGRS recovered the body, identification tags and clothing marks, dental charts, and correlations between fractures on the remains and known fractures on the person whom they believed it to be.¹³⁹ If examiners positively identified a set of remains, they casketed it in the Mausoleum and stored it in the Remains Depot pending repatriation or burial in the Manila American Cemetery.¹⁴⁰ In this regard, the Remains Depot also functioned as a distribution center. The Depot handled roughly 33,000 remains that came from the numerous cemeteries in PHILRYCOM and the Pacific Theater.¹⁴¹ The OQMG contacted the deceased's next of kin to determine their wishes. In the majority of cases, AGRS returned the remains to the family for private burial. If the family desired that its loved one be interred overseas, AGRS buried the deceased in the Manila American Cemetery or in the Punchbowl, depending on the loss location. The first repatriation shipment of remains from the Pacific Theater to the United States occurred on 26 February 1948, when AGRS sent 2,000 caskets from Saipan to San Francisco. These soldiers, sailors, and airmen had perished on Iwo Jima and in the Marianas-Bonins Campaign.¹⁴²

Identification attempts on POW remains from Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan presented unique challenges. As discussed earlier, record keeping at these two camps was incomplete at best. Moreover, a man's post-mortem dental record might differ significantly from his last available dental chart, especially if subsequent dental work went uncharted. Camp "dentists," for instance, could have performed work on POWs during their interment. Prisoners of war might have lost teeth as a result of malnutrition or violence. Between December 1946 and April 1947, AGRS identified nearly 300 sets of remains based on dental comparisons performed by non-dentists.¹⁴³ The accuracy of these identifications, therefore, must be considered questionable.

In 1951, the AGRS reviewed earlier POW camp identifications in the "Cabanatuan Project." An additional recovery team visited the former camp site, but the land there had changed dramatically since AGRS's first investigation in late 1945. The 1951 field team reported that it was unable to dig at Cabanatuan because the area had been flooded to create a rice paddy. According to Ms. Beckenbaugh and Ms. Harris, Capt John Shypula returned to Cabanatuan on 26 September 1951 "and determined that the former landmarks within the cemetery had been obliterated and could not be reestablished. . . . No test digging could be conducted nor anything further determined."¹⁴⁴

The Memorial Division of the Quartermaster Corps decided instead to re-evaluate unidentified remains that AGRS had previously recovered from Cabanatuan. These remains were held both at the Manila Mausoleum and at the Schofield Central Identification Laboratory (CIL), Hawaii. World-renowned anthropologist Dr. Mildred Trotter found that the Cabanatuan remains were in very poor condition. Analysts disinterred and processed remains several times, which often led to comingling. Ms. Beckenbaugh and Ms. Harris commented that Lt Col Stuart

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Abel and Dr. Trotter “found that the identifications being put forward to the Memorial Division could not be further substantiated by studying the remains and the accompanying paperwork at the same time.”¹⁴⁵ Dr. Trotter considered the project a failure, and the Memorial Division terminated it as a result. Ms. Beckenbaugh and Ms. Harris explained, however, “Those families who had already been notified that the remains of their loved one had been recovered received remains for burial.”¹⁴⁶ The AGRS interred the unidentified Cabanatuan remains as unknowns in the Manila American Cemetery.¹⁴⁷

By 31 March 1947, the Mausoleum had received 30,500 sets of remains, with almost 70 percent of them being skeletal.¹⁴⁸ By 1 December 1949, there were 3,568 unknown sets of remains in the Manila Mausoleum.¹⁴⁹ The Manila American Cemetery currently holds 3,741 unknown sets of remains—3,641 are single unknown remains, while the other 100 are comingled unknown remains.¹⁵⁰ Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command, Central Identification Laboratory (JPAC-CIL) historians are currently determining the number of and charting unknown remains (or X-Files) for their respective functional areas. It is beyond the scope of this narrative to provide a breakdown of X-Files for each sector and cemetery in the FEZ. The Solvability and Resolvability Group has tracked the movement of X-Files into the Manila Mausoleum and Manila American Cemetery, but that data still needs to be refined and its usability assessed. Their chart lists 3,620 X-Files, which is at odds with the ABMC number mentioned above. The Research and Analysis Group at JPAC is also currently tracking X-File data for the Pacific Theater. Closer coordination among the various sections is necessary if we are to determine the exact number of Manila X-Files. In the coming months and years, JPAC will compile readily accessible and searchable X-File databases.

The Manila American Cemetery at Fort McKinley

On 22 April 1947, the War Department selected Manila and Honolulu, Hawaii, as the sites for permanent overseas cemeteries for the un-repatriated World War II dead from the Pacific Theater. It settled on Manila for several reasons. Its large port, regular shipping schedule, and the availability of housing and hotels would facilitate an anticipated “Gold Star Pilgrimage” in which family members of the deceased could visit the gravesites. Also, the United States Army garrisons in the Philippine Islands could maintain and supervise the cemetery.¹⁵¹ The Memorial Division, OQMG, considered building an additional permanent cemetery on Guam for the remains of those who died in the MARBO Zone, on Okinawa, and in the Ryukyus. It abandoned these plans in 1948, however, when Congress did not appropriate the funds. The proposed Guam site was rather small, and the island was too remote, lacked sufficient accommodations, and was hotter than Hawaii.¹⁵² Manila and Honolulu were more suitable sites.

While AGRS completed concentration activities in late 1947 and early 1948, the ABMC sought a specific site in Manila for its permanent cemetery. On 19 November 1947, Brig Gen Thomas North, Secretary of the ABMC, arrived in Manila to meet with architect Ray Larson, Lt Col D. K. Donelson, who represented the Secretary of the Army, Lt Col Lindley A. Pennypacker, OQMG, Washington, and Col C. F. Kearney.¹⁵³ The ABMC evaluated Manila No. 2 as a potential location. It was 12 miles north of Fort McKinley in Manila’s outer city limits and was the main temporary cemetery through which AGRS funneled remains into

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the Manila Mausoleum. But the ABMC did not believe that the 70-acre plot was large enough to accommodate the estimated 20,000 remains that it would permanently inter in the Philippines. The group also discussed Little Baguio and the island of Corregidor as possible sites. When the American representatives met with Manuel A. Roxas, President of the Republic of the Philippines, to determine which land on Luzon was available, Col Murphey, commander AGRS-FEZ, suggested Fort McKinley. Located on a hill above Manila Bay just six miles south of the Manila city center, the 152-acre McKinley plot was picturesque.¹⁵⁴

The History of the AGRS explained:

Recommendations were made in writing to OQMG, Washington, that a site of one hundred (150) acres in the Fort McKinley area, including the site of the present Fort McKinley Cemetery be selected. The site was selected because of its contours and suitability for burial purposes, its scenic beauty, its historic associations, its accessibility, and the economy of installing a cemetery upon it.¹⁵⁵

On 1 April 1948, the Philippine government granted the United States permission to construct a cemetery on the former site of Fort William McKinley. American Battle Monuments Commission engineers and surveyors devised a burial layout and grading plan, and they began clearing trees, bushes, shrubbery, and concrete structures from the grounds.¹⁵⁶

Fort William McKinley was an American post first occupied by U.S. forces in 1901 during the Philippine-American War (1899–1902).¹⁵⁷ The U.S. Army constructed numerous such forts in the first decade of the Twentieth Century in an effort to police and pacify the United States' newly acquired Philippine territory. In 1903, for instance, the army established Fort Stotsenburg 50 miles north of Manila. In 1919, it added several airstrips at the fort and named that section of the grounds Clark Air Field. The main American naval base (Sangle Point) was at Cavite, eight miles southwest of Manila on Manila Bay.¹⁵⁸ Thousands of Americans died during the Philippine-American War and from injury and illness while on occupation duty in the subsequent decades. Many of these soldiers and sailors were interred in the various military post cemeteries throughout Luzon. The Fort McKinley Post Cemetery was the largest burial plot for American forces on the island in the pre-World War II decades. These pre-existing post and base cemeteries presented a problem for the AGRS in the months and years following World War II.

In late 1947, the ABMC decided to build a new, exclusively World War II cemetery on the exact site of the pre-existing McKinley Post Cemetery. Consequently, on 1 January 1948, OQMG directed AGRS to disinter the pre-World War II McKinley remains and reinter them 50 miles away at Fort Stotsenburg Cemetery (known today as Clark Veterans Cemetery).¹⁵⁹ In the 1920s, Fort Stotsenburg and Clark Air Field were two sections of one military post. In 1949, however, the two sites became known simply as Clark Air Force Base. Fort Stotsenburg had maintained two cemeteries, Stotsenburg No. 1 and No.2, during the first half of the Twentieth Century. Before construction could begin on the Manila American Cemetery, AGRS intended to merge the two Stotsenburg cemeteries, along with the pre-WWII remains from Fort

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McKinley, into a new Clark Cemetery. Image 10 shows the location of the Stotsenburg/Clark site, roughly 60 miles northwest of Fort McKinley.

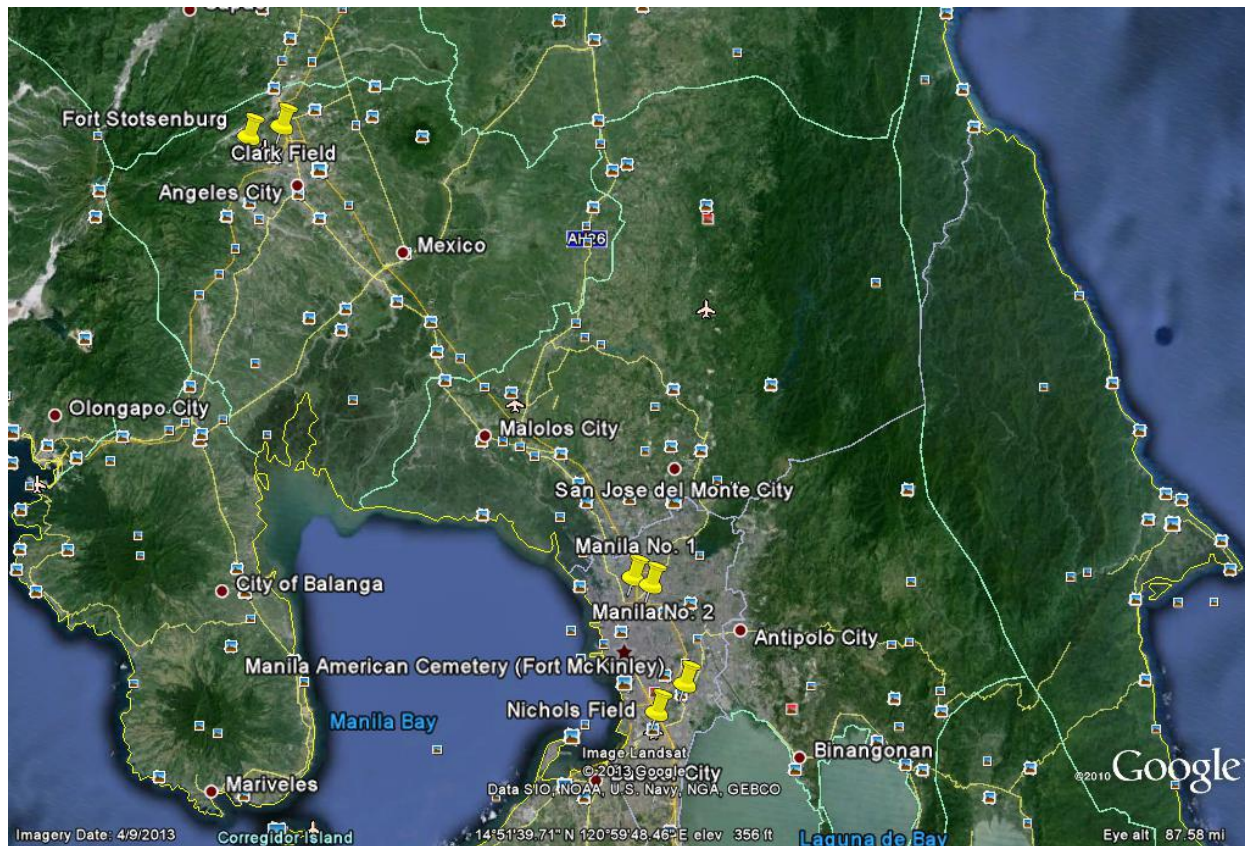


Figure 10. Google Earth Map of Stotsenburg/Clark, Manila No. 1, and Manila No. 2 Cemeteries. Also shown are the Nichols Field Mausoleum and the Manila American Cemetery (Fort McKinley).

It is difficult to determine if AGRS located and disinterred each preexisting grave at McKinley prior to leveling and grading the site for construction of the Manila American Cemetery. American Graves Registration personnel had begun preparatory work at Clark/Stotsenburg in 1947. Between January and May 1948, AGRS disinterred remains from the McKinley Post Cemetery for shipment to Clark/Stotsenburg.¹⁶⁰ The AGRS reinterred 4,200 sets of remains from the Fort McKinley Post Cemetery at the Stotsenburg/Clark site.¹⁶¹ The disinterment of pre-World War II remains at McKinley was hampered by the fact that fighting had occurred in and around that location during the 1945 Battle of Manila. According to the history of the Clark Veterans Cemetery, “Thousands of graves and cemetery records were damaged” or lost at McKinley.¹⁶²

On 14 January 1948, AGRS personnel began screening the Stotsenburg/Clark site for potential World War II losses.¹⁶³ They sent any World War II remains to McKinley for burial in the Manila American Cemetery. In May 1947, the AGRS defined old burials “as remains presenting evidence indicating that the deceased has been buried for a period of at least five years or more.”¹⁶⁴ By these standards, remains interred prior to May 1942—which would include a significant number of Battle of Bataan, Death March, and POW camp deaths—would

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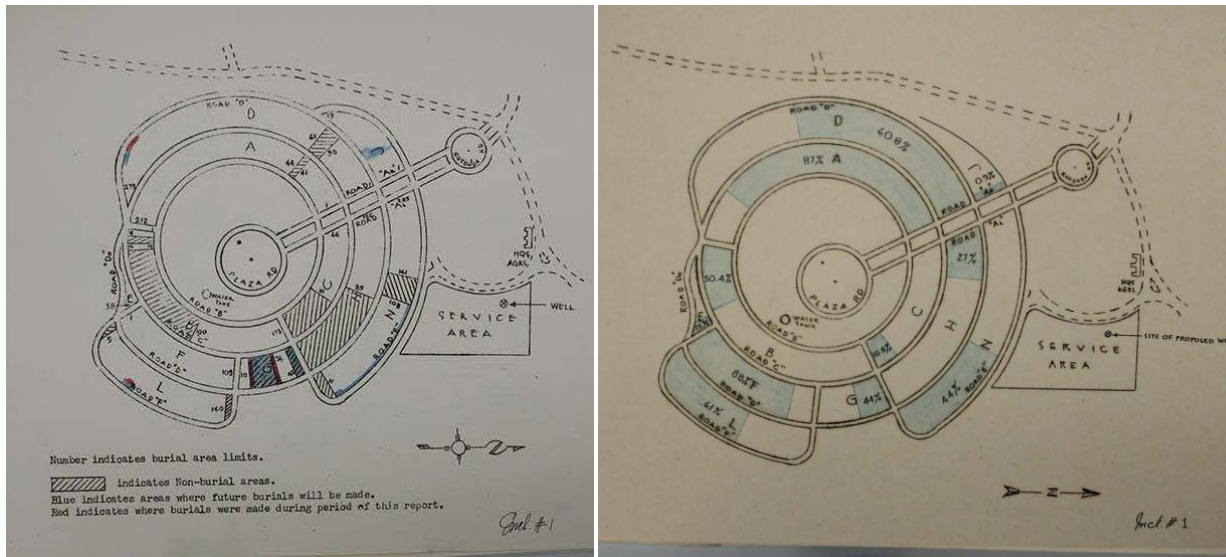
technically be considered old burials. The AGRS did not explain how analysts determined the length of time the remains were buried. Nevertheless, it would re-inter what it believed were old burials at the new Stotsenburg/Clark cemetery. The AGRS lamented, "Because of inadequate and conflicting cemetery records, a number of remains had to be disinterred to determine their identity. In the process a new plot map of the two Fort Stotsenburg Cemeteries evolved which was more nearly accurate than the older records."¹⁶⁵ There is a distinct possibility that AGRS failed to relocate all pre-WWII losses from McKinley to Stotsenburg. There is an equally likely possibility that AGRS did not completely move all WWII losses from Clark/Stotsenburg to McKinley, or that it mistakenly moved pre-WWII remains from Stotsenburg to McKinley.

On 1 March 1948, AGRS began "leveling and survey" of Fort Stotsenburg Cemetery, and the first burial of a pre-World War II set of remains occurred later that week.¹⁶⁶ The AGRS was still moving remains from the McKinley Post Cemetery as of 31 March.¹⁶⁷ It also reinterred remains from the United States Navy Sangley Point Military Cemetery and the two pre-existing Stotsenburg Post cemeteries in the new Clark/Stotsenburg cemetery.¹⁶⁸

While AGRS was moving pre-WWII remains from the McKinley Post Cemetery to Stotsenburg/Clark, it was also disinterring Manila No. 2 for shipment to the Manila Mausoleum and Manila American Cemetery. When the AGRS completed disinterring Manila No. 2 on 20 July 1948, it sent additional personnel to work at the new permanent cemetery. Paragraph 4, War Department General Order 76, 2 December 1948, "officially designated Fort McKinley Cemetery as the permanent overseas burial ground for the Far East Command."¹⁶⁹ Subsequently named the Manila American Cemetery, it held the remains of servicemen whose next of kin desired that they be buried overseas, bodies for whom there were no instructions, and unknowns from the Pacific Theater.¹⁷⁰

On 3 May 1949, the AGRS interred the first group of World War II deceased at the Manila American Cemetery. By the end of the month, AGRS personnel reached a daily interment rate of 234 bodies. When construction was complete on 24 June, 4,488 burials—or 25 percent of the estimated total—had occurred. There were still 10,928 remains waiting to be interred, as well as 2,220 cases still to be processed. By the end of September 1949, AGRS had buried 12,464 sets of remains, while 4,024 remains were awaiting burial; final disposition rulings were pending for 2,385 cases. According to Steere and Boardman, burials continued on a small scale during 1950 "as a result of identification of remains on hand and scattered recoveries by the few search units which still operated."¹⁷¹ Figures 11 and 12 illustrate the various phases of burial operations in the Manila American Cemetery. On 1 January 1951, the ABMC gained control of the Manila American Cemetery from the Secretary of the Army. In July 1957, when Steere and Boardman published their findings, the Manila American Cemetery contained 17,178 remains.¹⁷²

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Figures 11 and 12. American Graves Registrations maps of the Manila American Cemetery showing the of final interment.¹⁷³

On 8 December 1960, the ABMC dedicated the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, which was designed by the San Francisco architecture firm of Gardner A. Dailey. At 152 acres, it is the largest of the ABMC cemeteries. It holds more graves and lists more names of the missing on its memorial walls than any of the other ABMC sites. The cemetery's entrance is at the junction of McKinley and Nichols Field Roads. Immediately past the entrance is a plaza with a circular fountain and a visitor's center to the right. The Central Mall, which extends from the plaza, is lined with mahogany trees. The grounds have the appearance of a botanical garden and contain large lawns and native species of plants, trees, and flowers. Circular roads connect the graves area, which "is divided into eleven curved lettered plots of varying sizes forming concentric bands around the high ground on which the memorial stands."¹⁷⁴

The Manila American Cemetery contains the remains of known American servicemen who perished in the Philippines, Palau Islands, New Guinea, and on Guam—Guam was the consolidation point for Ulithi, Yap, and the Caroline Islands. Manila contains unknowns recovered from Saipan, Tinian, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Zamami Shima, Ie Shima, Japan (including those once stored in the Yokohama Mausoleum), Indonesia, East Borneo, North Borneo, Java, and Indo-China. Nearly all of the unknowns from the Pacific Theater are interred in Manila.

According to the ABMC, "In this cemetery are buried **17,202** of our military Dead representing 40 percent of the burials which were originally made in temporary cemeteries in New Guinea, the Philippines and other islands of the Southwest Pacific Area, and also in the Palau Islands of the Central Pacific Area."¹⁷⁵ These 17,202 dead lie in 17,097 graves.¹⁷⁶ A closer examination of the 100 sets of co-mingled remains may indicate whether any are candidates for a group disinterment. Figure 13 is a modern day image of the Manila American Cemetery. Tables 6 and 7 show the distribution of graves and headstones in the cemetery.

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FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLYFigure 13. Aerial view of the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial.¹⁷⁷

Table 6. Distribution of Graves in the Manila American Cemetery			
	US Military	Philippine Nationals	Total
Sets of Remains	16,632	570	17,202

Table 7. Distribution of Headstones in the Manila American Cemetery			
	Number of Headstones (Graves)	Number of Remains	Total Unknown Remains
Single Identified Remains	13,434	13,434	
Co-Mingled Identified Remains	6	28	
Single Unknown Remains	3,641	3,641	3,741
Co-Mingled Unknown Remains	16	100	
Total	17,097	17,203¹⁷⁸	

The Memorial, located near the cemetery's center, consists of a chapel and memorial court surrounded by two hemicycles. According to the ABMC, "Each hemicycle contains 24 pairs of fin walls upon the four faces of which are inscribed the names and particulars of 36,286 of our Missing."¹⁷⁹ The missing are broken down as follows (Table 8):

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Table 8. Missing for the Southwest Pacific Area.	
U.S. Army and U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF)	16,919
United States Navy	17,582
United States Marine Corps	1,727
United States Coast Guard	58
Total	36,286¹⁸⁰

The tablets represent missing servicemen who “gave their lives in the service of their Country in the regions from Australia northward to Japan, eastward to the Palau Islands and westward to China, Burma and India.”¹⁸¹ A War Department Administrative Review Board declared a man dead one year and one day after he reportedly went missing. The Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) list 28,778 names. This includes service men from the Pacific Theater of World War II (minus SWPA), the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The Philippine Heroes Cemetery, or Libingan ng mga Bayani in Tagalog, sits adjacent to the McKinley site and contains the graves of 33,520 Filipino Soldiers. Over 500 Philippine Scouts, however, are buried in the Manila American Cemetery.¹⁸² The current Clark Veterans Cemetery (formerly Fort Stotsenburg) which accepted the pre-WWII remains from Fort McKinley, contains 8,592 total burials. This includes WWII veterans who died after the war, as well as the remains of servicemen from all of America’s Twentieth Century conflicts. There are 2,139/2,149 sets of unknown remains, and 1,055 of them are military personnel who died between 1900 and 1906.¹⁸³ The Clark Veterans Cemetery website notes, “Many of the records and over 2,100 graves were lost, damaged or disrupted due to the ravages of WWII.”¹⁸⁴ This undoubtedly caused problems for AGRS when it segregated pre-World War II losses for burial at Clark and World War II losses for burial at McKinley. Though the majority of the remains at Clark are American, there are 647 Philippine Scouts buried there. Dependents of deceased soldiers and scouts are also interred at Clark. Table 9 shows the breakdown of burials at Clark Veterans Cemetery. When one adds up all of the burials, they do not equal the number indicated on the Clark Veterans Cemetery brochure.

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Confirmed US Veterans (all services)	1,825	All wars since Spanish-American War
Philippine Scouts	647	Served in US Army, 1900-1946
Confirmed Military Dependents	676	Authorized burials
Unknown Dead	2,149	Believed primarily military from Fort McKinley
Confirmed Civilian Army Quartermasters	200	Teamsters, Farriers, Blacksmiths, Packers
Confirmed Civilian Military Support	25	Trumpeter, Merchant Seaman, Ordnance
Philippine Constabulary (Police)	2	Augmented Military
World War II Dishonorable	20	Court-martialed and executed during WWII
Vietnamese Boat People/Refugees	9	Of moiré than 30,082 repatriated at Clark in 1975
Unclassified	187	No status available
Government Civil Servants (US & RP)	785	Primarily pre-WWII, most also veterans
Civilians misclassified	910	Veterans erroneously classified civilians
Civilians misclassified	350	Most likely dependents
Civilians misclassified	805	Unknown status American/Filipino
TOTAL	8,590*	

*Website adds this up to 8,592

Conclusion

This narrative has addressed the basic history of AGRS's "The Return of World War II Dead Program" for the Pacific Theater. It has evaluated search and recovery, concentration, identification, and repatriation efforts. It has also discussed the origins of the Manila American Cemetery. The Pacific Theater is too large to permit an in-depth discussion in one memo of the aforementioned efforts in each and every battlefield, temporary, and USAF cemetery. Historians at JPAC who work in Pacific Theater subfields, such as the Philippines, the Palau Islands, CBI, and Saipan, will provide more detailed analyses of AGRS operations in their own functional areas. They will also compile lists of X-Files and other relevant data for their projects, as well as track the movement of remains through the various cemeteries and concentration points.

Graves registration activities in the Pacific were unique. The size, geography, and weather in the theater significantly complicated AGRS's mission. Recovery operations proved challenging, and various cemeteries reported burial discrepancies. The numerous concentration points on widely dispersed islands increased the possibility of errors in consolidation, handling, and identification. Perhaps that is part of the reason why the Pacific Theater contains more unknowns and MIAs than any other World War II theater of action.

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¹ Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War With Japan* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 107.

² Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, Volume XII, *Leyte, June 1944 – January 1945* (1958; repr., Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 2001), 90-106.

³ M. Hamlin Cannon, *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines*, United States Army in World War II: The War in the Pacific (1954; repr., Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1987), 45-59.

⁴ Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun*, 524.

⁵ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 4, Headquarters, United States Army Forces, Western Pacific, Office of the Commanding General, APO 707, “General Orders No. 138,” 10 May 1946, 1, Folder Title: 314.7, GRS-Far East (Historical Narrative), Feb 46 – Oct 47. Record Group (RG) 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA II) College Park, Maryland.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Edward Steere and Thayer M. Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead, 1945-51*, Q.M.C. Historical Studies, Series II, No. 4 (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1957), 444.

⁸ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 5, “Organization Chart: American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theatre,” undated, Folder Title: 314.7, GRS-Far East (Historical Narrative), Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

⁹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 9, Headquarters, Philippines-Ryukyus Command, APO 707, “General Orders No. 34,” 22 March 1947, 1, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS – Far East (Historical Narrative) Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II. The documentary record utilizes Far East Zone and Far Eastern Zone interchangeably.

¹⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 522.

¹¹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 6, “American Graves Registration Service Geographical Boundaries,” 23 June 1947, Folder Title: 314.7, GRS-Far East (Historical Narrative), Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

¹² “History of American Graves Registration Service, Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 9-10, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS – Far East (Historical Narrative) Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II; Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 380.

¹³ “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 1 October 1947 – 31 March 1948, 2, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part One). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

¹⁴ “History of American Graves Registration Service, Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 12.

¹⁵ “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 3, 9.

¹⁶ “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” History PHILRYCOM Sector, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48, 39.

¹⁷ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 369.

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¹⁸ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 21, Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, To: Commanding Officer, AGRS, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, “Subject: Status of Search and Recovery Operations – 25 July 47,” 4-5; “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 15.

¹⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 444.

²⁰ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 21, 1.

²¹ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947), 15.

²² “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 2, “Graves Registration,” 4 May 1946, Folder Title: 314.7, GRS-Far East (Historical Narrative), Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

²³ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 21, 4.

²⁴ “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Inclosure [sic] 11, Maj Glen A. Lee, GSQM, “Staff Study, Personnel Requirements, AGRS,” 27 Feb 48, 2, 4, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6. This staff study illustrates the problems presented by the OQMG and AGRS files. In many instances, different reports on the same subject or events contradict each other. A different staff study figured that search and recovery operations would locate 10,000 remains “on islands from Okinawa to New Guinea [and that AGRS would be responsible] for the concentration, identification and storage of some 58,000 known and unknown remains and their final burial or shipment.” “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 15, “Staff Study, Personnel – American Graves Registration Service,” 1-2, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS – Far East (Historical Narrative) Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

²⁷ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 21, 1.

²⁸ Annex G, “Skeletal Chart with Instructions,” Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

²⁹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 21, 2.

³⁰ E. Bartlett Kerr, *Surrender and Survival: The Experience of American POWs in the Pacific* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985), 52-60. The American Graves Registration Service estimated that there were 1,500 Americans interred along the Death March Route. This number seems rather high. Estimates suggest that roughly 1,500 Americans died at Camp O’Donnell. It is possible that AGRS conflated the two statistics. “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 1. Death March Survivor Manny Lawton also erroneously noted, “The Death March, with its starvation, exhaustion, beatings and executions, had taken a toll of approximately 1,500.” Manny Lawton, *Some Survived* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2004), 31.

³¹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 445.

³² “Route of Bataan Death March,” undated, <<http://voiceseducation.org/node/519>> (Accessed 7 February 2014).

³³ Abie Abraham, *Oh, God, Where Are You?* (Chicora, PA: Mechling Books, 2008), 463-69.

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³⁴ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 1.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3. Emphasis added.

³⁶ Historian Gavan Daws observed, “After working my way through all kinds of arithmetical calculations concerning POWs, I count myself among those who know from experience that there are lies, damned lies, and statistics. Figures on combat and captivity are often shaky. Between Japanese and Allied figures there are serious discrepancies at almost every turn: how many men fought on either side in the Malaya campaign, how many prisoners survived the Bataan death march, how many were worked to death on the Burma-Siam railroad, and so on. Often, in writing about large numbers, the best I can do is indicate orders of magnitude. At the level of single camps and small groups of POWs, just as often the arithmetic in the surviving documentary records does not add up. So it goes, POWs gone missing forever, reduced to gaps in columns of figures that do not tally, blank spots in human history.” Gavan Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1994), 28-29.

³⁷ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 445.

³⁸ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 16.

³⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 456.

⁴⁰ “Disinterment Map of Bataan,” Folder Title: 293 Graves Regis – Far East (Identification) 1946-47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 410, NARA II.

⁴¹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 395.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 397-98, 409.

⁴³ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 15, “Staff Study,” 2. According to a different AGRS Report, however, “Concentration of World War II dead, for the PHILRYCOM Sector, contemplates the handling in Manila of approximately 58,000 bodies. It is planned that the concentration of 48,900 of these will be completed by 31 December 1947.” “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 15, Tab J, “Concentration,” 1. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

⁴⁴ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 15, “Staff Study, Personnel – American Graves Registration Service,” 2-3.

⁴⁵ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 15, Tab J, “Concentration,” 1.

⁵⁰ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [*sic*] 15, “Staff Study, Personnel – American Graves Registration Service,” 3.

⁵¹ Batangas No. 1 Concentrated into Manila No. 1 and No. 2 in March 1947. “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 17.

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⁵² *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁵³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 369-70.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 411.

⁵⁵ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 17.

⁵⁶ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 522.

⁵⁷ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 17.

⁵⁸ “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [*sic*],” Inclosure [*sic*] 11, Maj Glen A. Lee, GSQM, “Staff Study, Personnel Requirements, AGRS,” 27 Feb 48, 8.

⁵⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 415.

⁶⁰ Incl[osure] [*sic*] B, “USAF Cemetery Leyte #1, Visayan Mindanao Sector, List of Inactive USAF Cemeteries Concentrated to AGRS Mausoleum, Manila,” undated, 1, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

⁶¹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 418.

⁶² Christopher McDermott, e-mail message to author, 7 February 2014. This query for the Pacific Theater dead and missing included CBI and Japan losses, but it filtered out losses from the west coast of the United States, Alaska, and the Aleutians.

⁶³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 441-42.

⁶⁴ This partial list represents locations for which JPAC has copies of maps depicting burial sites.

⁶⁵ “Philippines,” undated, <<http://wikitravel.org/en/Philippines>> (Accessed 7 February 2014).

⁶⁶ Cannon, *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines*, 362-68.

⁶⁷ “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [*sic*],” Inclosure [*sic*] 20A, Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, “Concentration Activities in USAF Cemetery Leyte I.,” 1 March 1948, 1, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

⁶⁸ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 416; “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 3.

⁶⁹ Inclosure [*sic*] 20A, “Concentration Activities in USAF Cemetery Leyte I.,” 1.

⁷⁰ “History PHILRYCOM Sector, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48,” AGRS Installations, 40, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part One). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

⁷¹ Inclosure [*sic*] 20A, “Concentration Activities in USAF Cemetery Leyte I.,” 2.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 4. The report did not indicate whether this Merchant Marine casualty was American.

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⁷⁴ “History of PHILRYCOM Sector, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48,” “AGRS Installations,” 40. This same report noted, “Concentration activities in Leyte Cemetery No. 1 started 8 October 1947 in compliance with AGRS PHILRYCOM Directive No. 2, dated 3 October 1947.”

⁷⁵ Inclosure [sic] 20A, “Concentration Activities in USAF Cemetery Leyte I.,” 4. The AGRS-FEZ “Chronology” indicated the third and final shipment left Leyte on 8 January 1948. “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 6.

⁷⁶ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 416-18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 414.

⁷⁸ Lisa Beckenbaugh and Heather Harris, Archival Research Memo, Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), “Casualties of the Philippines POW Camps O’Donnell and Cabanatuan and the history of their burials,” 13 October 2005 (Revised 2 March 2010), 2; Lawton, *Some Survived*, 31; Michael Norman and Elizabeth M. Norman, *Tears in the Darkness: The Story of the Bataan Death March and Its Aftermath* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 237.

⁷⁹ Beckenbaugh and Harris, “Casualties of the Philippines POW Camps O’Donnell and Cabanatuan,” 2-3; Clark Lee, “A Visit to Recaptured Camp O’Donnell Where Martyrs of the Famous ‘March of Death’ From Fallen Bataan Now Sleep,” January 1945, n.p., <http://www.lindavdahl.com/FrontPage_Links/O'Donnell%20Visit%20Article.htm> (accessed 9 January 2014); Norman and Norman, *Tears in the Darkness*, 238. The reported grave dimensions differ in various sources. The Normans claimed that graves were “six feet wide, to ten to twenty-five feet long, and three to four feet deep, communal graves for five, ten, fifteen men and more.” International News Service correspondent Clark Lee visited the O’Donnell site in January 1945. He observed that POWs interred groups of five bodies in fifteen foot by sixteen foot graves that were only eighteen-inches deep.

⁸⁰ Beckenbaugh and Harris, “Casualties of the Philippines POW Camps O’Donnell and Cabanatuan,” 3.

⁸¹ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 4.

⁸² Lee, “A Visit to Recaptured Camp O’Donnell.”

⁸³ *Ibid.* Master Sergeant Abie Abraham returned to O’Donnell with AGRS in December 1945 to disinter the cemetery. He believed that 1,547 men were buried at the camp. Abraham plotted the burials as his team excavated the site. He recalled, “The whole cemetery was a mess. The tall *cogan* grass stood three feet high. As I glanced at the half-burned crosses, I knew the Japanese had tried to destroy the evidence, and had done a fairly good job of it.” Abraham, *Oh, God, Where Are You?*, 474.

⁸⁴ Beckenbaugh and Harris, “Casualties of the Philippines POW Camps O’Donnell and Cabanatuan,” 3.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 6-8; Heather Harris, DPMO WWII Division Memo, “Historical research concerning Grave 717, Cabanatuan Camp # 3 Cemetery (Philippines JPAC Incident 425),” 7 September 2010, 2-4.

⁹⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 410.

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⁹¹ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 19; “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 1.

⁹² “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Incl. [sic] 18, Headquarters, United States Armed Forces Cemetery Manila #2, Apo 358, To: Commanding Officer, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, “Subject: USAF Cemetery Manila No. 1,” 12 December 1947, 1.

⁹³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 415.

⁹⁴ Incl. [sic] 18, “USAF Cemetery Manila No. 1”; According to “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 2, AGRS completed disinterring Manila No. 1 on 29 October 1947 and began leveling it the following day.

⁹⁵ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 410, 416, 547; “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 4.

⁹⁶ “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Incl. [sic] 19A, Headquarters, United States Armed Forces Cemetery Manila #2, APO 358, To: Commanding Officer, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, “Subject: USAF Cemetery Sta Barbara No. 1,” 19 February 1948, 1.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*; “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 6; Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 415.

¹⁰⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 413.

¹⁰¹ Incl. [sic] 21A, Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, To: Historical Branch, “Subject: Finschhafen Concentration Activities,” 15 April 1948, 1, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 1-3.

¹⁰³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 414.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 419-420; 422-423

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 423-24; “History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” Chronology, 3.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 424.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 422.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 422-23

¹⁰⁹ “History AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 14, Folder 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part One). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

¹¹⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 423.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

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¹¹² “History AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 41.

¹¹³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 425.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 426, 543.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 543.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 426.

¹¹⁸ “History AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 85-86; “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Incl. [sic] 2A, Headquarters Eighth Army, United States Army, Office of the Quartermaster, APO 343, “Disinterment and Concentration of Remains,” 6 November 1947, 1.

¹¹⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 428, Footnote 83.

¹²⁰ Incl. [sic] 2A, “Disinterment and Concentration of Remains,” 1.

¹²¹ “History AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 85-86; “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Incl. [sic] 3, Central Identification Point, American Graves Registration Service, Far Eastern Zone, APO 707, To: Commanding Officer, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, “Subject: Final Report on Yokohama Operation,” 4.

¹²² Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 544-46.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 546.

¹²⁴ “History AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 26.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 53. A different report, however, indicated that the Mausoleum consisted of twelve hangers. “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 15, “Remains Depot (Mausoleum),” 1, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS – Far East (Historical Narrative) Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II. Another report indicated, “The Remains Depot (Mausoleum) consists of eight (8) hangars at Nichols Field capable of storing 40,000 bodies of the Sector. The operating unit must process the 58,000 concentrated remains for final burial or shipment to the United States.” “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 To 31 March 1948: Part Three: Inclosures [sic],” Inclosure [sic] 11, Major Glen A. Lee, GSQM, “Staff Study, Personnel Requirements, AGRS,” 27 Feb 48, 9.

¹²⁶ “History PHILRYCOM Sector, 1 October 47 – 31 March 48: Part One,” 27, 67.

¹²⁷ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 17, Folder Title: 314.7, GRS-Far East (Historical Narrative, Feb 46 – Oct 47. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 417, NARA II.

¹²⁸ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 24, Headquarters, Philippines-Ryukyus Command, APO 707, To: Commanding General, Ryukyus Command, APO 331, et al., “Subject: Centralization of Processing and Identification,” 15 April 1947, 1.

¹²⁹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Enclosure 23, Headquarters, Philippines-Ryukyus Command, APO 707, To: Commanding General, Ryukyus Command, APO 331, et al., “Subject: Centralization of Processing and Identification,” 5 May 1947, 1. Emphasis in original.

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¹³⁰ “History of American Graves Registration Service Pacific Theater Area Command and Far Eastern Zone (Feb 1946 – Oct 1947),” 18. Typhoon Jean struck Manila on 26 December 1947 and damaged the new buildings. According to AGRS, “Most damaged were the Search and Recovery building, in which twenty (20) feet of roofing was blown off and charts of Search Areas and locations of FOD’s [sic] were destroyed, and Records building in which most of the window frames were blown out, part of the roof was carried away, and one corner of the of the [sic] building was folded back by the wind. No records were destroyed or damaged, however, in either section.” “History AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 – 31 March 1948: Part One,” 25-26.

¹³¹ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 15, Tab J, “Identification,” 1.

¹³² “History of AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” 53-54.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 54-55.

¹³⁴ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 25, Headquarters, Philippines-Ryukyus Command, APO 707, To: Commanding General, Ryukyus Command, APO 331, et al., “Subject: Identification Procedures,” 1.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹³⁶ Incl. [sic] 23, “Manual for the Search and Recovery of World War II Dead,” 24 December 1947, 16-17, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* 17.

¹³⁸ “History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47),” Inclosure [sic] 15, Tab J, “Identification,” 2; Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 636.

¹³⁹ Inclosure [sic] 15, Tab J, “Identification,” 1-2.

¹⁴⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 636.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 546.

¹⁴² Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, PHILRYCOM Sector, APO 707, “Weekly News,” 9 February 1948, 2, Folder Title: 314.7 Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II. San Francisco was the port through which Pacific remains entered the continental United States. From there, OQMG distributed them around the country for final burial.

¹⁴³ Beckenbaugh and Harris, “Casualties of the Philippines POW Camps O’Donnell and Cabanatuan,” 7-8.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ “History of AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One,” 54.

¹⁴⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 637-38.

¹⁵⁰ The American Graves Registration Service also had to deal with a significant number of Allied remains. By 1 October 1947, it had compiled what it believed were complete rosters of these cases. According to the AGRS

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history, "By 31 March 1948 disposition had been made of all allied remains in the AGRS Mausoleum except for one (1) Argentine national and 889 Filipino World War II Dead," which included civilians, guerrillas, and members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. There were British nationals, Chinese nationals, Dutch, Javanese, and one Russian among the foreign remains. The AGRS disinterred, "processed, segregated, and casketed" these foreign national remains at the Mausoleum in January and February 1948. The U.S. Army disposed of Philippine Scout personnel "in accordance with U.S. Army Regulations." It then released the remains to the Philippine Army, which interred them at the Bataan Memorial Cemetery, or to next of kin for private burial. "History of AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," 56-57, 72-75.

¹⁵¹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 495, 497.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 515-16.

¹⁵³ "History of AGRS-FEZ, 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," 17.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵⁷ The American Battle Monuments Commission, "Manila American Cemetery and Memorial," (2009), page 9, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 7 January 2014).

¹⁵⁸ Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association, "History of Clark Veterans Cemetery," undated, page 2, <http://www.cvcra.org/historical_information.php> (accessed 7 January 2014).

¹⁵⁹In 1949, the Army transferred control of Fort Stotsenburg to the Air Force, and the Air Force renamed the site Clark Air Force Base. This is the current location of the Clark Veterans Cemetery. Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association, "History of Clark Veterans Cemetery," undated, page 2, <http://www.cvcra.org/historical_information.php> (accessed 16 January 2014). In 1991, the United States relinquished control of the Air Base to the Philippine Government.

¹⁶⁰ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 512. Two separate AGRS documents, however, indicated that disinterment operations at the McKinley Post Cemetery began on 26 February 1948. Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, Philrycom Sector, APO 707, "Weekly News," 1 March 1948, 2, Folder Title: 314.7 GRS Far East (History AGRS-FEZ) (Part Three). RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 416, NARA II; "History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," Chronology, 9.

¹⁶¹ "History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," Chronology, 9.

¹⁶²Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association, "History of Clark Veterans Cemetery," undated, page 2, 14 <http://www.cvcra.org/historical_information.php> (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁶³ "History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," Chronology, 6.

¹⁶⁴ "History of AGRS-PATA and AGRS-FEZ (Feb 46 to 1 Oct 47)," Inclosure [*sic*] 25, Headquarters, Philippines-Ryukyus Command, APO 707, To: Commanding General, Ryukyus Command, APO 331, et al., "Subject: Identification Procedures," 4.

¹⁶⁵ "History of AGRS-FEZ 1 October 1947 to 31 March 1948: Part One," 20.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

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¹⁶⁸ Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association, “History of Clark Veterans Cemetery,” undated, page 2, 14 <http://www.cvcra.org/historical_information.php > (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁶⁹ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 512.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 512-13.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 513-15.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 515.

¹⁷³ Folder Title, 319.1 GRS-Far East (Disposition of Remains—QMG-7) Jun-Jul. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 540, NARA II; Folder Title, 319.1 GRS-Far East (Disposition of Remains—QMG 7) Sept-Oct. RG 92: Entry 1894A, Box 541, NARA II.

¹⁷⁴ The American Battle Monuments Commission, “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” (2009), pages 9-10, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 9. Emphasis added.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

¹⁷⁷ “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” undated, <<http://www.djibnet.com/photo/world+war+ii/manila-american-cemetery-and-memorial-2320405163.html>> (Accessed on 7 February 2014).

¹⁷⁸ The ABMC claims that the cemetery holds 17,202 sets of remains, yet its numbers add up to 17,203. The ABMC website, however, indicates that there are 17,201 remains in the cemetery. “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” undated, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁷⁹ The American Battle Monuments Commission, “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” (2009), page 12, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 16 January 2014). The ABMC website indicates that there are 36,285 names on the Tablets of the Missing. “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” undated, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁸⁰ The American Battle Monuments Commission, “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” (2009), page 12, <<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ml.php>> (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association, “History of Clark Veterans Cemetery,” undated, page 20, <http://www.cvcra.org/historical_information.php > (accessed 16 January 2014).

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 9, 14, 19. The “History of Clark Veterans Cemetery” provides conflicting numbers of unknown dead.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁸⁵ Data for 1900 – 2011. *Ibid.*, 14.

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In deep and everlasting appreciation of the heroic efforts of those who, in keeping their country free, made the supreme sacrifice in World War II, the entire nation has been dedicated to disposing of the mortal remains of those honored dead in a manner consistent with the wishes of their next of kin.

Harry Truman
President of the United States

FINAL DISPOSITION OF WORLD WAR II DEAD 1945-51

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By
Edward Steere
and
Thayer M. Boardman

QMC Historical Studies
Series II, No. 4

HISTORICAL BRANCH
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL
Washington, D. C.
1957

THIS publication is the fourth of a new series of QMC historical studies covering the post World War II and Korean emergency periods. This new series (Series II) succeeds the 21 consecutively numbered QMC historical studies dealing primarily with World War II, which were published during the 9-year period, 1943-51. (For a list of all QMC historical publications and historical works in progress, see Appendix.)

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PREFACE

THIS study is a sequel to QMC Historical Studies No. 21, *The Graves Registration Service in World War II*, by Edward Steere. It attempts to cover the postwar graves registration program in all pertinent details and aspects and in all important combat areas of World War II. Since this program proved to be by far the largest of its nature ever undertaken by any nation at any time, and since the officers responsible for it from the beginning expressed a desire for an elaborate and thorough account of all phases of postwar graves registration activities, this study is necessarily long and voluminous. Its major purpose is to serve as a guide to future graves registration planners and operators by relating in detail the experiences, problems, weaknesses, and accomplishments of the postwar program.

The reader may gain some idea of the enormousness of the postwar graves registration task from the fact that it involved the final disposition of over 280,000 recovered remains from all parts of the world. Of this number, over 171,000 were eventually returned to the United States and sent to various distribution centers throughout the country for final burial according to wishes of next of kin. The total cost of the program reached the sum of some \$163,869,000. At the peak of the program, more than 13,000 persons, military and civilian, were engaged in its execution.

It should be noted that throughout this study, the term "repatriation," although actually a misnomer, is almost constantly used in referring to the program of returning war dead to their homeland. The authors have accepted this term because nearly all documents use it and because the phrase, "return of the dead program" would be too cumbersome, even though more accurate in describing the activity.

The study begins with a very detailed examination of the various planning phases which preceded actual operations; this planning was centered mostly on organizational problems in the European Theater. Next comes an extensive account of major graves registration operations in the European Theater that describes search and recovery of the missing dead, establishment and care of the ten permanent cemeteries in Europe, and plans and operations involved in the actual return to the United States of those war dead whose next of kin desired final burial in native soil.

Turning to the Pacific Theater of Operations, the study deals with graves registration organization, problems, and operations in that area. One chapter each is devoted to activities in the Africa-Middle East and Mediterranean areas, followed by a full account of the vital world-wide identification operations, including the technical aspects and accomplishments of this activity, which resulted in positive identification of nearly 97 percent of all recovered dead of World War II. The study closes with a chapter on the operations and accomplishments of distribution centers in the United States whereby the returned deceased received final interment in a cemetery chosen by their relatives.

In general, Mr. Steere was responsible for the chapters pertaining to planning and organizational matters, especially in the European Theater. Mr. Boardman, originally assigned the part of the study dealing with the Pacific Theater of Operations, completed this task, and upon Mr. Steere's retirement, owing to ill health, at the close of May 1955, also prepared the chapters on operations in other theaters and those dealing with permanent cemeteries and repatriation of the dead from Europe.

Source materials consulted in research for this study include the records of the Office of The Quartermaster General and Quartermaster field offices. The principal types of records were general and special orders, staff memoranda, staff studies, transcripts of conferences, policy letters, special reports, and organizational charts. Also much utilized were records of the Federal Records Center in Alexandria, Va., and the Kansas City Records Center at Kansas City, Mo. Records of the American Battle Monuments Commission also proved valuable.

Working more or less independently in clearly marked phases of the Return Program, the authors wish to express their appreciation separately to various individuals who assisted them in their work. Those to whom Mr. Steere feels particularly indebted include, first of all, Maj. Gen. George A. Horkan, Director of the Memorial Division during the culminating period of planning and transition to the world-wide operation, and later The Quartermaster General. On General Horkan's insistence, this study was prepared as a special report on the activities of The Quartermaster General in his extraordinary capacity as Chief, American Graves Registration Service. Brig. Gen. Everett Busch, Assistant Director under General Horkan, gave indispensable help in establishing useful contacts between Mr. Steere and historical units of the AGRS overseas commands. Mr. Steere wishes also to express appreciation to the following officers who directed the Memorial Division during the Return Program: Col. E. V. Freeman, Maj. Gen. K. L. Hastings (later The Quartermaster

General), Col. James B. Clearwater, and Col. John D. Martz, Jr.

It is difficult to select from the roster of officers and civilian officials of the Memorial Division those who deserve special acknowledgment. Particular mention must be made, however, of the following: Col. George H. Hinman, Chief, Liaison Branch; Mrs. Helen T. McDonald, Information Specialist on Memorial Division matters; Col. L. R. Talbot, former Chief, Cemetery Plant Division, AGRC-EA, and later head of the Operations Branch, Memorial Division; Col. Leslie W. Allen, successor to Colonel Talbot in the Operations Branch; Lt. Col. Carl Allbee, Operations Branch; Col. Horace B. Speed, Chairman, Board of Review; Col. T. H. Metz, Chief, Identification Branch; Lt. Col. James F. McFarland, who took over the Identification Branch after a tour of duty in AGRC-EA; Mr. Jesse D. Myers, Chief, Management Branch, who performed the indispensable task of co-ordinating the activities of the historical project within the Memorial Division; Mr. Herbert S. Edlis, who succeeded Mr. Myers in this office; Mr. Fred A. Moore, Chief, European Section, Operations Branch; and Mr. Herbert J. Elliott, Chief, Mediterranean and North Africa Section. Mention should also be made of the group of professional morticians who gave valuable assistance, notably Lt. Col. M. A. Meyer, Mr. C. T. Noll, and Capt. F. A. Missey.

Although few participants in graves registration planning were available for consultation, Mr. Boardman wishes to express special appreciation for invaluable assistance rendered by various officers and civilians of the Memorial Division, particularly Col. Robert J. Thomas, Lt. Col. Samuel F. Fritz, Lt. Col. Carl Allbee, Mr. William M. Annetti, and Mr. John M. Fisher.

Mr. Boardman also wishes to express his appreciation for the many courtesies extended by custodians of various file collections. The staff of the Federal Records Center, Alexandria, Va., especially Mrs. Margaret V. Nester and her assistants, Mrs. Mary K. Stuart, Mrs. Annie L. Griffin, Mr. Francis Knapper, and Mr. Vincent Boone, proved to be most helpful and co-operative in the search for pertinent information. At the Kansas City Records Center, where Mr. Boardman gathered vital material for the study, he found an attitude of utmost helpfulness matched by a highly efficient performance in the location of needed files. The staff of the Mail and Records Branch, OQMG, also deserve credit for much needed aid in the location of pertinent records.

Finally, the authors wish to thank Dr. Alvin P. Stauffer, Chief, Historical Branch, OQMG, who rendered invaluable assistance in reviewing, editing, and offering advice for the improvement of the

various chapters as they were presented. In the same Branch, Mr. William H. Peifer and Mr. Herbert R. Rifkind edited and prepared the galleys and page proofs for publication. Grateful acknowledgment is also made to Mr. Henry U. Milne, who cheerfully cooperated in the selection of illustrations for the study; to Mr. Alfred J. Holston, Printing Specialist, who performed a vital service in developing the format and design of this publication; and to Mrs. Hadasel W. Hill, Mrs. Charlesette Logan, and Miss Helene M. Bell, whose efficient performance in the typing of the manuscript was indispensable.

Washington, D. C.
17 JULY 1957

EDWARD STEERE
THAYER M. BOARDMAN

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CHAPTER XIX
WORLD-WIDE IDENTIFICATION OPERATIONS

Final disposition of the war dead in accordance with wishes of the next of kin incurred the obligation of reducing the number of unknown dead to the lowest possible minimum. The capital importance of this obligation was recognized at the outbreak of hostilities by adding to the Memorial Division, as then organized, an Overseas Branch which assumed the responsibility of maintaining a central office of burial records. An Identification Section was subsequently organized within the Branch to process all burial reports of unknown dead and conduct such investigations as might be suggested by fingerprints, tooth charts and personal effects. In commenting on the inadequate staff assigned to these two units, Col. R. P. Harbold, Chief of the Memorial Division, warned in a memorandum of 30 March 1944 for The Quartermaster General that "this work unless actively pursued at this time, will pile up and become an almost insurmountable task upon the cessation of hostilities."

Failure on the part of higher authority to heed Colonel Harbold's warning produced the very situation foreseen in March 1944. But widespread interest in problems relating to final disposition of the war dead afforded officers of the Memorial Division a hearing that had been denied during the war years. Identification of the unknown dead became a matter of paramount importance in the various planning programs developed by the Division between the Armistice of Reims and the issuance on 29 December 1945 of War Department GO No. 125, authorizing the establishment of AGRS area and separate zone commands. Notably, The Quartermaster General directed that a maximum effort should be made in the overseas theaters to establish identification of all deceased presently buried as unknowns and that burial reports should receive careful review to determine if any additional facts might help establish or confirm identities.¹

Search and recovery of isolated remains added new complications to the identification problem. Procedures employed in these operations during November-December 1945 in Germany and elsewhere

¹ Ltr, Col C. J. Blake, Mem Div, OQMG, to Brig Gen H. R. McKenzie, Hq USAFMIDPAC, 13 Dec 45, 293, Pacific. Alex RC.

during the early months of 1946 have been described in Chapter VI. Briefly, the techniques applied at graveside and collecting points were, in the main, a carryover of standard identification practices developed during the war years. Field experience, however, disclosed serious disadvantages of this system. In the first place, members of the disinterring team stood idle while the leader prosecuted studious investigation to establish a positive identification. Again, the so-called identification analysts and their assistants were, generally speaking, deficient in the knowledge of anatomy requisite to their work. Finally, there was a serious shortage of mortuary kits.

These deficiencies suggested the advisability of evacuating remains to a central identification point. Properly equipped and staffed, such a center would offer in contrast to the primitive methods employed in graveside identification the following advantages: (1) Physical anthropologists could greatly assist many investigations through the determination of approximate age, height, race, and sex by bone measurement; (2) Professional morticians could be available to supervise proper treatment and casketing of remains; (3) Difficulties in tooth charting could be handled by dental technicians; (4) Elaborate laboratory equipment (fluoroscope and X-ray machines) would be in the hands of skilled operators.

Central Identification Point

Upon recommendations proceeding from correspondence between Headquarters, AGRC-EA, and the Memorial Division, The Quartermaster General in May 1946 invited Dr. Harry L. Shapiro, Chairman and Curator of Physical Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, to visit the European Theater for the purpose of recommending procedures and anatomical techniques in the identification of unknown servicemen. Dr. Shapiro arrived in France on 23 June 1946 and spent three weeks in the field, visiting AGRC units and observing their methods.² After reviewing every detail of graves registration activities in the three field commands, Dr. Shapiro proposed the establishment of a centrally located laboratory where identification processes would be accomplished with the aid of highly developed scientific apparatus. Graveside identification should be limited, Dr. Shapiro believed, to the resolution, if possible, of nationality. Upon such determination, the remains of American deceased, together with all identifying media found in or near the place of burial, should be sent through a collecting point to the central laboratory.³

² Narrative History, CIP, p. 3.

³ Rpt, Shapiro to CO, Mem Div, OQMG, 6 Aug 46, 293, WW II Identification, Alex RC.

Dr. Shapiro suggested that personnel requirements for the proposed Central Identification Laboratory should embrace several categories of workers, the numbers in each category depending upon the workloads and the pressure of time. He indicated a need for the following scientific personnel, leaving to the experience of military officials the determination of the number of processors:⁴

(a) A director, preferably a physical anthropologist, with broad background and high scientific attainment, familiar with various techniques that might aid in problems of identification, particularly in the study of skeletal remains, who could direct and organize the work assigned to him.

(b) An assistant, also a physical anthropologist, to aid in expediting detailed laboratory procedures.

(c) A general technician, familiar with laboratory techniques and capable of determining blood types from bony remains (the latter process was so recent a development that any possible candidate would require special instruction before assuming his duties).

(d) A second general technician, to assist in the aforementioned duties and to handle fingerprints and other such requirements.

(e) A police detection expert, familiar with special devices developed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and metropolitan police agencies.

(f) A group of enlisted men to serve as clerks and assistants, the number to be determined by the volume of work.

(g) High-grade processors working in close collaboration with and under the director of the technical staff.

In addition to these personnel recommendations, Dr. Shapiro offered rather detailed suggestions about existing identification procedures. In addition to his firm belief that graveside processing should be eliminated as wasteful of time and manpower and as conducive to the destruction and loss of evidence, Dr. Shapiro thought that the work in a Central Identification Laboratory might well prove less disagreeable than graveside processing. He favored experimentation with other procedures which might ameliorate a task that at best strained men's sensibilities. He proposed that tooth charts, as a highly significant item in identification procedures, be made only once in each case and only by well-trained and reliable persons. Dr. Shapiro listed several other advantages which he believed would accrue from the establishment of a Central Identification Point, including an easier and more uniform flow of supplies, processing at a faster and more even pace, the establishment of greater uniformity and higher standards, and better co-operation between those per-

⁴ *Ibid.*, Memo on Personnel for Laboratory.

forming routine processing functions and those engaged in technical and scientific aspects of identification. Realizing the necessity for accessibility of a remains until a given case was closed, Dr. Shapiro advocated above-ground storage near the laboratory. Finally, he suggested that every effort be exerted to determine blood type, since recent techniques had rendered such information available through study of osseous or bony remains. He believed that the blood type would prove a valuable clue in identifying unknowns, and in cases where identification tags were suspect, it could be a means of verification. In Dr. Shapiro's opinion, any available X-ray records could also offer a very important criterion for identification. He strongly urged all scientific personnel to work as a united team, bending their diverse efforts to the solution of each case.⁵

In accordance with Dr. Shapiro's recommendations and findings, AGRC Headquarters established the Central Identification Point (CIP) at Strasbourg, France, under General Order 46, dated 18 July 1946, effective 1 August 1946. All recovered isolated remains, both known and unknown, would henceforth be sent to the Central Identification Point for complete examination. At the same time, the practice of processing remains at graveside, unit, group, field command or cemetery processing points, was permanently discontinued.⁶

The new establishment did not actually commence operations until 7 August 1946, under Col. Willard N. Wallace, who had been serving as Commanding Officer of the Sixth Sector, AGRC, at Etampes, France.⁷ At its inception, the CIP was operated by the 349th QM Battalion. In addition to the Commanding Officer, the new organization consisted of 3 officers and 24 enlisted men.⁸ Within a very short time, several units or sections were created to carry out the manifold activities of the CIP, including a morgue unit, where processing operations took place, and Chemical and Photographic Laboratories.

Among the most important functions of the Central Identification Point were: the thorough processing of all remains recovered by search teams, and the recording of all information gathered; preparation of remains for reburial in a temporary United States Military Cemetery; the reprocessing of unknowns currently buried in temporary United States Military Cemeteries and of special cases as directed, and the conduct of research in the field of identification processing

⁵ *Ibid.*, see fn. 3.

⁶ Ltr, Hq AGRC, European Theater to Commands Concerned, 1 Aug 46, sub: Centralization of Processing and Identification, 293, Europe, Alex RC.

⁷ Narrative History, CIP, pp. 3-4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

for the purpose of developing new and better techniques and improving those currently employed.⁹

Among the outstanding civilian contributors to early identification efforts in Europe was John Aievoli, Detective, New York Police Department, who served in this Theater until mid-October 1946. Detective Aievoli aided greatly in the establishment of identification techniques and procedures which were followed quite closely in later operations. Officials in Memorial Division, OQMG, considered his efforts among the most helpful of any individual in the entire European GRS organization.¹⁰

After establishment of the CIP at Strasbourg, disinterring teams, following search teams of the First Field Command and each of the Zones, exhumed and prepared recovered remains for evacuation to the Identification Point. The deceased were sent to the CIP by air, rail, and motor vehicle. The type of transportation depended mainly upon the location of the disinterring team. All shipments were manifested on a Way Bill to insure an accurate accounting for every body. At the time of evacuation, the Field Unit prepared and forwarded with the shipment of every remains, a case history which the workers at the CIP completed and sent to AGRC Headquarters. Upon arrival of a remains at the CIP, the Receiving Officer and the appropriate Liaison Officer checked it and the case history to insure that the shipment was complete in every detail. After opening the box and spraying the body with a disinfectant, they placed the deceased in storage to await processing by the Morgue (or Mortuary) unit.

Processing a typical remains for identification normally involved certain steps. In the first place, CIP workers carried the box containing the deceased into the processing laboratory, where technicians checked the evacuation number and emergency medical tag with the case papers. Next, they carefully removed the remains to a processing table, which was covered with a clean mattress. A team, usually consisting of four men (a table supervisor and three assistants, including a recorder), closely examined the body for clues. These analysts were required to possess a thorough knowledge of anatomy, have the ability to reconstruct the skeleton and name the bones of the body, recognize gross abnormalities and surgical or accidental scars, make an accurate tooth chart, and take finger prints.¹¹

⁹ Memo, Hq AGRC, European Theater, 30 Nov 46, sub: Operation of the Central Identification Point, 293, GRS-Europe, Alex RC.

¹⁰ Ltr, Horkan to Arthur J. Wallender, Commissioner, N. Y. C. Police Dept, 26 May 48, File 201—Aievoli, John J.

¹¹ See fn. 9, above.

The team removed all clothing and equipment from the remains, listed and measured each piece of clothing for size and recorded the color, design, and fabric. They looked carefully for laundry marks, manufacturer's marks, sizes, and lot numbers. They then washed all clothing in order to discover any other evidence, cut away any faded markings, and sent them to the Chemical Laboratory for special treatment. This careful study of clothing and equipment often aided in the determination of nationality, branch of service, and other valuable clues which led to positive identification.

After removing the clothing and laving the body with a gentle spray of water to remove all dirt and foreign articles, the processors searched the remains, especially the chest cavities and abdomen. They then turned the body over and thoroughly scrutinized the back for identifying media, such as tags buried or embedded in the flesh of the posterior part of the shoulder girdle. Following this examination, they arranged the remains and prepared the anatomical chart, on which they blacked out all missing parts of the body and recorded the missing bones. They then estimated height by use of the Rollet Tables, which were used to determine height by measurement of the long bones of the body, and whenever practical, checked by actual overall measurement of the skeleton. If a skull was present, the team members measured it in order to determine the head size, and based on other anatomical features, an attempt was made to determine the race and age of the individual.¹²

The next step involved the preparation by a specialist of a tooth chart. After completion, the table supervisor and a dental consultant carefully examined the chart to assure accuracy. The processing team wrapped the body in a clean mattress cover, placed it on a litter and carried it to the fluoroscope room for examination. This step proved to be an important part of identification processing since, on several occasions, identification tags, bracelets, and other metallic objects were discovered which might otherwise never have been found. The separate fluoroscopic examination of clothing sometimes also bore fruitful results. The body was then returned to the processing room, wrapped securely in a clean sheet and blanket and placed carefully in a casket with the head resting upon the pillow. When the processors found two identification tags, which should have been worn around the neck, they fastened one tag to the blanket near the head of the remains and tacked the other one to the head of the casket in the upper right-hand corner. When they located only one tag, the laboratory workers pinned it to the blanket and an embossed strip was cut and placed on the head of

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

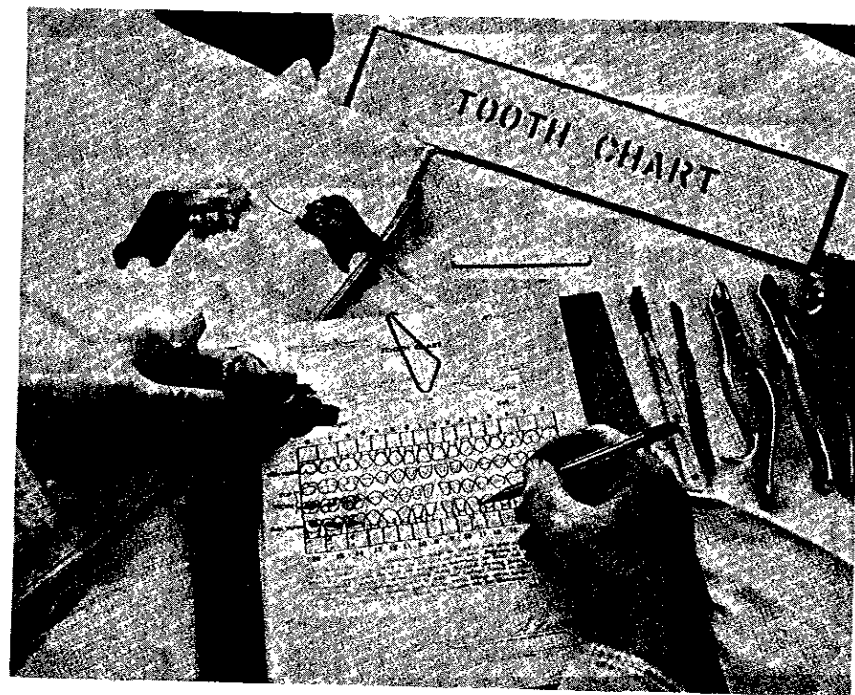


FIGURE 39. *Tooth charts proved to be an important factor in identification of remains.*

the casket. In unknown cases, the technicians cut an embossed strip for each casket, giving the unknown "X" number assigned the remains. The final step consisted of moving the casket containing the deceased to the shipping room where it was draped with an American flag while awaiting removal to a permanent military cemetery for reburial or return to the United States.

The thoroughness of identification procedures was clearly illustrated on 8 October 1946 (two months after the CIP at Strasbourg commenced operations), when 40 bodies, disinterred from St. Avold Cemetery, arrived at the CIP Mortuary for processing. Although each remains, after receiving at least one previous examination by a field team had been buried as an unknown, the processors at the Laboratory located dog tags buried in 5 remains and conclusive identification marks, such as bracelets, among 3 others, resulting in the successful identification of 8 of the 40 originally listed as unknowns. In addition, the CIP technicians discovered substantial clues as to the possible identity of 20 others.¹³

Mass burials involved those cases wherein more than one body

¹³ Narrative History, CIP, Mortuary Section, p. 9.

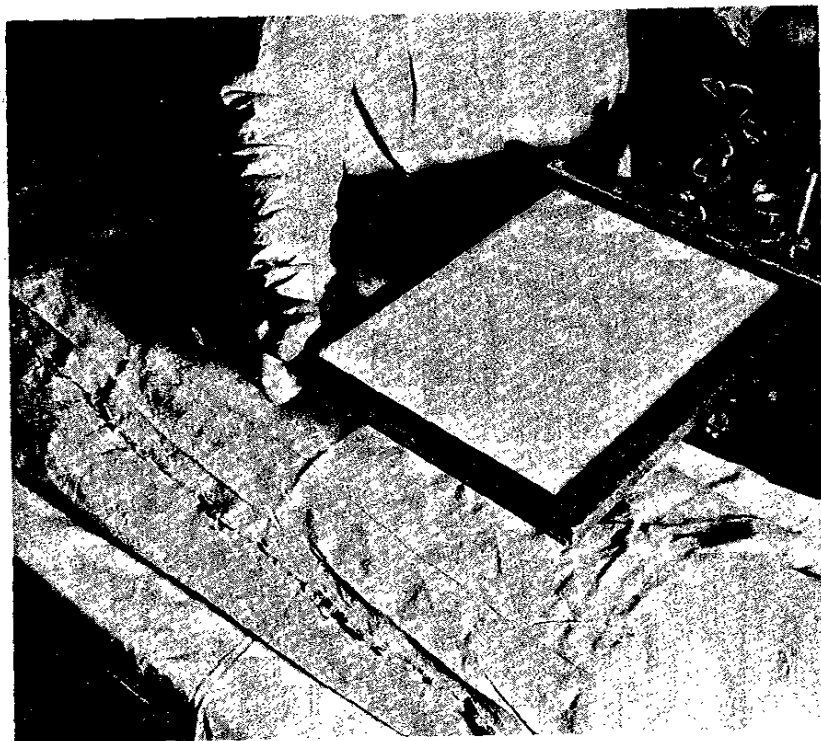


FIGURE 40. *X-ray technician uses fluoroscope to detect any foreign matter which might be lodged in remains, CIP, Strasbourg, France.*

was buried in a single grave. Such burials received the same identification processing as an individual case. In addition, highly trained technicians made a complete anthropological study in order to segregate remains in whole or in part so that each deceased might be processed as an individual. This procedure often required as many as ten tables with a like number of trained technicians, who examined and classified each bone and piece of equipment and clothing. In addition to making tooth charts, they attempted to reconstruct shattered jaws.¹⁴

During the first few weeks of the CIP's existence, the Morgue Unit necessarily assumed the responsibility of scrutinizing every clue removed from remains in lieu of systematic chemical research which was then non-existent. As has been indicated, pieces of clothing which bore evidence of laundry marks or serial numbers were carefully washed in the hope of revealing a number or clue obliterated

¹⁴ Memo, Hq AGRC, European Theater, 30 Nov 46, p. 5, sub: Operation of the CIP, ETA, 293, GRS-Europe, Alex RC.

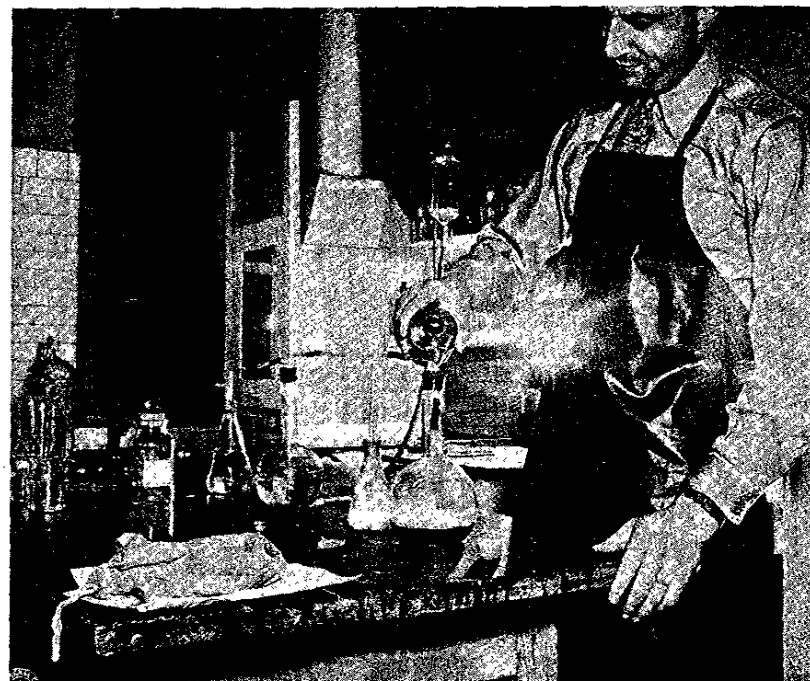


FIGURE 41. *Laboratory technician prepares a solution of ammonium sulfide for use in restoration of faded writing.*

by oil, dirt, blood, or age. Microscopic initials and names on rings and pieces of jewelry that had become rusted, twisted, or otherwise marred, were often illegible. Fragments of letters on which the ink had faded offered important clues, but the still limited facilities of the Morgue prevented full utilization of such opportunities for identification.¹⁵ Consequently, a Chemical Laboratory was established at the caserne (barrack) and the first chemical processing took place there on 27 September 1946.

Normally, the Chemical Laboratory served in the role of "troubleshooter" for the Morgue. After a remains had been completely processed at the Morgue, all material recovered during this procedure was sent to the Chemical Laboratory for further scrutiny. A trained chemist examined every item in an attempt to uncover any hidden clue which might aid in positive identification. Some of the special items processed by the Chemical Laboratory included hair, letters, cards, memo books, jewelry, and blood stains and clots.¹⁶

¹⁵ Narrative History, CIP, Chemical Laboratory Section, p. 1.

¹⁶ (1) *Ibid.*, p. 7. (2) See fn. 14, above.

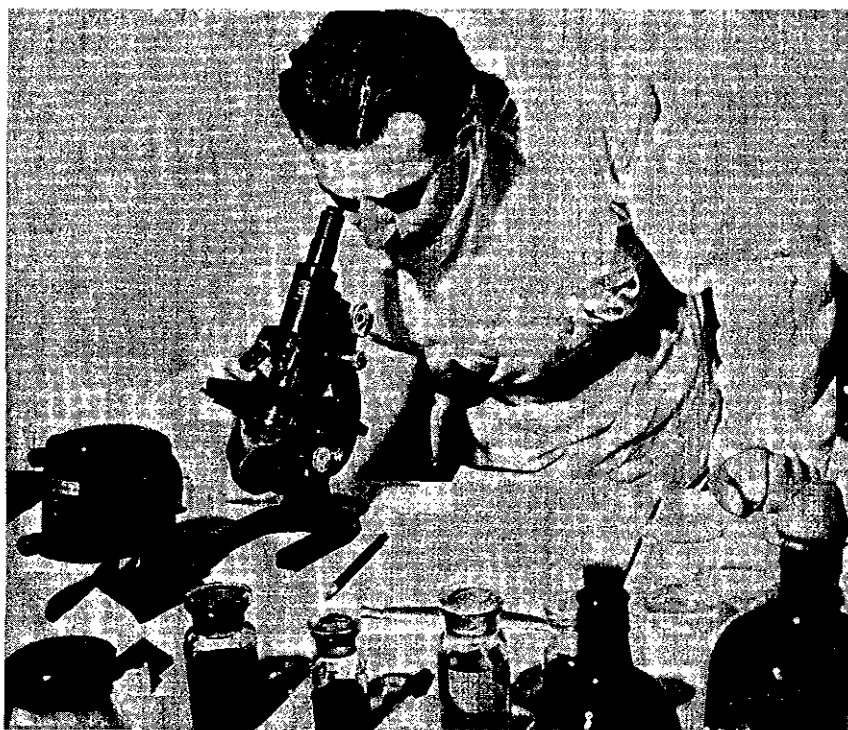


FIGURE 42. A chemist, with aid of microscope, examines a small piece of clothing in search for identification clues.

Another function performed by the Chemical Laboratory included consultation and comparison of information with other Government agencies. For example, a War Crimes Investigator disinterred three American soldiers from the St. Avold Cemetery and requested the Central Identification Point to process the remains. The specific point checked involved the determination, if possible, of whether or not morphine was present in the bodies of these soldiers, since it was suspected that a Nazi doctor had administered this drug. The CIP, through its Chemical Laboratory, could make such decisions and perform other toxicological examinations as requested. The Chemical Laboratory could also take prints of mummified decomposed fingers through a special process of injecting glycerine or liquid paraffin into the subcutaneous tissue, cleaning the epidermis with alcohol or gasoline, then drying the epidermis with heat to the proper degree so that it could be inked and printed.¹⁷

The Photographic Laboratory constituted another important segment of the CIP. This unit photographed any clues which might

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

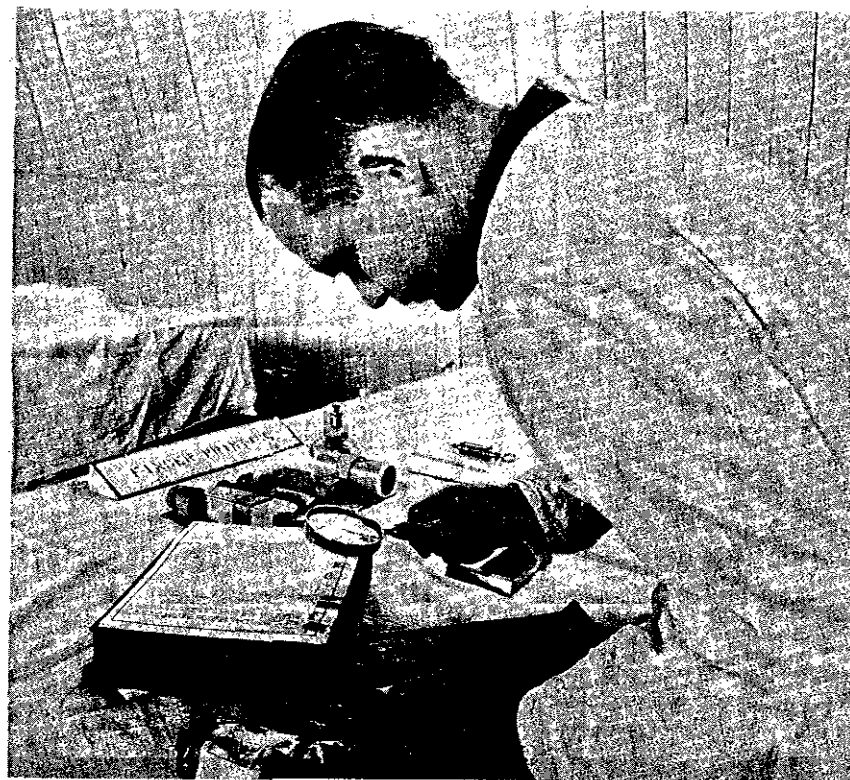


FIGURE 43. Fingerprinting for positive identification, Chemical Laboratory, Strasbourg, France.

lead to positive identification of the deceased, including rings, lockets, bracelets, pens, pencils, dentures, watches, fingerprints, personal photos, laundry and clothing marks, personal or official letters, business cards, drivers' licenses, club membership cards, and union cards. In addition to normal photography, this Laboratory used an infra-red lamp to photograph faded writing and laundry marks. Use of the lamp made it possible to defer the use of chemicals since the latter often destroyed evidence unless quickly photographed. The Laboratory also used an ultra-violet ray lamp to decipher writing made illegible by charring, deterioration, and dirt.

Personal effects received at the CIP were given close attention at all times. They were carefully collected, inventoried and placed in a special bag. Upon completion of processing in both the chemical and the photographic laboratories, they were delivered to the Personal Effects Officer for final disposition. Two courses were available in disposition of these items. In cases involving remains which had been positively identified by the CIP, the effects were forwarded

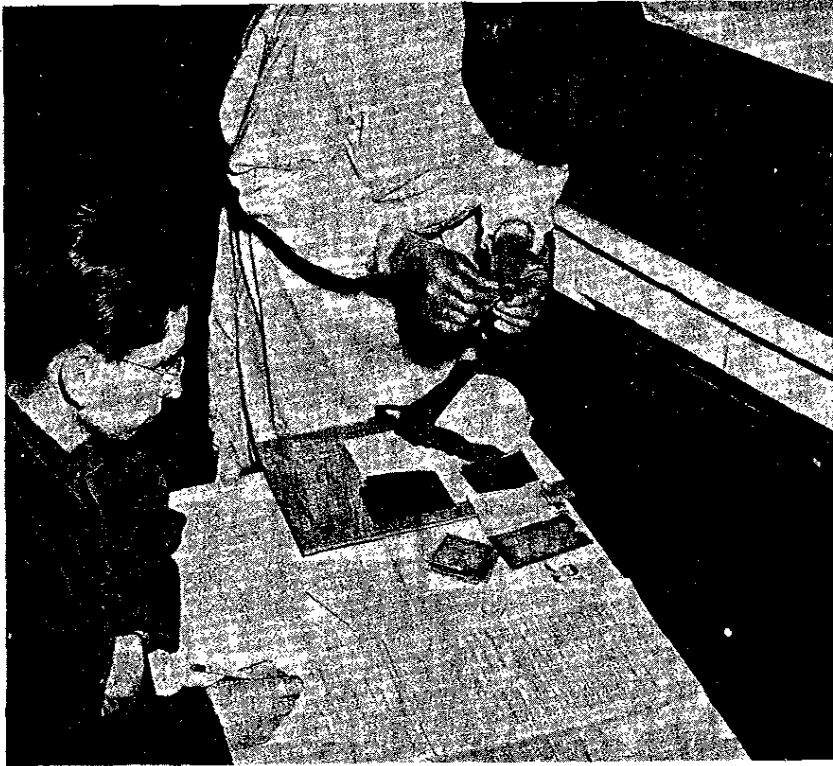


FIGURE 44. *Personal effects are examined by a table supervisor at Central Identification Point, Strasbourg, France.*

to the nearest QM Depot, which, in turn, sent them to the Effects Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri. In case of unknowns and "believed to be identified" the effects were stored temporarily at the CIP. When Hq, AGRC-EA, considered a case closed and had forwarded all papers pertaining to it to Washington, the CIP sent effects to Kansas City, as in cases of positively identified remains. The only exception to these procedures involved the handling of monies, which were promptly converted at the nearest Finance Office in order to safeguard the interests of the next of kin.¹⁸

The Central Identification Point continued to carry out its functions at Strasbourg, France, until late in the spring of 1947, when, in order to reduce cost of operation, its various sections were moved to new sites. The Chemical Laboratory, Photographic Laboratory, Effects Branch, Record Section, Supply Section, and Administrative Section moved to the AGRC Fontainebleau Depot, where more

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

adequate facilities existed. The Morgue Section was transferred to recently constructed buildings at Neuville-en-Condroz Cemetery, and to Margraten, where a sub-CIP was established. Officials estimated that these changes would result in a total operational savings of approximately \$50,000 annually.¹⁹

Boards of Review

Before narrating the activities of various CIP sections subsequent to the changes of locale, it is necessary to digress briefly in order to consider one of the most important units which dealt with identification matters—the Board of Review. Established in the spring of 1947, by authority of an AGO letter to all overseas area commanders,²⁰ these Boards were composed of not less than three commissioned officers, appointed by the chief of each AGRS Area and Independent Zone Command for the purpose (1) of reviewing and acting upon all cases pertaining to the identity of unknown remains referred to a board and (2) of reviewing and determining in all cases, from evidence presented, the non-recoverability of remains.²¹

The letter which directed the establishment of these boards specified that the following means of identification would be considered conclusive unless in conflict with other evidence submitted:

(1) An identification tag found around the neck of the deceased. In the case of an isolated interment, a tag found elsewhere, as in pockets or in the clothes, would also be considered positive proof of identity.

(2) A pay book of an enlisted man or pay card of an officer would be accepted as conclusive identity only when found in the clothing of the deceased.

(3) An emergency medical tag would be considered conclusive when signed by medical personnel.

(4) An identification bracelet when found worn on the wrist.

(5) An official theater identification card, when found on the person of the deceased.

(6) When any group of bodies was found with or in a tank, aircraft, or vehicle, the names of the crew or passenger list could usually be ascertained. In such cases, if all remains but one were identified, the identity of the unknown could be established by the simple process of elimination.

¹⁹ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRC-Europe, 1 May 47, p. 4.

²⁰ Ltr, WD, AGO to Commander in Chief, FEC, European Command, CG, AGFPAC, et al., 9 Apr 47, sub: Establishment of Boards of Review for Identification of Unknown Dead Overseas; KRCR-AGRS-IBT, 293.9, Bodies, Corpses, etc.

²¹ *Ibid.*

(7) A signed statement from an individual who knew the deceased and positively identified the remains. Such a statement must include characteristic features and such factors as missing digits, bruises, scars, tattoos, and birthmarks.

It should be noted that many of these means of positive identification very closely corresponded to those clues used by the early postwar disinterring teams. In addition, the Boards of Review considered as positive evidence any two or more of the following clues unless contradictory evidence existed:

(1) Identification tags, when found elsewhere than on the person of the deceased, but in the immediate vicinity.

(2) Motor vehicle operating permit, government or civilian.

(3) Personal papers, including Social Security card, marriage certificate, wills, letters addressed to the decedent, money orders, unofficial identification cards and similar papers.

(4) Engraved jewelry.

(5) Clothing marks containing the first letter of the last name and the last four digits of the decedent's serial number.

(6) Favorable comparison of tooth charts obtained from the remains and the last known tooth chart of the deceased.²²

The findings of Boards of Review in all cases were forwarded to the Memorial Division, OQMG, for administrative approval.

General Identification Operations, European Theater

Intensive identification training of officers and War Department civilians took place following the transfer of CIP units to Fontainebleau and Neuville-en-Condroz. On 21 July, the first CIP Repatriation School opened at Fontainebleau with an enrollment of 25 officers and 47 War Department civilians. Upon completion of the 2-week course, this group was assigned to the First Zone. The second school began during August with 11 officers, 14 enlisted men, and 50 War Department civilians enrolled. When the course ended, these officers and men proceeded to the Second Zone before undertaking their assignments. The third and last Repatriation School began on 6 October 1947 and ended 12 days later. Eleven officers, 39 War Department civilians, and 14 enlisted men completed the course. Of this group, 2 officers and 14 enlisted men were sent to the Third Zone and assigned to 2 Field Operating Sections there. One of these Sections was subsequently transferred to

²² *Ibid.*

the Second Zone and the other one went directly to Lisnabreeny Cemetery, in northern Ireland, to begin exhumations.²³

During the last half of 1947, meanwhile, the CIP achieved notable results in actual operations. The unit at Neuville-en-Condroz, which received the personnel moved from the sub-CIP at Margraten after its closeout in the summer of 1947, handled all remains received from isolated locations and reprocessed unknowns then interred in cemeteries throughout Belgium and Holland. Also attached to the CIP were two Mobile Identification Teams with headquarters at St. Avold and Hamm Cemeteries, whose members reprocessed unknown dead in established French cemeteries. From 1 July to 30 November 1947, nearly 1,600 remains were received from isolated locations in Europe. As a result of CIP processing, approximately 348 remains were identified, 206 were "believed to be identified," 943 possessed clues, and 103 had no clues.²⁴

In accordance with Troop Movement and Assignment Order No. 31, dated 21 November 1947, the CIP closed out as a major subordinate command of AGRS-EA on 30 November, and became the Central Identification Section, Hq, First Zone. This organization was composed of an Administrative and Records Unit, located in the cantonment area; the Chemical and Photographic Laboratories, located in the First Zone Communications Switchboard Building; and the Morgue Unit, which operated in Neuville-en-Condroz Cemetery. During this period, Mobile Identification Team No. 1 functioned in the Second Zone area at St. James Cemetery and Team No. 2 in the Third Zone area at St. Avold Cemetery.²⁵

Operational elements of the Central Identification Section moved to Liège early in December while the Administration and Records Unit remained at Fontainebleau until 10 December, when all records were moved to Neuville-en-Condroz Cemetery. This change in area location of the Central Identification Section created the problem of hiring a new office force, since all personnel in Fontainebleau were French employees and could not be taken into Belgium. Despite the inevitable distractions stemming from this move, the Morgue Unit and Mobile Teams processed an estimated 450 cases during the last quarter of 1947.²⁶

Early in 1948, considerable discussion arose over the possibility of bodily harm to technicians who operated fluoroscopes in identification processing. Recommendations of the Command Surgeon

²³ Rpt of Opns, Hq AGRS-EA, Vol. I, Narrative, 1 Jul-30 Sep 47, pp. 112-13; 1 Oct-31 Dec 47, pp. 131-33.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1 Oct-31 Dec 47, p. 118.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-20.

resulted in the temporary suspension of fluoroscopic operations at the Neuville Identification Point, pending careful inspection by a qualified EUCOM technician. Since zone commanders agreed that the fluoroscope saved time in locating identity tags and other objects which might not otherwise be found, steps were taken promptly to protect technicians in order that such operations might be resumed without undue hindrance to the identification program. Consequently, after the Command Surgeon had declared that the fluoroscope room and equipment were properly protected, the Commanding General, AGRC-EA, ordered operations to be resumed.²⁷

During the spring of 1948, the Records and Administrative Section moved from its former location in the cantonment area at Liège to Neuville Cemetery, thereby further consolidating overall identification operations. The Identification Point at Neuville meanwhile received some 486 remains from isolated locations during the April-June quarter and processed 306 of this group.

Later in the summer, a two-man Mobile Identification Team proceeded from Neuville to Cambridge Cemetery, England, to reprocess cases assigned to the Identification Point. Meanwhile, a new morgue was constructed for identification purposes at Neuville Cemetery. Despite definite evidence that the workload of the Identification Point would not be greatly reduced before the end of 1948, officials decided to retain only one technician each for the Chemical and Photographic Laboratories.²⁸

Operational emphasis upon the processing of unknowns for identification progressively increased during the closing months of 1948. A Mobile Identification Team was organized in the autumn to handle all remaining cases in France, except at St. Avold, and in Luxembourg. At this time, technicians at Neuville exerted considerable effort to resolve all cases involving discrepancy in identity uncovered during processing operations there. Of approximately 500 such discrepancy cases discovered at Neuville, about 100 had been cleared by the end of the year.²⁹

Other figures revealed that 1948 had been a year of notable activity and accomplishment in identification operations. A total of 1,494 of the unknowns buried in temporary cemeteries or recovered from isolated graves during the year were identified as a result of careful correlation of detailed evidence gathered by expert field investigators and records sections and thru the use of modern scientific

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 Jan-31 Mar 48, p. 7; 1 Apr-30 Jun 48, p. 162.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1 Jul-30 Sep 48, pp. 171-72.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1 Oct-31 Dec 48, pp. 119, 172.

methods by the CIP at Neuville Cemetery. This achievement, in addition to 7,541 unknowns identified previous to 1948, brought the total of former unknowns successfully identified to 9,005, leaving a percentage of only 4.65 still unidentified.³⁰

Realizing that the search and recovery phase of operations was coming to a close and hoping to utilize the knowledge of experienced personnel in such work, the First Field Command set up a special section at Headquarters to review case papers of all unknowns recovered in the Command's search area and to seek out clues which might lead to their identification. The project, undertaken at the end of 1948, continued in full swing for several months. The results of this operation demonstrated the wisdom of the move, since 1,689 unknown cases were successfully resolved by the end of the first quarter of 1949, including all cases of unknowns in the following U. S. Military Cemeteries:³¹ St. James, Villeneuve, St. Corneille, Gorrion, Le Chene Guerin, Marigny, St. Laurent, St. Andre, La Cambe, Ste. Mere Eglise 1, Ste. Mere Eglise 2, and Blossville. Total resolution of such cases meant that a given remains was definitely identified, that it was not identifiable, or that it should be eliminated as representing other than American deceased personnel.

In March 1949, graves registration officials established a schedule for completion of all resolutions of unidentified deceased still resting in the following European cemeteries: Hamm by 15 June 1949; St. Avold and Margraten. by 15 July 1949; and Neuville by 15 August 1949.³² The Chief, Registration Division, AGRC-EA, felt confident that these deadlines could be met. In addition, the OQMG noted that fulfillment of such plans required that the majority of these cases be forwarded to the Memorial Division for completion of processing before 15 August 1949.

Although the rate of identification cases successfully resolved increased during the April-June quarter of 1949, with some 1,991 cases completed, it became apparent that the target date of 15 August 1949 for termination of all identification processing could not be met. Many of the remaining cases required additional information from the OQMG before further action could be taken by AGRC-EA. Then, too, as the program continued, cases became increasingly difficult of solution, usually requiring the services of an anthropologist at a time when only one such technician was available in the entire Command. Consequently, the acquisition of addi-

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1 Jan-31 Mar 49, pp. 117-18.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

tional anthropologists, especially from the adjoining Mediterranean Zone, received top priority.³³

Another very persistent problem which hampered identification of officers was the shortage of thoroughly trained and efficient dental technicians. Of approximately 25 men trained in tooth charting, only 10 became proficient in this operation. As a result, graves registration officials urged Headquarters, AGRC-EA, to employ only the best-qualified personnel.

Despite difficulties in completing unsolved cases, other phases of identification work in general progressed satisfactorily. Both the Chemical and Photographic Laboratories carried out their duties smoothly and efficiently. Records were forwarded to Hq, AGRC-EA, upon termination of any given case, and personal effects moved promptly to the AGRC St. Germain Depot, Personal Effects Branch. But the lack of a fluoroscopic unit, which had been out of order for several months, constituted a major handicap since it increased notably the time consumed in processing activities.³⁴

Despite all efforts, nearly 1,500 cases of unresolved unknowns still were on hand at the end of August 1949, necessitating further extensions of the deadline for terminating the activity to 15 January 1950 and later to 28 February. Even the latter date proved premature, since 899 unresolved cases remained at the close of March. Although this number seemed formidable, it was actually small when compared with the more than 4,000 cases which had faced identification workers a year earlier.³⁵

During the last two weeks of May 1950, the CIL Morgue and the Storage Section moved from Neuville-en-Condroz Cemetery to the Lido area at Jupille, Belgium, on the outskirts of Liège. The Casketing Point had operated at that location for over a year. All graves registration units were now in close contact in the Lido area, thus facilitating the physical handling of remains and the processing of available military records.

During the summer of 1950, Dr. Alexander Tardy, who had served in the former AGRS-MZ command, joined the identification technicians. With his assistance, processors during the ensuing year reduced the number of unresolved cases to 595 by July 1951.³⁶ Of this number, 503 required later action by the OQMG.

With the scheduled return of the Lido area to the Belgian Gov-

³³ Hist File, Hq AGRC-EA, Ch. III, Plans, Operations and Training, pp. 6, 38-39, Departmental Records Branch, AGO, Alex RC.

³⁴ AGRS Critique of Activities, Hq AGRC-EA, Ch. III, Operations, pp. 140-41.

³⁵ Hist Rpt, 7887 GR Detachment, 1 Apr 50-31 Dec 51, p. 25.

³⁶ (1) *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27. (2) Dr. Tardy left Europe in March 1951 for duty with the AGRS in Japan which was handling casualties of the Korean conflict.

ernment, the CIL Morgue Unit, Casketing Point, and Storage Section moved during July to the Bressoux area of Liège. By October 1951, one officer and four Department of the Army civilians arrived in Liège to help resolve the diminishing number of cases still on hand. Owing to their assistance, only 161 unresolved cases remained by 15 December 1951, and disposition instructions on many of these cases were being sent by the OQMG. Because of the lessened workload, only one embalmer and one identification technician were now needed.

It is interesting to note that of over 148,000 remains recovered in the European Theater, only slightly more than 1,700 or just over 1 percent were unidentified at the termination of the AGRS program at the end of 1951. These figures testify to the fine work accomplished in Europe by identification technicians in this vital phase of GRS operations.³⁷

Identification Operations in Other Theaters

Pacific Area

The identification phase of the repatriation program in the Pacific Zone (AGRS-PAZ) was handled by three organizational groups—the Central Identification Laboratory, where the remains received anthropological examination; the Identification Branch of the Repatriation Records Division, where pertinent information from the Laboratory, the Search and Recovery Branch, and the OQMG was assembled and compared; and the Board of Review, which considered and evaluated this information before determining whether on not identification could be established in any given case.³⁸

The Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) in the Pacific Zone came into existence during the spring of 1947. When the Chief of the Laboratory was appointed on 6 May 1947, no adequate facilities existed with which to carry on identification operations. Chiefs of the CIL and the Identification Branch, both of whom had been trained at the CIP in Europe, drew up plans for operations, which were somewhat modified in the interest of economy. The later enlargement of the CIL, however, actually exceeded the original suggestions.

At the beginning of its operations, the CIL sorely lacked qualified personnel. Technicians and helpers arrived one or two at a

³⁷ (1) *Ibid.*, p. 29. (2) Statistical Review of Permanent Disposition of WW II Dead, p. 10. (3) World War II Statistics, World War II Cemeteries, Burial Rpts, 26 Apr 54, Mem Div, Registration Br.

³⁸ (1) Hist, AGRS-PAZ, II, p. 214. (2) *Ibid.*, App. C, Incl. 18.

time for a period of over a year. The laboratory supervisor, Mr. Gravenor, a veteran of over a year's experience with AGRS in Europe, and the anthropologist, Dr. Mildred Trotter of Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, arrived in Honolulu in September 1947. They set up a training course to teach physical anthropology as it pertained to the reconstruction and evaluation of human remains. After reporting, each new laboratory employee received this course as well as a demonstration of skeletal reconstruction.³⁹

The procedure at the CIL consisted of an orderly examination of all remains from a particular cemetery, closely paralleling the methods and operations followed at the original CIP in Strasbourg, France. No records or files were available to the technicians at the Identification Laboratory because the local command held that they should rely completely upon their own research efforts. Graves registration officials at PAZ Headquarters contended that this system would inspire confidence in the accuracy of the identification data furnished to next of kin.⁴⁰

The CIL later received warm praise from Col. L. R. Talbot, Memorial Division, OQMG, who spent some time in Hawaii during the summer of 1948 and observed AGRS operations there. He stated that "Dr. Mildred Trotter and the other personnel there are doing an excellent job."⁴¹

The general procedure at the Identification Branch consisted of the acquisition, examination, comparison, and evaluation of all available information from the CIL, the Search and Recovery Branch, and the Memorial Division, OQMG. At the beginning of its activities, the Branch was very small but later it became one of the largest in Zone Headquarters. At its peak, it had a strength of 4 officers and 5 civilians. The Branch Chief, Capt. Clarence B. Watts, had received training at the CIP in Europe. The Branch handled all paper work on unknowns and on major discrepancy cases.⁴²

The Board of Review, AGRS-PAZ, at first consisted of five officers. The members of this Board changed frequently and the positions rotated among the entire officer personnel of the AGRS Headquarters. In order to formulate a Board decision, at least three officers had to agree on a given case. Later in the program,

in order to hasten the completion of identification activities in the Zone, two officers were assigned to the Board on full-time duty to act in an administrative capacity.

During 1948, considerable difference of opinion arose between Hq, AGRS-PAZ, and Memorial Division, OQMG, over certain Board of Review functions. AGRS-PAZ officials believed that only those agencies having custody of remains should be charged with Board responsibilities. They justified their stand on the ground that duplication of action, waste of time and effort, and confusion, would thus be avoided.⁴³ Memorial Division, OQMG, failed to concur in this opinion. Instead, it issued new instructions which constituted a major change in procedure but which was also designed to avoid duplication of effort. These instructions provided that all CIL findings for processed remains formerly interred or stored in the China and India-Burma Zones "should be transmitted without Board action to the AGRS command presently having jurisdiction over the areas previously occupied by the China and India-Burma AGRS Commands."⁴⁴ The parent Zone could then correlate any CIL findings with "any and all surface investigation and search and recovery records at hand." Board of Review action might then be initiated in the Zone having current jurisdiction—in this case, the PHILCOM Zone.

Officers at AGRS-PAZ Headquarters objected strenuously to these prescribed changes in identification procedures. They pointed out that such a plan would require weeks of work at Pacific Zone Headquarters to prepare copies of their records in order to enable the PHILCOM Zone to effect identification of remains. Then, too, since the remains from the former China and India-Burma Zones and over 90 percent of the records pertaining to them were in Hawaii, the task of reviewing cases should, in the opinion of the Board, remain in its hands, rather than at PHILCOM Headquarters, thousands of miles distant. Both Eighth Army and PHILCOM Zone officials agreed with this point of view and urged the OQMG to reconsider its action.⁴⁵ As matters finally developed, the OQMG agreed to continue the procedure already in effect, with a few minor adjustments.⁴⁶

All decisions of the Board of Review were, until very late in the repatriation program, subject to the concurrence of Memorial Di-

³⁹ Ltr, Hq AGRS-PAZ to TQMG, 7 Jun 48, sub: Identification of Unknowns; KCRC-AGRS-Pacific, 293.

⁴⁰ 1st Ind to Basic Ltr of 7 Jun 48, D/A, OQMG to CO, AGRS-PAZ, 14 Sep 48; KCRC-AGRS-Pacific, 293.

⁴¹ Rad, CG, USARPAC to TQMG, 22 Oct 48; KCRC-AGRS-Pacific, 293.

⁴² Mem, Hq AGRS-PHILCOM Zone to CO, AGRS-PZ, 4 Nov 48, sub: Identification of India-Burma Unknown WW II Dead; KCRC-AGRS-PHILCOM, 293.

vision, OQMG, whose verdict was final. A later change in policy gave the Identification Branch the power to declare certain remains unidentifiable—a move which, if made earlier, might have accelerated the entire identification operation. Nevertheless, the Memorial Division often possessed important information, unavailable to overseas commands, which could establish identity—a most vital consideration, since this step constituted the primary objective of all identification efforts.⁴⁷

As already indicated, the three units of AGRS-PAZ which dealt mainly with problems of identity necessarily co-ordinated their activities quite closely. Consequently, considerable sentiment arose in favor of a closer geographical relationship to facilitate operations. As was true of certain other AGRS activities in the Zone, the sections were split between Fort Shafter, where the Identification Branch and the Board of Review were located, and the 20-mile distant site of the Identification Laboratory at Mausoleum 2, Schofield Barracks. Towards the end of the program, the desire for closer geographical relations was realized when the functions of the CIL and Identification Branch were combined and placed in Building 144 at Pearl Harbor.⁴⁸

A serious mishap, which vividly reflected the success of the training and experience gained by AGRS identification technicians in Hawaii, occurred in August 1948 when a B-29 crashed at Hickam Field, killing 16 of the 20 men aboard. Although such a case did not fall within the normal responsibilities of overseas identification operations, officers at Hq, AGRS-PAZ, received an urgent request from the Army current death mortuary at Fort Kamehameha to furnish personnel who could supervise attempts at identifying the badly burned and mangled victims. Consequently, several graves registration officials and enlisted men, from both the CIL and the Identification Branch, hurried to the mortuary and the scene of the crash. Working through the night, those at the mortuary searched for identification media, applying the same techniques and principles as those used daily at the Laboratory. They located identification tags on seven of the deceased, some embedded in the flesh. These individuals were considered to be positively identified. Those at the crash scene supervised the collection of personal effects from the still smoking, foam-covered wreckage.⁴⁹

In the morning, the remaining nine victims were moved to the Laboratory where working facilities were more suited to the immediate task. Unable to interview the four survivors because of their critical

condition, graves registration personnel requested others from the plane's squadron to attempt identification by recognition. Four officers and 4 enlisted men volunteered to perform this service and identified 6 additional remains, leaving only 3 as yet unknown.

A radio request was sent subsequently to the squadron's home base at Spokane, Washington, for dental and physical descriptions of the victims. Technicians at the CIL meanwhile completed physical descriptions and dental charts of the deceased. Upon receipt of the needed information from Spokane, the last three were identified through comparison of dental and physical data, completing a difficult problem just 44 hours after the fatal accident.⁵⁰

The identification effort in AGRS-PAZ encountered problems not found in other zones. The geography of the Pacific, unfavorable climatic conditions, and the large number of plane crashes, ship wrecks, and isolated burials, all contributed to a somewhat higher percentage of unknowns and unrecoverables in this Zone. Nevertheless, efforts there compared quite well with those of other zones.

Far East Area

In the Far East Command, one of the earliest steps towards initiating identification operations along the lines followed at Strasbourg, France, was a letter of 7 February 1947 from the Chief, Memorial Division, OQMG, to the Commander in Chief, Far East, which urged that preliminary action be taken towards the establishment of a Central Identification Point at Manila and of a mobile unit for assignment to outlying cemeteries in accordance with their priority for exhumation operations.⁵¹ This letter also indicated that the AGRC-European Theater Area had already been asked to forward copies of standing operating procedures, technical reference data, and tables of personnel and equipment used at the CIP in Strasbourg. Furthermore, OQMG authorities had requested the Far East Command to send at least one officer and one embalmer to the European Theater to study its identification methods. OQMG also promised to furnish the Far East Command with a qualified anthropologist as soon as possible but suggested that an attempt be made to employ one locally.⁵²

In mid-April, Headquarters, PHILRYCOM Sector, Far East Zone, authorized the establishment of a central processing and

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-22.

⁵¹ Ltr, Horkan to CINCFE, 7 Feb 47, sub: Establishment of Central Identification Unit; KCRC-AGRC-FEC, 293.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Hist, AGRS-PAZ, II, p. 223.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 223-24.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-21.

identification laboratory and a mobile unit.⁵³ The main laboratory would henceforth be known as the Central Identification Point and would be located at Manila, P. I. All isolated deceased, both known and unknown, would thereafter be evacuated to the CIP or to "other identification points that may be designated from time to time by this headquarters for complete processing."⁵⁴ This directive also terminated immediately the practice of processing remains at graveside, unit, group, field command, or cemetery points.

On 5 May 1947, a communication from Hq, AGRS-PHILRYCOM, directed the establishment of one mobile processing unit in each Sector of the Far East Command. Ten days later, still another message outlined specific procedures to be followed. These procedures closely paralleled those used in Europe.⁵⁵

Based on the foregoing directives, a small identification unit, the nucleus of the Central Identification Point subsequently established at the AGRS Mausoleum in Manila, came into existence during July 1947 at Manila Cemetery No. 2. This unit processed special unknown cases from Manila No. 1 and Manila No. 2 cemeteries and trained technicians for a mobile team sent later to Yokohama, Japan.⁵⁶

The identification technicians worked closely with the Mausoleum and the Remains Depot, since bodies which could be positively identified were sent to the Remains Depot and held there pending repatriation, while those which could not be identified were stored above ground at the Mausoleum. Whenever the work load lightened, these remains were brought back to the Identification Point for further study.⁵⁷ After September 1947, the three graves registration units occupied adjacent hangers at Nichols Field. Step-by-step procedures were formalized in October.⁵⁸

At this time, Col. James A. Murphey expressed to Col. L. R. Talbot, Memorial Division, OQMG, his satisfaction over progress in identification activities in the Zone and emphasized that technicians would leave "not one stone unturned in efforts to eliminate any possibility that casualties reported unrecoverable in the Pacific are among unknowns."⁵⁹ He also stressed that each casualty report received careful study and that all available records of unknowns were closely compared with the information received

⁵³ Ltr, Hq PHILRYCOM, to CG, Ryukyus Command, *et al.*, 15 Apr 47, sub: Centralization of Processing and Identification; KCRC-AGRS-PHILRYCOM, 293.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Hist, AGRS-PATA, Feb 46 to Oct 47, Incls. 24, 25.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Incl. 15, sub: Tab K.

⁵⁸ Hist, AGRS-FEZ, 1 Oct 47-31 Mar 48, Pt. I, pp. 53-55.

⁵⁹ Ltr, Murphey to Talbot, 16 Oct 47, 319.1, Far East, Alex RC.

on that particular case. The unknowns which could not positively be eliminated were rechecked before the complete case was forwarded to the Zone Board of Review for action.⁶⁰

Of a total of 6,327 remains which had been received thru 31 March 1948 by the Mausoleum, the Remains Depot, and CIP, the latter unit had handled some 5,576 remains. Of this number, 735 were already identified when they entered the Mausoleum. On 31 March 1948, 4,841 remains were still unknowns, although after processing, enough data had been found to list 161 of this group as cases in which identity was indicated but which required more information to make it positive, while some clues had been discovered in 707 of these cases. The CIP had made positive identification on 16 cases and had received final approval of these findings from both PHILRYCOM and OQMG Headquarters.⁶¹

During the period of generally increased AGRS activities in PHILRYCOM, which extended from 1 April to 30 September 1948, the Central Identification Point processed some 2,600 remains from the Cabanatuan POW Camp, including both known and unknown deceased. Identification Point technicians examined remains individually and attempted to segregate them by groups. They also worked on approximately 650 major discrepancy cases from different cemeteries, which included those of remains where extra teeth or perhaps an extra identification tag were discovered, causing reasonable doubt about the original identification.⁶²

By November 1948, Hq, PHILCOM reported to the Commander in Chief, Far East, that some 5,000 unknowns, including about 900 remains from Cabanatuan, still were on hand in that Zone, and estimated that perhaps half this group might eventually receive either group or individual identification. Since this task would require thorough and unhurried analytical study, PHILCOM officials doubted that it could be completed before the end of 1949.⁶³ On 1 March 1949, Far East Command Quartermaster A. D. Hopping observed that even the estimated closing date of 31 December 1949 for identification activities in the Far East was overly optimistic in view of the large number of unresolved cases still on hand and the rate of their disposal by Boards of Review.⁶⁴

Nine months later, on 1 December 1949, GHQ, Far East Com-

⁶⁰ (1) *Ibid.* (2) The Zone Board of Review, AGRS-FEZ, was established by Opnl Order No. 1, AGRS-FEZ, 9 May 47, cited in Hist, AGRS-PATA, Incl. 35.

⁶¹ Hist, AGRS-FEZ, 1 Oct 47-31 Mar 48, Pt. I, pp. 53-55.

⁶² Hist, AGRS-PZ, 1 Apr-30 Sep 48, p. 25.

⁶³ Ltr, Capt M. O. Billbe, Hq PHILCOM to CINGFE, 19 Nov 48, sub: AGRS Phase Out of Operations; KCRC-AGRS-PHILCOM, 293.9.

⁶⁴ Memo, GHQ, FEC to D/A, 1 Mar 49; KCRC-AGRC-FEC. 293.

mand, reported that an inventory of unknown remains in the AGRS Mausoleum, Manila, showed a total of 3,568 in that category. The records indicated that 250 remains had been identified, 371 processed as unidentifiable, and 1,122 recommended for identification. AGRS Headquarters at Manila stated that "the newly established total of unresolved unknowns indicates that certificates of unidentifiability on all cases cannot be completed earlier than 1 March 1950. A more realistic estimate of this completion date will be supplied by 1 January 1950."⁶⁵

As matters finally developed, identification activities continued well into 1950. The Identification Section completed a substantial number of cases and submitted its findings to the Board of Review for action.⁶⁶ By October 1950, however, the waning of identification activities in PHILCOM was reflected in a smaller number of cases submitted to the Board of Review.

In the JAP-KOR Sector of the Far East Zone, identification operations involved intricate problems. Successful identification of airmen proved exceedingly difficult since they were generally buried in mass graves and were often badly mangled because of the terrific impact of the plane as it struck the ground.⁶⁷ Bombs and gasoline tanks usually exploded after the crash, making a blazing inferno of the fallen plane and rendering identification still harder. Often Japanese civilians could not approach the site for several days and when they could, the stench of decomposing flesh caused them to inter the bodies as soon as possible. Usually they removed identifying media and simply buried bones, flesh, and ashes in a common grave.

During the initial search just after the surrender of Japan, recovery teams attempted graveside identification based upon such evidence as laundry marks, equipment, and personal effects found near the remains. Since airmen, like members of other armed services, often borrowed or exchanged articles of equipment and apparel, this evidence hardly sufficed as positive identification.⁶⁸ Upon later receipt of additional information, AGRS officers discovered that many of the early postwar identifications were erroneous.⁶⁹

In April 1948, three months after the departure from Yokohama of the special Manila Mobile Identification team which had processed over 1,100 remains while in Japan, a Central Identification Labo-

ratory for AGRS-JAP-KOR was established at the Yokohama Cemetery. The Laboratory lacked some items of identification equipment but its technicians used chemicals advantageously in processing laundry marks and personal effects. The CIL had no photographic facilities but received excellent co-operation from Signal Corps photographers. The SCAP Legal Section also aided on several occasions. In atrocity cases, material evidence was found in Japanese-made rope imbedded in the neck or shoulders of remains, calcification of fractured bones, or evidence of skull injuries.⁷⁰

In the MARBO Sector of the Far East Zone, the Central Identification and Processing Laboratories were located on Saipan, but they remained incompleated until November 1947, only a few months before the first repatriation shipment from MARBO. Lack of a fluoroscopic technician proved to be no handicap since climatic conditions in MARBO produced skeletal remains in most cases.⁷¹ After the Processing Center was opened, training of technicians continued, although for a short period before the sailing of the USAT *Walter W. Schwenk* with the initial homeward shipment from MARBO, the CIP was closed as all attention was directed to final processing and casketing operations. Following the departure of the *Schwenk*, the CIP resumed its normal functions and continued them without special incident until the task was completed.

Africa-Middle East Zone

Before the establishment of the American Graves Registration Service, Africa-Middle East Zone (AGRS-AMEZ) on 1 June 1946, the Commanding General, Africa-Middle East Theater (AMET) received a long letter from Col. M. H. Zwicker, Memorial Division, OQMG, which outlined repatriation problems and plans.⁷² In addition to urging close attention to standard identification procedures, Colonel Zwicker urged GRS workers to sift the soil thoroughly around and below the deceased in an effort to locate identification tags and personal effects.⁷³

The unavailability of trained personnel stymied quite completely any significant progress in the identification of unknowns until some time after establishment of AGRS-AMEZ. Late in the summer of 1946, officials of the newly created AMEZ requested the OQMG to provide two mobile identification teams which would accomplish graveside identity. Shortly thereafter, an officer at AMEZ Head-

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1 Dec 49; KCRC-AGRC-FEC, 293.

⁶⁶ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-PHILCOM Zone, 26 May 50, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁷ Hist, AGRS-JAP-KOR, 1945-48, p. 69.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷¹ Hist, AGRS-MARBO Zone, Mar 48-Feb 49, I, p. 69.

⁷² Ltr, Zwicker to CG, AMET, 7 Feb 46, sub: Repatriation Organization and Operations, AMET File, Mem Div, OQMG.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

quarters, Capt. G. W. Rogers, sent his comments to the OQMG regarding certain portions of the Shapiro Report of 6 August 1946. He observed that, in general, AMEZ officers agreed with the identification techniques recommended in the report with two exceptions. The first involved the concentration of unknowns at a central point. Captain Rogers believed that this procedure would necessitate the changing of all plot maps and administrative records, besides causing "irregular, unsightly gaps in established cemeteries."⁷⁴ Secondly, he maintained that the proposed preparation of check sheets for identified remains would not be feasible since personal effects, when found on a body, were usually listed on the Burial Report.

In November 1946, General Horkan and Colonel Talbot visited the Zone. As a result, the earlier request of AMEZ officials for two mobile identification teams was reduced to one, which would consist of a director, an assistant director, and two technical assistants.⁷⁵ At that time, an officer and a War Department civilian were in Europe, studying identification operations which might serve as a basis for establishing methods and procedures in AMEZ. Although no technical equipment was then available in the Zone, officials planned to requisition such supplies from the European Theater through the OQMG.

The general situation at this time regarding identification operations in the Zone is shown in the following statistical table:⁷⁶

TABLE 23—*Identification Operations in Africa-Middle East Zone*

Section	Cemetery	Total Burials	Ident.	Unknowns
Morocco	Casablanca	530	472	58
	Fedala	85	79	6
	Port Lyautey	110	109	1
Algeria	Oran	1,100	1,065	35
	El-Alia (Algiers)	427	400	27
	Constantine	392	382	10
	Souk Ahras	172	172	0
	Tebessa	389	376	13
Tunisia	Gafsa	819	744	75
	Bcja	485	459	26
	Mateur	790	726	64
	Tunis	472	409	63
	Hadjeb-el-Aioun	280	276	4
	Ksar-Mezouar	100	100	0

⁷⁴ Memo, Capt G. W. Rogers to TQMG, 27 Sep 46, 1st Ind to Shapiro Rpt, 293, Alex RC.

⁷⁵ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-AMEZ, 30 Nov 46, p. 2

⁷⁶ Chart, 21 Nov 46, 333.1, AGRS-AMEZ, Alex RC.

TABLE 23—*Identification Operations in Africa-Middle East Zone*—Continued

Section	Cemetery	Total Burials	Ident.	Unknowns
Egypt	Heliopolis	385	356	29
Liberia	Harbel	74	74	0
French W. Afr.	Dakar	61	61	0
Nigeria	Lagos	133	89	44
Iran	Teheran	248	248	0
Totals		7,052	6,597	455

By December 1946, graves registration officers in Zone Headquarters had made definite plans to evacuate all unknowns by air transport to the Central Identification Point at Strasbourg, France, for processing and subsequent return to the American Military Cemetery El-Alia for reburial. They offered several reasons for this unique proposal—first, the difficulty of procuring suitable facilities within the Zone; secondly, the high cost of establishing a zonal Central Identification Laboratory for less than 500 recovered unknowns; thirdly, the evacuation of unknowns to Strasbourg would eliminate the need for extensive training of additional personnel in processing techniques.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, Captain Rogers had returned from a personal inspection of CIP at Strasbourg, convinced that processing AMEZ unknowns could be accomplished there with much greater accuracy, speed, and economy. He mentioned other advantages, particularly the existence of chemical and photographic facilities.⁷⁸ He strongly criticized graveside processing by mobile units and observed that it had been discontinued in Europe because of its poor results.

Unfortunately for AMEZ officials, their well-laid plans for removing unknowns to Strasbourg were disapproved by General Horkan, who ordered AGRS-AMEZ to establish a mobile identification point. AGRS officials then made arrangements with local authorities for the establishment of mobile identification points at the United States Military Cemeteries at El-Alia, Oran, and Tunis. All unknowns in the entire Zone, with the exception of those at Oran and Tunis, would be moved to El-Alia by aircraft, since the vast distances involved demanded this method of transportation.⁷⁹ AMEZ officials estimated that the movement of unknowns could not be completed before July 1947 unless more than one C-47 aircraft was available. They expected, though, that a second C-47

⁷⁷ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-AMEZ, 31 Dec 46.

⁷⁸ Rpt, Rogers, Hq AGRS-AMEZ to CO, AGRS-AMEZ, 19 Dec 46, sub: Rpt of Inspection, CIP, Strasbourg and Carentan, France, 293, AGRS-AMEZ, Alex RC.

⁷⁹ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-AMEZ, 31 Jan 47, p. 1.

might be obtained in February 1947, thus enabling them to finish their mission during April 1947—an accomplishment which would avoid the overlapping of identification processing operations and initial repatriation activities.

On 22 January 1947, AMEZ Headquarters received notice by cable from Memorial Division, OQMG, which authorized the establishment of a semi-mobile identification unit, consisting of a laboratory officer, 3 supervisor embalmers, 8 assistant embalmers, 2 tooth chart specialists, 3 special technicians (X-ray, Laboratory, and Photographic), and 3 clerks. Consequently, on 12 February 1947, such a unit, headed by Lt. Alexander Capasso and two French anthropologists, Dr. Paul Witas and his assistant, Dr. D. C. Saffores, began work at the Mobile Identification Point at Oran Cemetery. They exhumed the 35 unknowns there and carefully processed them for identification, but little success rewarded their efforts. Remains were in a very dry condition and offered few clues. The technicians obtained tooth charts for 18 deceased, but the others had no skulls. They carefully sifted the dirt surrounding the remains, but discovered little to aid in identification.

The team then moved on early in March to El-Alia, where they processed some 159 unknowns, which had reached El-Alia by both aircraft and vehicle from U. S. Military Cemeteries in West Africa, Morocco, and Algeria. In several cases, identity tags were located and other good clues were obtained, but officials expected that the percentage of successful identifications would be very small, since most remains had decomposed to dry bones, leaving no clues of flesh or skin. Many possessed no jaws nor skulls.⁸⁰

During March, graves registration officials located suitable building facilities for a Mobile Identification Point at Tunis, where all unknowns from the six military cemeteries in Tunisia would be processed and reburied at the U. S. Military Cemetery. Meanwhile, after completion of its task in El-Alia, the identification team transferred its activities and equipment to Tunis, early in April. It fluoroscoped, examined, and measured some 230 deceased and made tooth charts whenever possible.⁸¹ In six cases, identity tags were located in remains, resulting in a tentative classification of "Believed to Be." Successful identifications were few in number, however, because of the same factors which hampered the identification team at Oran and El-Alia. By the close of May 1947, AMEZ Headquarters reported that the "processing of all unknown remains in this zone for identification by Mobile Identification

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 31 Mar 47, pp. 1-2.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 30 Apr 47, p. 1.

Points has been completed."⁸² A total of 17 former unknown dead had been identified.

When the Zone was deactivated at the close of April 1948 and its residual duties transferred to the Mediterranean Zone (AGRS-MZ), a total of 457 unidentified remains had been located within its borders. Of this number, 144 were considered totally unidentifiable. However, since some 6,624 deceased were successfully identified of a total of approximately 7,100 Americans resting in AMEZ cemeteries, it may be concluded that this Zone had a reasonably high percentage of identified dead.⁸³

The Mediterranean Zone

In the months following the establishment on 1 April 1946 of American Graves Registration Service in the Mediterranean Theater as a separate major command, AGRS-MTZ, the War Department considered proposals by Col. George A. King, CO, AGRS-MTZ, for the creation of a mobile anthropological laboratory. The Theater Surgeon, however, questioned the practical application of such a move, pointing out that "it is not clear how bone examination, either chemical or morphological, determines skin texture and leads to identification except in individual cases with known defects or markings Unless differentiation can be made between the remains of various nationals and the remains of United States nationals selected and further differentiation made to name individuals, the proposed organization would not appear to have a practical value."⁸⁴ Because the Theater Surgeon's opinion was based more upon scientific findings than that of any other official in Hq, AGRS-MTZ, Colonel King agreed to delay any decision on establishment of an anthropological laboratory for at least two months, during which AGRS-MTZ would secure all possible data from AGRC-ETA on their views concerning the value of anthropological identification procedures.⁸⁵

Although the Mediterranean Zone was fortunate in having several officers, enlisted men, and indigenous civilians who later developed into skilled identification technicians, some difficulty was experienced in securing qualified anthropologists. Nevertheless,

⁸² *Ibid.*, 31 May 47, p. 1.

⁸³ (1) *Ibid.*, 30 Apr 48. (2) The latest available figures showed only 234 recovered unknowns in the Zone—Taken from WW II Statistics, WW II Cemeteries, Burial Records, 26 Apr 54, Mem Div, Registration Br.

⁸⁴ Ltr, Hq MTO to CO, AGRS-MTZ, 9 Sep 46, sub: Identification of World War II Deceased, 293, AGRS-MTZ, Alex RC.

⁸⁵ 1st Ind to Ltr cited in fn. 84, above, 17 Sep 46, Hq AGRS-MTZ to CG, MTOUSA.

each of the later established Central Identification Points (CIP) in the Zone was able to obtain one fully qualified anthropologist, who was usually assisted by several medical and GRS technicians. In any event, the suggested anthropological laboratory never materialized.⁸⁶

Perhaps the most outstanding anthropologists who served in the Mediterranean Zone were Dr. Alfredo Sacchetti and Dr. Alexander Tardy. Dr. Sacchetti questioned the value of the Rollet Table for height estimation even though officials in Memorial Division, OQMG, authorized its use and felt that Dr. Sacchetti placed too much emphasis upon bone measurements as a means of identification. They believed that the tooth chart provided the prime factor in identification.⁸⁷

During November 1946, General Horkan and Colonel Talbot made an inspection tour of the Zone and recommended the establishment of Central Identification Points.⁸⁸ By early 1947, plans were well advanced for the activation of a permanent Central Identification Point at the U. S. Military Cemetery, Nettuno, Italy, patterned after the original CIP at Strasbourg. At this time, over 33,000 recovered American dead lay in U. S. military cemeteries within the Zone. Of this number, some 1,438 still were unidentified.⁸⁹

The Central Identification Point was activated at Nettuno on 15 February 1947. Three sections were provided for—the one at Nettuno, composed of 2 officers, 4 War Department civilians, and 23 Italian civilians, and two Field Sections, northern and southern. The southern section was located in Sicily and the northern one at the U. S. Military Cemetery in Mirandola.⁹⁰ By the end of May 1947, the Nettuno Section had completed work on 185 cases and the southern section had finished 227 cases, including remains from Sicily and from the U. S. Military Cemetery at Bari, Italy. The northern section did not begin operations at Mirandola Cemetery until 27 May.⁹¹

During July and August, the southern section, then consisting of nine individuals, processed unidentified remains at the U. S. Military Cemetery, Naples. Since the cemetery lay close to Sector

⁸⁶ Hist, AGRS-MZ, 1 Oct 47–30 Jun 50, pp. 9–10.

⁸⁷ Ltr, Col Whitfield W. Watson, Hq AGRS-MZ, to Col L. R. Talbot, Chief, Opns Br. Mem Div, OQMG, 18 Nov 48.

⁸⁸ Ltr, OQMG to CG, MTO, 17 Jan 47, sub: Central Identification Points, 293, GRS-MZ, Alex RC.

⁸⁹ Rpts, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-MTZ, 31 Jan 47, p. 6; 28 Feb 47, p. 1.

⁹⁰ (1) *Ibid.*, 31 Mar 47; 30 Apr 47. (2) Hist, AGRS-Mediterranean Zone, 1 Apr 46–1 Oct 47, Incl 4.

⁹¹ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-MTZ, 31 May 47, p. 10.

Headquarters, the identification unit worked from there, travelling back and forth each day. By 20 August, after completing work on 139 cases,⁹² the section turned to the processing of unidentified deceased in the U. S. Military Cemeteries at Marzanello, Carano, and R. Fratelle. Field Headquarters were established at Marzanello. The task was finished by 13 September 1947, with 65 cases processed.⁹³

The Nettuno Section, CIP, comprising a total of 11 enlisted men and civilians, also spent an active summer, completing on 5 August 1947 identification work on all unknowns then interred in the Nettuno Cemetery. This unit also processed remains recovered from the Island of Malta. On 8 August, members of the CIP unit disinterred and processed 16 unknowns at the U. S. Military Cemetery, Tarquinia, Italy, and then reinterred them in that burial ground. In mid-August, a small section of the Nettuno Identification Team departed for the American Cemetery at Castelfiorentino, Italy, and began the disinterment of some 184 unknowns there.⁹⁴

The CIP, Northern Section, possessing a strength of about 15 individuals, including 4 enlisted men and 11 civilians, finished the processing of 25 unknowns in the Pietramala Cemetery during July 1947. By the end of that month, the unit had terminated operations on some 150 remains from cemeteries lying within its area of responsibility.⁹⁵ During the late summer and early autumn, it completed its work in Mirandola Cemetery and began similar activity at Castelfiorentino, where the Nettuno unit had earlier disinterred unknown dead. Processing operations there closed at the end of September. The cemeteries at Vada and Follonica were scheduled for identification activities during the autumn months.⁹⁶

Thus, with a busy and fruitful summer just ended, the three CIP sections were strategically located throughout Italy. The Nettuno Section still processed remains from U. S. Military Cemeteries throughout central Italy. The southern and northern sections continued to operate as field mobile sections, moving about from one cemetery to another within their assigned areas.

By the close of October, the three units (Nettuno, Mirandola, and Paestum, where the Southern CIP Hq was then located), had processed a total of 1,525 cases. Pertinent data had been forwarded to Theater Headquarters in Rome where the Investigation and Research Branch attempted to correlate the information thus

⁹² Hist, AGRS-MZ, 1 Apr 46–1 Oct 47, p. 142.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁹⁴ Rpt, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-MZ, 31 Aug 47, pp. 8–9.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 31 Jul 47, pp. 9–10.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 31 Aug 47; 30 Sep 47; 31 Oct 47.

furnished with available cases of unknowns. Each case was presented to the Board of Review for its recommendations and then sent to the OQMG for final review and decision.⁹⁷

Early in 1948, a roving CIP Mobile Unit of 1 officer, 4 enlisted men, and 1 native civilian anthropologist visited all American military cemeteries in the Zone, except Mirandola and Pietramala. This team checked the work performed by the three CIP units. During January 1948, it processed remains in Nettuno, Follonica, and Castelfiorentino cemeteries. In February, the group moved to southern Italy and worked in Naples, Paestum, and Bari cemeteries.⁹⁸ During this same period, the three established CIP units continued to operate in their assigned areas. When exhumation of the various cemeteries began, preparatory to repatriation operations, the CIP units completed their task in a burial ground before it was vacated.

Prior to final disinterments, which started during March 1948, a procedure was instituted in three cemeteries—Nettuno, Naples, and Mirandola—which included the checking of all remains for verification of identity, the notation of any discrepancies, and re-burying at a shallow level. This program proved advantageous when full-scale repatriation activities began, saving much time and labor for exhumation teams as well as for the Central Identification Points.⁹⁹

Identification activities waned in the Zone after the beginning of cemeterial exhumations and the consequent shift of operational emphasis to the preparation of remains for homeward shipments or permanent overseas burial. By that time, nearly all doubtful identification cases had been resolved. Whenever an identity was questioned, however, a careful recheck ensued. When the last residual Detachment (the 9107th TSU-QMC, AGRS-MZ) was inactivated at the end of June 1950, AGRS reports indicated that identification technicians and workers in the Zone had performed in a remarkably thorough and praiseworthy manner, since more than 33,000 recovered dead had been identified while only 747 remained unidentified.¹⁰⁰

Publicity Concerning Identification Operations

As the time approached for the return of deceased from overseas war theaters, AGRS officials recognized that there was a rising tide

⁹⁷ Hist, AGRS-MZ, 1 Apr-1 Oct 47, p. 39.

⁹⁸ Rpts, GR & Repat Opns, AGRS-MZ, Jan 1948; Feb 48.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ The latest available figures, issued in April 1954, showed a total of 696 unknown recovered deceased in the Mediterranean Zone—Taken from WW II Statistics, WW II Cemeteries, Burial Records, Mem Div, Registration Br, OQMG.

of publicity in the American press concerning the accuracy of identification operations. These officials realized the importance of informing the public of the careful and exhaustive measures taken overseas to establish identity of unknowns. One such officer, Lt. Col. Edward Comm, felt that reticence concerning the fine accomplishments of identification technicians would mean a failure to give the public "that feeling of certainty about our identification processes that is so essential to the success of the whole program."¹⁰¹

Lt. Colonel Comm also believed that identification stories should come from the field rather than from Washington. If these stories originated in overseas areas, either in special articles by feature writers or in on-the-spot reports, the record of accomplishment would carry more weight with the general public.

A vivid illustration of such an identification story was provided by the release of the case of Unknown X-43, which showed clearly the lengths to which AGRS workers would go to establish the identity of a single unknown serviceman.

The individual known as "X-43" died on 2 August 1944 in Normandy, and was buried in Marigny, France, in Plot A, Row 7, Grave 128. The clues were very limited, although the interment report bore a notation that the body arrived at the cemetery with the following tag attached: "KIA, 8-2, A. Co., 18th Inf., Driver, Herman Rosen."¹⁰²

The first task involved the location of the driver, Herman Rosen. After receiving his address from The Adjutant General's Office, interested AGRS officials sent a letter to Mr. Rosen, explaining that the remains of X-43 had been found with a tag on them indicating that Rosen had driven the deceased to the collecting point. Mr. Rosen's reply did not shed much light on the matter, but did mention the name of a Lt. Kaspar from the 1st Battalion Headquarters Company, who had accompanied him on the day in question, 2 August 1944. After AGRS investigators obtained Lt. Kaspar's address from The Adjutant General's Office, they dispatched a letter to him, asking for any pertinent information.

Kaspar's reply proved to be important, since it informed the investigators that he and Rosen had encountered a jeep from the 90th Division on a reconnaissance mission. Both vehicles were shelled by the enemy. Kaspar stated that two of the three men in the reconnaissance jeep survived the shelling. Since these circumstances

¹⁰¹ Ltr, Lt Col Edward D. Comm to Brig Gen Howard Peckham, Hq AGRS, APO 58, New York, 22 Sep 47, 293, Alex RC.

¹⁰² "The Case of Unknown X-43, Incl. to Memo, W. M. Hines, Chief, Office of Tech Inf, OQMG to CO's, Schenectady, Philadelphia, Columbus, *et al.*, 28 Mar 47, p. 2, 293, Alex RC.

strongly indicated that the unknown deceased belonged to the 90th Division, AGRS officials again wrote to The Adjutant General's Office, asking for a list of all casualties which occurred in Normandy on 2 August 1944 among members of the 90th Infantry Division. This information was provided and served as a check for the eventual findings.¹⁰³

Still another letter was dispatched to Mr. Rosen to determine if he knew any of the men who rode in the reconnaissance jeep. Through Mr. Rosen's answer, AGRS investigators learned that his father had received a ring from somebody who believed that it belonged to Mr. Rosen. Actually, the ring did not belong to him, and might have been worn by the unknown. The ring provided the first really tangible clue to the identity of X-43. Yet another inquiry was sent to Mr. Rosen, asking him from whom his father had received the ring. The reply indicated that it had come from the Army Effects Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri. In turn, Rosen sent the ring to the AGRS investigators, who forwarded it to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with a request for an examination of this important clue. The FBI reported that an examination revealed it to be a class or school ring, with these markings on the outside: "SVHS, Spring Valley, 1944, D. T." The FBI believed that the object was a Spring Valley High School ring for the class of 1944 and was made for someone, possibly a woman, having the initials "D. T." A quick check of an atlas indicated that towns named "Spring Valley" were located in the following states: Arkansas, California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

The FBI also revealed that the inside of the ring bore a marking "Jostenick," which probably referred to the manufacturer's name or trademark. A search of the Jeweler's Guide listed a Josten Manufacturing Company, located at Owatonna, Minnesota, who made school and college rings. AGRS investigators then wrote to the Josten Manufacturing Company, giving them all available information about the ring. The firm then supplied the important fact that the initials "D. T." referred to a Dorothy Thomas and that more information might be obtained from Mr. J. Shirley, the principal of Spring Valley, Wisconsin, High School.

After writing a letter of inquiry to Mr. Shirley, AGRS officials received from him the answer which finally brought the vital information they sought. He revealed that Dorothy Thomas had given her class ring to a Don Peters, a soldier whose Army Post Office number was 90. It was then ascertained from this number that

Peters had been in Normandy with his unit. Mr. Shirley stated further that Peters had been killed on 2 August 1944 and that his home was in Spring Valley, Wisconsin.¹⁰⁴

After receiving a report of Don Peters' death from The Adjutant General, Memorial Division, OQMG, had enough facts to complete the case for presentation to a Board of Review. A case history was written which mentioned all of the clues which established the identity of X-43 as Don Peters. After approval by the Board of Review, the case went to the Chief of Memorial Division, OQMG, who again carefully reviewed the facts before signing his approval. Finally, AGRS officials informed the mother of Don Peters of the burial place of her son. Another "unknown" soldier had been identified by much patient and painstaking work.

This case was an outstanding one, often cited as illustrative of the thoroughgoing efforts made to establish the identity of unknowns, but it was by no means unique. There were literally scores of cases involving almost equal difficulties. One such case involved the ultimate combining of two partial remains buried as unknowns with resultant successful identification as one individual.

This case involved 1st Lt. Walter B. Bidlack, O-1112021, who according to Army records, was killed on 6 June 1944, in the D-Day operations on the Normandy beaches. At the time of the landing and for some days afterwards, the confusion on the beaches delayed the removal and burial of the dead. No record indicated that Lieutenant Bidlack was ever buried under his name. However, one remains, listed as "X-112," interred in St. Laurent Cemetery, consisted of a left foot only, bearing the marking on the legging, "Lt. Bidlack, S-2021C or S-3021C." This clue provided the only identification discovered by investigators on 16 July 1944. With this evidence, efforts followed to locate the remainder of the body. After much research, identification analysts concluded that another unknown, X-158, might be the remains for which they had been searching.¹⁰⁵

The official burial report indicated that "X-158" had died on or near the Normandy beach on 6 June 1944, and was buried on 8 June in a temporary cemetery nearby. The body was moved on 12 July 1944 and reburied in St. Laurent Cemetery, as Frank Nawakas on the basis of an Army Pay Book found on the remains. Later information revealed that Nawakas was still alive and had been discharged from the Army after V-E day. Under scientific examina-

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Ltr, Maj James C. McFarland, Mem Div, OQMG to Verne C. Bidlack, 6 Oct 47, 293, BIDLACK, WALTER B, O-1112021, Alex RC.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

tion 3 July 1947, the remains of "X-158" were found to lack a left foot, but the right shoe contained the remnant of a heavy grey non-regulation sock. The service shoe was size 11½-B. These two articles, upon close comparison, were found to be identical to the sock and left shoe of "X-112." The hair found on "X-158" was light brown, matching that of Lt. Bidlack. Since the deceased was a member of the 112th Engineer Combat Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, the engineer insignia attached to the shirt collar provided an important clue. The estimated height of "X-158" compared favorably with the known height of Lt. Bidlack. A dental chart, submitted for X-158, was incomplete in many respects, causing investigators to contact the next of kin, and request a civilian dental record. Upon receipt of the needed data, identification analysts showed a good comparison in the dental charts of X-158 and Bidlack. As a result of this combined evidence, GRS officials felt confident that the remains represented by X-112 and X-158, actually were those of Lt. Bidlack. Consequently, Unknown "X-112" was consolidated with the remains of "X-158" in the latter's grave at St. Laurent Cemetery.¹⁰⁶

The parents of Lt. Bidlack, after consulting with their civilian dentist, accepted the findings of GRS officials that both X-112 and X-158 were actually the remains of their son. They did raise the question of how the pay book of Frank Nawakas became associated with X-158. In reply, Memorial Division frankly admitted that this matter had never been satisfactorily explained, but that the pay book was not present when the remains of X-158 were re-examined on 3 July 1947. Direct questioning of Mr. Nawakas simply brought out the fact that the original pay book was still in his (Nawakas) possession.

After considerable thought, the parents of Lt. Bidlack decided to allow him to remain overseas for permanent burial. On 1 March 1949, Quartermaster General Larkin informed Mr. Verne Bidlack, father of the deceased, that his son rested in Plot I, Row 20, Grave 3, in the permanent American Military Cemetery, St. Laurent, France, thereby closing successfully another interesting but complex identification problem.

By publicizing such accomplishments, GRS officials aided greatly in establishing public confidence in this all-important phase of graves registration.

¹⁰⁶ (1) *Ibid.* (2) Ltr, Hq AGRC-EA to TQMG, 21 Aug 47, 293, Alex RC.

Conclusion

When the Return of the Dead Program officially ended on 31 December 1951, world-wide statistics showed a total of 280,994 recovered dead. Of this number, 270,983 remains had been identified, leaving 10,011 still unidentified.¹⁰⁷ In other words, only slightly more than 3½ percent of the total recovered dead remained unidentified. In view of the many difficulties which faced identification technicians, this small figure reflects much credit on those workers and upon the professional anthropologists, such as Dr. Shapiro, Dr. Trotter, Dr. Sacchetti, Dr. Tardy, and Dr. Witas, among others, who spent so much time and tedious effort in exhausting all possible means of identification. These anthropologists aided particularly in dealing with such problems as determination of age, height, race, and abnormalities in individual cases. They also performed important service in the segregation of mixed skeletal remains, making possible identifications which otherwise would have been impossible.¹⁰⁸ All in all, perhaps in no other major phase of GRS activities were efforts more successful than in the technically difficult identification operations.

¹⁰⁷ (1) Statistical Review of Permanent Disposition of WW II Dead, 31 Dec 51, p. 24. (2) The latest figures available, issued in April 1954, showed a total of 281,769 recovered dead, of which only 8,744 were not identified.

¹⁰⁸ Interv, Carl Allbee, Registration Br, Mem Div, 5 Dec 55.

EXHIBIT

4



Incl. # 3

DISINTERMENT MAP of BATAAN

CURRENT LEGEND

- Currently Disinterred with Remains Indicated
- ✚ Unrecoverable
- △ MT.
- Previously Disinterred
- Discovered
- Guide Not Available unable to locate



DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
2300 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2300



Historical Report

U.S. Casualties and Burials at Cabanatuan POW Camp #1

I. Introduction

Thousands of United States soldiers, sailors, Marines, and civilians were taken prisoners of war (POW) by the Japanese in the Philippine Islands between 7 December 1941 and 8 May 1942. The saga of the battle for the Philippines and the horrible treatment the survivors received in Japanese POW camps is the subject of numerous books and articles, but there are few resources that articulate graves registration operations, especially those focused on recovering and identifying the remains of U.S. servicemen who perished at the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camps. The details concerning the circumstances under which U.S. prisoners held at Cabanatuan lived and died were difficult and complicated, as were the attempts to disinter and identify their remains after the war's end. As a result of these complications, when the Cabanatuan Project ended in 1951, 1,007 service members and civilians remained unidentified from among the 2,764 burials at the Camps.¹

When Filipino and American Military Forces surrendered on the Bataan Peninsula on 8 April 1942, they had been fighting a defensive retreat across the Philippine Island of Luzon (see figure 1). For over four months they held off the advancing Japanese troops all the while suffering from a lack of food, medicine, ammunition, and hope. On 1 January 1942, all Filipino and American forces had been placed on half rations, and the amount of rationed food only decreased as time passed. Because of the poor quality of their diet, many suffered from night blindness and a variety of jungle illnesses, including malaria, dengue, dysentery, and hookworm. It has been estimated that over seventy percent of the men on Bataan suffered from malaria due to the lack of adequate medical supplies to treat them.²

Compounding the food and medical issues, the Japanese seriously underestimated the number of prisoners they would encounter on Bataan. Almost 75,000 (65,000 Filipino and 10,000 American) surrendered. The Japanese also expected the men to be in good physical condition—not sick and starved. However, Japanese interest lay in what was beyond Bataan—Corregidor

¹ **NOTE:** Several studies of the campaigns of the Philippines and the experiences of U.S. forces who surrendered to the Japanese are cited in the footnotes of this memorandum, but they represent only a tiny fraction of the total volume of the histories and memoirs written. Readers interested in more extensive study of this history can find a wealth of resources at the website, "Center for Research: Allied POWs Under the Japanese," <http://www.mansell.com/>. A list of more than 500 titles specifically concerning the WWII history of Luzon Island can be found in the POW resources section of the website. The casualty figures cited in the introduction are based upon the current casualty status of the individuals as tracked by the accounting community. As will become clear within this memorandum, several of those currently carried as identified cannot be verified.

² Louis Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines*, vol. 1 of *The War in the Pacific*, vol. 4 of sub series *United States Army in World War II* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953), 245, 254, 257, 355; John W. Whitman, *Bataan: Our Last Ditch, The Bataan Campaign, 1942* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1990), 380-83; Calvin G. Jackson, *Diary of Col. Calvin G. Jackson, M.D.: Kept during World War II, 1941-1945* (Ada: Ohio Northern University, 1992), ii; and John E. Olson, *O'Donnell: Andersonville of the Pacific* (Self-published: John E. Olson, 1985), 14-15.

Island—not the physical condition of their new prisoners of war. Corregidor Island was situated in Manila Bay and because the fortress had not surrendered with Bataan, it posed a serious problem to the Japanese (see figure 2). They were, therefore, in a big hurry to move the surrendered Bataan soldiers and sailors out of the way in order to begin the assault on Corregidor.

The vast majority of Filipino and American forces surrendered while located on the southern tip of the Bataan Peninsula. Depending upon where the men were captured, they either waited in temporary camps or were immediately moved to concentration points. The Japanese transported some small groups of prisoners, such as the Luzon Force Headquarters and some of the patients from field hospitals on Luzon directly to Camp O'Donnell. Those who were able among the early arrivals at Camp O'Donnell began to ready the camp for the arrival of the rest of the prisoners.³

The men not taken directly to Camp O'Donnell were sorted into groups of one hundred and started on an arduous forced march. When they began the long walk (the “Death March”), they were in a horrible physical state. For eleven days the POWs were forced to walk sixty-five miles to San Fernando, enduring abuse by Japanese guards and watching the deaths of thousands of fellow soldiers. At San Fernando the Japanese stuffed hundreds of men into steel-sided boxcars for a twenty-five mile train trip to Capas. The boxcars were packed so tightly the men could not sit down. They traveled at night, but also under a sun so fierce it made the sides of the boxcars too hot to touch. Finally, the train arrived at Capas and the POWs off-loaded to march a final nine miles to Camp O'Donnell (see figure 3).⁴

II. Camp O'Donnell

Camp O'Donnell was located approximately nine miles from Capas, astride the Capas-O'Donnell Road. The main road bisected the American and Filipino sections of the camp, with the Americans occupying the smaller northern portion. The first exhausted prisoners entered O'Donnell on 11 April 1942, and by 30 April 1942, the last new groups of prisoners arrived. From this point until the Camp's closure, movement into and out of the camp would be related to prisoners leaving and returning on work details rather than new arrivals.⁵ Once inside the camp

³ No author, “Historical and Statistical Record of Camp Cabanatuan, 9 Apr 42 to 15 Nov 42; 14 pages,” Historical Statistical Records of Cabanatuan, Maps of Corregidor, and Miscellaneous, Philippine Archives Collection, RG 407: Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴ It has been estimated that as many as 62,000 Filipinos and 10,000 Americans endured the ordeal. Estimates of the death toll range from 7,000 to 10,000 Filipinos and approximately 600 Americans. Most were needless deaths, caused by heatstroke, exhaustion, and disease. E. Bartlett Kerr, *Surrender and Survival: The Experience of American POWs in the Pacific* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985), 52-60; Donald Knox, *The Death March: The Survivors of Bataan* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), 151; Gavan Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1994), 18-9, 74-90; James A. Cox, “The Infamous Bataan Death March,” *Marine Corps League*, 58, (Spring 2002): 36; Jesse L. Miller, *Prisoner of Hope* (Englewood, CO: Jesse L. Miller, 1988), 41-2; Hampton Sides, *Ghost Soldiers: The Forgotten Epic Story of World War II's Most Dramatic Mission* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 91; Meirion and Susie Harries, *Soldiers of the Sun: The Rise and Fall of the Imperial Japanese Army* (New York: Random House, 1991), 315; and Lester I. Tenney, *My Hitch in Hell: The Bataan Death March* (Washington: Brassey's, 1995), 44-5.

⁵ “Historical and Statistical Record of Camp Cabanatuan, 9 Apr 42 to 15 Nov 42; 14 pages,” National Archives.

the Japanese confiscated any personal items the men may have been able to retain during the march. Sometimes this confiscation included identification tags.⁶

Concerns over how and where to bury dying prisoners surfaced immediately. Initially the Japanese wanted to cremate any casualties, but because of pleas from American chaplains the Japanese agreed to allow the dead to be buried just outside the main gate north of the road to Capas. As the death toll increased another cemetery was added. The first deaths occurred on 14 April 1942. Throughout this entire time, the Japanese were selecting and transporting men on “work details” around the islands. This ranged from clearing bomb damage, to loading ships, to working on farm plots. Many times men would not return from the details, having died and been buried in proximity to the location of their death rather than in the camp cemeteries. So the numbers of men in O’Donnell fluctuated daily from work details, new arrivals, and deaths. By 31 May 1942 there were 5,679 men in the American camp and the death rate had soared to forty-four per day. On 29 May 1942, the death rate reached a pinnacle with the deaths of fifty American prisoners.⁷

Captain A. L. Fullerton, a U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps officer trained in graves registration, assumed charge of the burial activities at Camp O’Donnell. He established a morgue for receiving, checking and holding the dead until the next burial detail arrived. Processing a body consisted of inventorying the deceased’s possessions. If the body had two identification tags, one was retained by the graves registration section, and the other was later put on the crude wooden cross that marked the graves. The name, rank and serial number, organization, place of death, date of death, cause of death, method of identification, name and address of nearest kin, place of burial (including plot, row, and grave), date of burial, age, race, remarks, and home addresses were, if known, recorded in a report of death. In many cases, very little was known of the deceased, particularly in the early days at the camp. Three copies of the death report were made, two for graves registration and one for the camp adjutant. Then the burial details would carry the bodies to the cemetery, where a previously dispatched detail would have already dug the gravesite. Ideally, the graves were ten feet by six feet and four feet deep, in order to hold multiple bodies in a common grave, but in actual practice many of the graves were much shallower. During the dry season the soft clay was easy to work, but digging during the rainy season was problematic. Often the water would rise almost to the edge of the grave and the bodies would have to be weighted down with stones. Sometimes the digging details would encounter hard, dry, rocky soil in which they could barely scratch out a shallow grave. Prisoner Nicholas Fryzuik recalled that, “people were buried in mass graves and you could see legs, hands, or feet sticking out of the little dirt used to cover them.”⁸

Over 1,500 Americans and 26,000 Filipinos died during the seventy-one days of O’Donnell’s operation. One out of every six Americans who entered O’Donnell died. Because of the high death rates the Japanese ordered the camp closed on 16 May 1942. In early June, the senior

⁶ **NOTE:** This confiscation of valuables and personal items of interest to the Japanese occurred from the very beginning of captivity and continued as the prisoners encountered new groups of Japanese guards. An individual prisoner might have items taken from him several times over the course of his years of imprisonment.

⁷ Olson, *O’Donnell*, 43, 63, and 235. **NOTE:** The daily death rates soared even higher in the Filipino section of Camp O’Donnell.

⁸ Olson, *O’Donnell*, 174-75, 181-85. **NOTE:** One set of the Death Reports was buried in the Camp O’Donnell cemetery before the move to Cabanatuan.

officers relocated to Tarlac and the rest of the men moved to Cabanatuan or were assigned to work details around the islands. Camp O'Donnell, "Camp O'Death" to the men living there, finally closed on 20 January 1943. The 1,547 Americans who perished there remained in the camp cemetery until U.S. Graves Registration personnel disinterred them after Allied forces regained control of Luzon.⁹

III. Camp Cabanatuan

While the men died at high rates in O'Donnell, Allied forces that had not surrendered on Luzon continued to fight the Japanese from Corregidor Island. They too fought a losing battle and surrendered on 6 May 1942. After Corregidor capitulated, the Japanese took over the island and forced the men to clear debris for two weeks. They finally left by ship, but unlike the men on Bataan, the Japanese allowed them to retain their personal effects. The nine thousand captives from Corregidor entered Bilibid Prison, where they were able to purchase supplies. They had adequate water and even showers—much different from the conditions at Camp O'Donnell. From Bilibid, the men marched three miles to the railhead, and were stuffed into those same steel-sided cars that had transported the Bataan survivors. Finally, they marched ten miles to Cabanatuan, about ninety-five kilometers north of Manila (see figure 4).¹⁰

The three Camps making up the Cabanatuan POW Camp system had been barracks and a training facility used by the Philippine Army prior to the outbreak of war. Camp #1 sat approximately nine kilometers east of the city of Cabanatuan. Situated six kilometers further east of Camp #1, Camp #2 only briefly held prisoners before they were transferred to Camp #1 due to the lack of available water. Camp #3, a further six kilometers from Camp #2, functioned from the end of May 1942 until October of the same year, when the remaining prisoners were also transferred to Camp #1. Cabanatuan Camp #1 consistently served as the single largest camp for U.S. prisoners for the duration of the war, housing as many as 10,000 prisoners on days when few groups left on work details.¹¹ By the middle of June 1942, the camp was divided into a regular area which was further subdivided into three groups and a hospital area, though as one doctor imprisoned there noted, "the hospital served to only to segregate the very ill from the less ill."¹²

⁹ Edward W. Weiss, *Under the Rising Sun: War, Captivity and Survival 1941-1945* (Erie, PA: Edward W. Weiss, 1992), 233; Kerr, *Surrender and Survival*, 65, 80-1; Knox, *The Death March*, 198; and Olson, *O'Donnell*, xiii, 110, 163-72; Abraham, Abie, *Ghost of Bataan Speaks* (New York: Vantage Press, 1971), 91, 156-160. **NOTE:** The Filipino prisoners at Camp O'Donnell did not make the move to Cabanatuan. Most of them were granted amnesty by the Japanese in exchange for signing agreements that they would not take up arms against the occupying forces.

¹⁰ Kerr, *Surrender and Survival*, 52-3, 76-8; Richard M. Gordon and Benjamin S. Llamzon, *Horyo: Memoirs of an American POW* (St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 1999), xii, xxvii; William R. Evans, *Soochow and the 4th Marines* (Rouge River, OR: Atwood Publishing Company, 1987), 85; Donald LeRoy Versaw, *Mikado no Kyaku* (Lakewood, CA: Donald L. Versaw, 1998), 7; and Knox, *The Death March*, 199-200.

¹¹ Captain P. L. Smith, 17 September 1945, "Report on Cabanatuan Camp #1," Legal Section, Manila Branch, Administrative Division, Miscellaneous (1945-1948); Supreme Commander for Allied Powers; Record Group 331: Records of Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, World War II; National Archives, College Park, MD; see also, "Historical and Statistical Record of Camp Cabanatuan, 9 Apr 42 to 15 Nov 42; 14 pages," RG 407, National Archives.

¹² John R. Bumgarner, *Parade of the Dead: A U.S. Army Physician's Memoir of Imprisonment by the Japanese, 1942-1945* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., 1995), 88.

In June of 1942, prisoners from Camp O'Donnell began to stream into Camp #1, joining the men from Corregidor and increasing the number of prisoners to over 7,300 men. Because of the poor health of the men from O'Donnell, the death rate at Camp #1 soared. By the end of the year 2,642 had perished, compared to sixty-nine in Camp #3. It was not until 15 December 1942 that Cabanatuan Camp #1 celebrated its first "zero death" day. By the end of 1942, the death rate in all of the camps slowed. The weak and wounded had not survived. The death rate continued at a much lower pace over the next two years (see figure 5). The Death March and life at O'Donnell took a heavy toll on the captives of Bataan. Former POW Lester Tenney estimated that one out of every three prisoners from Corregidor died, while two out of every three taken captive on Bataan expired. While the death rates at Cabanatuan Camp #1 soared, men were continuously moving in and out of the camp on work details. This makes it difficult to estimate the number of men in Camp #1 on any particular day, but estimates show that in 1942 and 1943 the population ranged from five to more than eight thousand prisoners.¹³

The work details varied in scope and length. The two largest were the farm detail and the Cabanatuan airport detail. The five hundred acre farm grew food for the prisoners and the Japanese. At the Cabanatuan airport, men worked to repair and enlarge the runway for Japanese planes. The smaller, and sometimes seasonal, work details included gathering firewood, digging latrines, preparing military defenses, and digging foxholes. Men were also transported to various other parts of the island to work on other airports, bridge-building, or repairing buildings. In October 1942, about one thousand men moved permanently to Davao Penal Colony for additional farm work.¹⁴

This was not the only movement for work details the prisoners faced. In 1942 the Japanese experienced a serious labor shortage. Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo declared that all prisoners, including officers, were to work as laborers in Japanese industries. He ordered all prisoners shipped to Japan in every available returning vessel. The Japanese military subsequently transferred large numbers of POWs to industrial sites throughout their empire—Formosa, Korea, Manchuria, China, Burma, and Siam—but most of the prisoners were sent to the one-hundred-and-sixty camps within the Japanese home islands. The conditions on these ships were so bad that they were aptly nick-named "hellships." Death due to extreme heat, thirst, or hunger was not the only problem faced on the voyage to Japan. Death due to Allied action became a major source of concern. Men aboard the hellships suffered some of the worst casualties of the war. For example, on February 25, 1944, Allied bombs sank the *Tango Maru* killing 3,000 men. On September 18, 1944, Allied planes sank the *Junyo Maru*, killing 5,640 prisoners. Of the 68,000 Allied prisoners-of-war moved to industrial camps, over 22,000 died on hellships. American deaths on the hellships totaled more than 3,800. With all the movement out of Cabanatuan, there were only about eight hundred men left there by October of 1944. Several

¹³ "Historical and Statistical Record of Camp Cabanatuan, 9 Apr 42 to 15 Nov 42; 14 pages," RG 407, National Archives; Captain P. L. Smith, "Report on Cabanatuan Camp #1," 17 September 1945, RG 331, National Archives; Knox, *The Death March*, 198-367; Sides, *Ghost Soldiers*, 135; Gordon, *Horyo*, 104, 107; William Paul Skelton, *The American ex-Prisoner of War*, 15th ed. (Tampa: University of South Florida College of Medicine and James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, 1999), 14; Charles G. Roland, "Stripping Away the Veneer: P.O.W. Survival in the Far East as an Index of Cultural Atavism" *Journal of Military History*, 53 (January 1989): 92; and Kerr, *Surrender and Survival*, 79-81, 102-04.

¹⁴ Captain P. L. Smith, "Report on Cabanatuan Camp #1," RG 331, National Archives.

hundred of these were transported to Fort McKinley near the end of the year and the remaining POWs in the camp were liberated on 30 January 1945.¹⁵

IV. Deaths and Burials at Cabanatuan Camp #1

From the first arrivals at Cabanatuan Camp #1 until its closing men continued to perish. The first official burials in the Cabanatuan Camp #1 cemetery occurred on 3 June 1942.¹⁶ After this date, and through the end of 1942, the death rate remained high. In July 1942, the deadliest month, 799 U.S. prisoners died (see figure 5). The rates of death soared in the early months due to lack of medicine, inadequate food, and the general deteriorated state of the prisoners as the result of all that they had thus far endured. Situated in a rainy climate and on land formerly used for rice paddies, the camp proved to be a breeding ground for flies and mosquitos, further contributing to the spread of disease among the prisoners. John R. Bumgarner, an Army physician and Cabanatuan POW described the deplorable situation:

I could have easily predicted the rise of the death rate in view of the deficient diet and the lack of medication. For the first week or ten days at Cabanatuan there were about ten deaths per day. By the middle of June the grisly procession of dead had grown alarmingly to average 20 deaths per day - 20 men who had endured the terrible ordeal of Bataan, who were 10,000 miles from home, and who then died in the most miserable circumstances. For me, as a doctor, the most distressing thought was that they could have been saved, almost without exception, by proper diet and medical care.¹⁷

Captain Bumgarner's observation concerning proper medical care was also supported by the drop in the numbers of deaths after the arrival of Red Cross packages, additional medicines, and additional medical and dental staff in December 1942. In February 1943, U.S. dental corps personnel set up a dental clinic. Prior to opening it, they made a survey of all the prisoners not in the hospital or on work details, examining 2,725 men, 67% of whom needed dental care.¹⁸

As with other aspects of camp administration, such as the hospital and dental clinic, the organization of a system for registering and tracking the deaths of prisoners was left up to American officers within the camp. The three groups of prisoners in the main part of the camp each had a Graves Registration Officer assigned to track and report deaths from within their

¹⁵ Captain P. L. Smith, "Report on Cabanatuan Camp #1," RG 331, National Archives; Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese*, 284-87; Kerr, *Surrender and Survival*, 112-13, 117, 237; S. P. MacKenzie, "The Treatment of Prisoners of War in World War II," *Journal of Modern History* 66 (September 1994): 514, 517, 519; Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors*, 18; Waterford, *Prisoners of the Japanese in World War II*, 37, 143-44, 167-68, 173; Linda Goetz Holmes, *Unjust Enrichment: How Japan's Companies Built Postwar Fortunes Using American POWs* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001), 22; and Skelton, *The American ex-Prisoner of War*, 16-18. **NOTE:** The rest of the prisoners on the hellships were British, Australian, Indian, or Dutch.

¹⁶ **NOTE:** One death on 2 June was reported buried in the vicinity of the cemetery, and those who died at Cabanatuan in May 1942 were buried in isolated graves or in the Camp #3 Cemetery.

¹⁷ Bumgarner, *Parade of the Dead*, 93.

¹⁸ Virginia W. Lee, "Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 22 November 1950 - 20 February 1951, Inclusive," 21 February 1951, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

group on a daily basis. In the hospital section, medical personnel kept records documenting the cause, time, and date of death, as well as information for contacting the next of kin of the casualties. If the casualty had an identification tag, it was placed in his mouth. Otherwise, a piece of paper containing his name was placed there. Prisoners moved the dead to the morgue to await a burial detail to convey them to the cemetery.¹⁹

A Camp Graves Registration Officer collected the information from the group officers and the hospital and reconciled it into one master list. All of the officers in charge of details concerning graves registration rotated duties from time to time, and especially in the early months in camp, they, like almost everyone else, often fell ill. Due to the changes in duties and to sometimes severe illnesses, graves and deaths occasionally went unregistered until months after their occurrence. In November 1942, Captain Robert Conn became the Camp Graves Registration Officer and remained in that position until his departure from Cabanatuan on 16 October 1944. As conditions in the camp improved, Captain Conn went back over early, incomplete records and conducted interviews to enable corrections or additions to the master list. As a result of this work, he created the most complete record available. His work formed the cornerstone of subsequent identification efforts. Still, he carefully noted that “due to the lack of organization, which can be attributed to many causes such as, sick and disheartened Americans, lack of materials to carry on record keeping, and a decided lack of spirit of co-operation on the part of our hosts, the records for the early days were incomplete and in some instances inaccurate.”²⁰

Because so many men were dying, burial parties worked every day. Each morning, the men would gather at the morgue and organize into teams to begin the march to the cemetery. The camp adopted a mass internment system, burying all that died in one day in one common grave. The day consisted of a period of twenty-four hours which ran from 12:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. (during the period 3 June through 25 September 1942), 5:00 pm to 5:00 pm (during the period 26 September 1942 through 19 October), or 12:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (during the period 19 October 1942 until Cabanatuan’s closure). The burial party would deliver the dead to the cemetery and then dig the mass grave for the next day.²¹

¹⁹ Captain J. F. Vogl et al., “Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call,” 29 September 1950; Virginia W. Lee, “Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 September-21 November 1950, Inclusive,” 1 December 1950; R. E. Conn, Jr., letter to Captain J. F. Vogl, 3 October 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** Practices in the morgue were not without problems. Captain Conn, the Camp Graves Registration Officer noted that two U.S. enlisted men working in the morgue were caught removing gold fillings from the teeth of the dead.

²⁰ Captain Robert E. Conn, Jr., 7 January 1944, “Following is a history in chronological outline form of the Graves Registration work at Military Prison Camp No I of the Philippine Islands, Cabanatuan, Province of Nueva Ecija, Philippine Islands,” 558-2 Death Report, Cabanatuan, Testimonies and Investigation File, 1945-48; Legal Section, Manila Branch, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers; Record Group 331: Records of Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, World War II; National Archives, College Park, MD. This chronological outline is appended to the end of the Cabanatuan Death Report compiled by Robert Conn. A more legible copy of the outline can be found in the following file: Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²¹ Mildred Trotter, “Notes: Historical in so far as the Cabanatuan burials and disposition has been made,” 24 October 1951, Mildred Trotter Papers, Special Collections of the Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University, St. Louis, MO; and John A. Glusman, *Conduct Under Fire: Four American Doctors and Their Fight for Life as Prisoners of the Japanese, 1941-1945*, (New York: Viking Press, 2005) 258; “1942,” undated, POWs, General Records-Cabanatuan, Philippine Archives Collection, Office of the Adjutant General; Record Group 407;

In June and July 1942, the two highest mortality months at the camp, the Japanese did not permit markers or a specific organization for the placement of the graves. After a few graves had been put in a section or plot, the odor would become so offensive that the Japanese sentry would select a new section and the burial details would dig at that location. The digging of large deep graves was impossible due to the high number of daily deaths plus the weakened condition of the men on the burial details. Heavy rains with no drainage facilities also hampered digging. Many shallow graves were dug during the early period, some so shallow that it was not uncommon for the rain to reveal portions of the buried bodies.²²

On 3 August 1942, Captain Willibald Bianchi became the officer in charge of grave digging.²³ He instituted and maintained order in the placement of the graves. By the end of August, Japanese prison administrators had granted permission to the Chaplains to hold brief ceremonies in the cemetery and also agreed to allow for the use of grave markers. It is unclear, based both on the details available for August and on the reports of activities surrounding the beautification of the cemetery described below, exactly how the graves were marked from 27 August forward. It might be that individual graves had markers, or this may simply be a reference to being allowed to mark off areas used for a particular day's common burial. The latter seems more likely, given that no records describe a process in which known individuals were placed into annotated graves during this period. After January 1943, rates of death among the prisoners slowed enough that the burial practices changed. From this point forward, the digging teams still dug a common trench grave, but they did not fill it in any single day. Instead, once the dead for the day had been placed into the trench, they marked the end of the burials with a baffle board, returning upon the next death to resume burials in the trench at that spot.²⁴

After many requests from the American officers administering the Graves Registration and burial process, the Japanese agreed to allow improvements in the cemetery and on 2 February 1943, they requested a plan for beautification, which they approved on 18 March. The prisoners completed beautification of the cemetery in time for a ceremony on Memorial Day in May 1943. In between the approval of the plan and the celebration, Graves Registration Officers worked with prisoners to mound graves, place crosses, create walkways, plant flower beds and erect a cement monument.²⁵

During the process of beautification, Captain Conn worked with men who had participated in earlier burial details to determine the boundaries of the older graves. He interviewed them for

National Archives, College Park, MD; and J. F. Vogl, et al, "Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call," Record Group 92, National Archives.

²² Captain P. L. Smith, "Report on Cabanatuan Camp #1" 17 September 1945, RG 331, National Archives.

²³ **NOTE:** Captain Bianchi later died aboard the Japanese hellship *Enoura Maru*. Today, he numbers among our unaccounted-for casualties.

²⁴ Captain Robert E. Conn, Jr., "Following is a history in chronological outline form of the Graves Registration work at Military Prison Camp No I of the Philippine Islands, Cabanatuan, Province of Nueva Ecija, Philippine Islands," 7 January 1944; and Virginia W. Lee, "Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 September- 21 November 1950, Inclusive," 1 December 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

²⁵ **NOTE:** In the source records for this information, the holiday is referred to as Decoration Day. Today Decoration Day is celebrated as Memorial Day.

details about specific placement and the dates on which they had done the work. Through this method, he felt able to securely establish grave locations for burials from August 1942 forward. In some instances, in trying to locate the boundaries of the grave, digging revealed the presence of bodies and Captain Conn adjusted the boundaries to encompass them. Captain Conn then drew a map of the cemetery to scale, along with sketches of each of the individual plots (see figure 6). He numbered the graves, noted the numbers on the map, and also added them to the master list of deaths he had created, today labeled "558-2, Death Report, Cabanatuan." He did not number the plots to correspond with dates of death, so that the earliest deaths were in plot one, later deaths in plot two, etc., in part because the original burials did not lend themselves to this kind of order. Instead, starting at the bottom of the cemetery and continuing counter-clockwise, Captain Conn numbered the plots from one to eleven, then assigning numbers to the grave within each plot. Unfortunately, due to the many circumstances outlined above, Captain Conn could not obtain reliable information concerning burials from 3 June through 29 July 1942, a period covering 1,263 deaths (45.7% of total deaths), and he did not annotate burial location numbers next to the names of these individuals in the death report for the camp.²⁶

After the cemetery had been beautified, and until the liberation of Cabanatuan Camp #1 in January 1945, deaths among the prisoners decreased dramatically, as did the overall population in the camp. In that period, in addition to refining and clarifying the information on the "558-2, Death Report, Cabanatuan," Captain Conn collected and organized the death records for Camp O'Donnell, and also interviewed prisoners about deaths they saw both during combat and along the route of the death march. When he felt the information had veracity, he typed up an affidavit for the prisoner's signature. In the post-war years, the records created and refined by Captain Conn were used to search for missing U.S. service members and as exhibits in the trials of Japanese war criminals.²⁷

IV. Post-War Disinterment of Cabanatuan POW Camp Cemeteries

In August 1945, the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon visited the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery. The team cut back the encroaching vegetation that obscured the graves and replaced the crosses, adding information from identification tags, where available, and stenciling grave numbers on the back. In addition, one member of the Platoon created a sketch map for the cemetery (see figure 7). Second Lieutenant Beard noted, in his report of their activities: "The cemetery is situated in a low area, and water stands between the mounded graves after each rain. The lower end of the cemetery is under water a great share of the time."²⁸

In December 1945 and continuing into the early months of 1946, the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon returned to disinter the Cabanatuan Camp #1 and Camp #3 cemeteries, as well as isolated burials in the area that they had documented during their August

²⁶ Captain J. F. Vogl, et al, "Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call," RG 92, National Archives.

²⁷ Major David M. Lynch, letter to Major Robert E. Conn, Jr., 23 July 1946, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** After his release from captivity, Robert Conn received a promotion from Captain to Major.

²⁸ Second Lieutenant Maurice S. Beard, memorandum to Quartermaster, PHIBSEC, 30 August 1945, "Subject: Report on POW Interments and Restoration of Graves," Continuing File, 1946-52, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

visit to the former prison camps. The members of the platoon examined the remains as they disinterred them. In the process, they charted the teeth present with the remains, though they did not have dental records for the deceased with them and did not make graveside assessments to match the teeth present to dental charts and records for the deceased men. The team did, however, make almost one thousand identifications based upon the presence of identification media in the form of cards or metal tags. The remains were moved to U.S. Armed Forces Manila #2 Cemetery (twelve miles north of Manila). Those with identification tags moved with a designated name. All others received unknown numbers for tracking purposes.²⁹

Graves Registration personnel stationed in the Philippines sent copies of the dental records made by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon to the Memorial Division, which was situated within the U.S. Army's Office of the Quartermaster General. The Memorial Division had responsibility for coordinating with graves registration offices in the field, collecting and maintaining records about casualties and also records concerning searches for those casualties. It served as a liaison with other offices which had responsibility for issues concerning deceased military personnel, such as the Adjutant General's Office. Memorial Division personnel also served as the conduit for casualty information concerning Marine Corps and Navy losses, given that the Army, and more specifically, the Office of the Quartermaster General, had received executive agency over all WWII battle deaths, regardless of the service member's branch of service. The Identification Branch of the Memorial Division had two dental corps officers placed with them on temporary duty. Starting in December 1946, Colonel Kennebeck and Major Shenberger compared the dental records of men who had been buried in the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery against the dental charts created for the remains. Where the charts matched, the dentists stapled a certification of the comparison to the tooth chart from the disinterred remains. On 27 March 1947, the Memorial Division approved the identifications of 284 individuals who had been buried in the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery and 2 from the Cabanatuan Camp #3 Cemetery.³⁰

V. American Graves Registration Service Activities

²⁹ Lenora Rowinski, "Telephone Inquiry," 13 September 1951, Memoranda and Reports, and "Alphabetical Roster," 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** Ms. Rowinski conducted a phone interview with Mr. Gilbert Zehner who had supervised the disinterment of the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery as a graves registration officer in 1945-46. The "Alphabetical Roster," was created as part of the Cabanatuan Project in 1950. It includes succinct information about how individuals were identified and was used to tally the number of identifications made using ID tags or cards. This document was also used as one of the foundational sources of the accounting community's current dataset concerning Cabanatuan casualties.

³⁰ Fisher, "Background Information Relating to the Identification of Remains from the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camp and the Reasons Why the Current Project was not Instigated at an Earlier Date," Continuing File, 1946-52, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** One individual was also identified from remains disinterred from the cemetery at Camp O'Donnell. The Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPF) for all 287 individuals proposed for identification contains a list of their names and more specifics about the identifications. See, for example, the IDPF for Sgt David A. Ahlberg, 6584381. Out of the sixty-nine burials in the Camp #3 Cemetery, only four remain unidentified today. Fifty-eight of the identifications from this cemetery were made on the basis of identification media (paper, a burial bottle, or tags) found in the cemetery. Two identifications, as discussed above, occurred as the result of dental review. Five others were approved during the period of identifications proposed by field boards of review.

In 1947, in response to the passage by the U.S. Congress of legislation to fund “The Return of the World War II Dead Program,” practices for making and processing identifications changed. Graves Registration Personnel working on the issue were reorganized under the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS). Still headquartered in Washington D.C. and managed through the Memorial Division of the Office of the Quartermaster General, the reorganization resulted in the creation of zones of responsibility for search and recovery operations for still unrecovered casualties and for the disinterment and consolidation of cemeteries across the globe. Once identified and disinterred from a temporary cemetery, a casualty’s remains would be buried in accordance with the wishes of the next of kin, either in a permanent overseas American military cemetery or shipped to the United States for burial in a stateside military or private cemetery. In the Philippines, these changes resulted in the establishment of the AGRS Manila Mausoleum to serve as a collecting point for casualties from a broad zone including all of the islands of the Philippines. The mausoleum also contained a Central Identification Point where AGRS personnel examined unidentified remains, comparing them against records of casualties to effect identification of the remains. For Cabanatuan casualties, these changes resulted in a shift of analysis for identification from the Memorial Division to the Manila Mausoleum. Memorial Division personnel shifted to reviewing proposed identifications from the field office.³¹

Beginning in the fall of 1947 and continuing through July 1948, Manila #2 Cemetery was disinterred and moved to the AGRS Mausoleum at Nichols Field. The remains moved through the Central Identification Point where civilian embalmers and military graves registration personnel processed them for identification. In addition to creating new dental charts for the remains, they measured long bones to produce stature estimates, and examined the remains for evidence of malformations or fractures that might have been documented during life and could serve as an additional clue to their identity. A skeletal chart showing the elements present for each set of remains was also prepared. Staff of the Memorial Division’s Identification Branch documented only twenty-nine casualties approved in this phase of the identification process for Cabanatuan: nineteen individual identifications and an additional ten individuals represented in group burials.³² Many of the recommended identifications put forward to the Memorial Division for review were disapproved with the request that further study be completed on the remains. The grounds for disapproval were based upon differences in, and/or a lack of dental data for the unknown remains from the graves in which the casualties were reportedly buried. Comments from the Memorial Division to the field office regularly noted, in requesting further study or disapproving a proposal, that the Army dental records of the decedents involved were “meager and incomplete” and presented a “marked similarity which would probably compare equally well with any cross-section of remains recovered from the Cabanatuan Cemetery.” The

³¹ Edward Steere and Thayer M. Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead, 1945-51* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch Office of the Quartermaster General, 1957), 635-636; Fisher, “Background Information Relating to the Identification of Remains from the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camp and the Reasons Why the Current Project was not Instigated at an Earlier Date,” National Archives.

³² **NOTE:** The figures for identifications made at different phases of the study of Cabanatuan remains are based on the “Alphabetical Roster” cited in footnote 27. Study of the Individual Deceased Personnel Files for some of these casualties suggests that the basis of their identification sometimes changed prior to the end of the attempt to identify Cabanatuan remains. For example, PFC Clayton L. Holland, Jr., 290553, was originally noted as identified as the result of an approved field board of review, but his IDPF indicates ultimate identification from remains which had been designated unknown X-2551 Manila #2, with an approval date of 2 November 1951, placing this last identification after the end of the field board submissions and suggesting that the final phase, the “Cabanatuan Project,” overturned his field board identification. Further study of the IDPFs of Cabanatuan casualties is likely to reveal more changes of this type.

Field Boards of Review continued to take the lead on identification until June 1950. If identification could not be determined, the remains were reburied as unknowns in Fort McKinley Cemetery in Manila. Maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission, this cemetery is now known as Manila American Cemetery.³³

VI. Cabanatuan Project

In May 1950, a member of the Memorial Division staff proposed that the remains from the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery should be reviewed in a focused project. This proposal arose from concerns about the poor quality of the comparisons and suggested identifications arriving from the field boards of review. After detailing the circumstances presented in the case of common grave 316, from which ten individuals had been identified based upon the presence of identification tags, two additional men had been identified during later remains processing, and fifteen men remained unidentified with fifteen unknown remains associated, the Memorial Division staff member proposed that a sustained and detailed study of this grave and the others from Cabanatuan had the possibility of producing several hundred more identifications. The Chief of the Memorial Division approved the proposal.³⁴

In June 1950, L. V. Monzel outlined the procedures to be followed in setting up and completing the Cabanatuan Project. The team, located in Washington, D.C., would create three rosters to be used to capture the circumstantial, physical, and dental information necessary to make associations between unidentified remains and unaccounted-for casualties. First, the team would screen all the 293 files for decedents listed on the Cabanatuan Roster.³⁵ In conducting the screening, investigators would make a sheet containing available physical, dental, and casualty

³³ Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead*, 547; Fisher, "Background Information Relating to the Identification of Remains from the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camp and the Reasons Why the Current Project was not Instigated at an Earlier Date," National Archives; Mildred Trotter, "Notes Historical," Mildred Trotter Papers. See also field board proceedings and correspondence from the Memorial Division regarding the results in many of the IDPFs of Cabanatuan casualties (for examples see the IDPFs of Pvt Dean E. Cederblom, 20900696 or Pvt Harold S. Hirschi, 19038407). **NOTE:** By this point in the multiple processings of remains, each set of unknown remains had received at least three different unknown numbers. The earliest, a "C-number" was assigned either at the graveside or shortly after transport to Manila #2 Cemetery. The second designation, an "X-number" was assigned at Manila #2, and a third designation, also an "X-number" was assigned at the Manila Mausoleum. Today, the unknowns files associated with these remains are stored under the "X-number" assigned at Manila #2. Information about the specific numbers used for remains associated with particular common graves from the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery may be found in the more detailed analysis of that particular grave or in the case summaries written to explain the circumstances of loss of a particular unaccounted-for service member who died at the camp.

³⁴ Author's name illegible, note to Captain Cox, 19 May 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** The Cabanatuan Project personnel did not successfully resolve the cases of the 15 men then unidentified from common grave 316. They remain unaccounted-for today.

³⁵ **NOTE:** The term "293 file" in this context refers to extracts of the physical, medical, and dental information pulled from the service records of deceased individuals and compiled into a single file. Today, the "293 file" is synonymous with the Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF). The reference here is to a subset of the documents that make up today's IDPF.

status information for each individual. Kept alphabetically after completion, these sheets could form the alphabetical roster for the project (see figure 8).³⁶ Second, and concurrently with the creation of the screening sheets, project personnel would develop a chronological roster of deaths using “information currently in this Office. Such a roster does not now exist and is a necessity for the chronological study which will be [the] primary means through which associations will be made.” Third, the project team would create screening sheets for all the unidentifiable remains associated with Cabanatuan. Also within this phase of the project, a “special grave index should be set up reflecting the identified and unidentified remains according to the Cabanatuan grave from which they were recovered.” Finally, upon completion of the rosters and screening sheets, the team would establish associations to the unknown remains through study of the rosters and circumstantial, physical, and dental comparisons.³⁷ In concluding the recommendations for structuring the project, Monzel made the following observation: “It is obvious that errors in some of the identifications established through ID tags will seem apparent in the course of the study. However, because of the lack of processing information for the remains prior to their permanent burial, it is believed that those identified remains interred in Fort McKinley should not be disturbed unless a misidentification appears definite and th[r]ough the disinterment of the remains additional identifications can be made after processing.”³⁸

Mrs. Virginia Lee, a civilian employee of the Identification Branch, Memorial Division, submitted the first interim report for the Cabanatuan Project on 26 September 1950. She noted that the first three phases of L.V. Monzel’s proposal had been completed and she anticipated that comparisons of the records for deceased personnel against the records for remains would begin within two weeks of her submission of the report. The proposal going forward was to study, in particular, the chronological roster of burials that the Memorial Division had recreated from Major Conn’s burial report, noting: “A preliminary study is now being made in order to ascertain the relationship between the accountable burial periods and the dates and hours of death as shown on the roster” (see figures 9 and 10). At this point, Cabanatuan Project personnel assumed a correlation between the hour of death noted in “558-2, Death Report, Cabanatuan” and the order in which burials had been made within each of the graves.³⁹

Shortly after the submission of the first interim report, Cabanatuan Project personnel encountered several problems with their attempts to associate casualties to remains using the documentation they had gathered and created. Trying to line up deaths for the months of June and July 1942 with burials in accordance with dates and times of death revealed “overlaps” in the burials. In other words, some individuals who died on a particular day at an earlier hour were associated with burials that the Cabanatuan Project staff felt should have been made on a

³⁶ **NOTE:** As the project evolved, the screening sheets proved to be in too high of a demand among the project staff and could not serve as the alphabetical roster. Consequently, a separate alphabetical roster was produced.

³⁷ **NOTE:** This team made dental and physical comparisons with the remains based solely upon paperwork provided from the field. Their suggestions for associations between “unknown” remains and unidentified service members were not made based upon a study of the remains themselves.

³⁸ L. V. Monzel, memorandum to Captain Cox, June 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

³⁹ Virginia W. Lee, “Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 June-21 September 1950, Inclusive,” 26 September 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

subsequent day, while other, later deaths were associated with burials they thought had occurred earlier. Further, their analysis of graves and the numbers of remains removed from those graves suggested that several numbered burials, specifically 304, 313, 413, 414, 1012, 1013, and 1108 appeared not to have been recovered by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon when they disinterred the cemetery. With these difficulties in mind, project staff contacted Robert Conn, now a civilian living in Minnesota, and worked through some of the problems via telephone, written correspondence, and a trip by Mr. Conn to Washington, D.C. to be interviewed by Memorial Division staff.⁴⁰

The conversations with Mr. Conn clarified several points of confusion for the Cabanatuan Project personnel. First, in determining who should have been buried in a particular grave, the accountable burial period, that is, the 24 hour period in which remains were collected at the morgue for burial, should be the primary consideration rather than the specific hour and date of death. Men from any particular accountable burial period would be buried together, but not systematically by their time of death. In many instances, the time of death reported on the roster represented an approximation, since many of the casualties died in the night, unattended by fellow prisoners. With this understanding in mind, the team drew up a new chronological roster, this time using the accountable burial period to group the casualties. They used information concerning identified personnel to group together unidentified individuals who should have been buried with the identified personnel along with the unknown remains recovered from the same grave (see figure 10). This new roster formed the basis for all the subsequent work of the project.⁴¹

Mr. Conn, when explaining the possibility of unrecovered graves, noted that all the graves in question would have been placed in the June-July 1942 timeframe. He found it quite possible that they had failed to actually locate the graves when marking the boundaries within the cemetery in the spring of 1943:

Let's say this – that when we went out to finally try to put the cemetery in order, I took a large number of boys out who had been on previous work details to try to locate where graves had been put in and the dates they were put in, and it is just possible that the ones you mention would have given the appearance of being a grave but in reality was nothing but a mass of ground which would look like a grave.⁴²

He stated that these very concerns were among those that led him not to specify grave numbers for those early burials.⁴³

⁴⁰ J. F. Vogl et al., "Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call," 29 September 1950; Virginia W. Lee, "Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 September-21 November 1950, Inclusive," 1 December 1950; R. E. Conn, Jr., letter to Captain J. F. Vogl, 3 October 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴¹ Virginia W. Lee, "Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 September-21 November 1950, Inclusive," RG 92, National Archives.

⁴² J. F. Vogl et al., "Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call," 29 September 1950; Virginia W. Lee, "Subject: Cabanatuan Project, Interim Report 21 September-21 November 1950, Inclusive," RG 92, National Archives.

⁴³ R. E. Conn, Jr., letter to Captain J. F. Vogl, RG 92, National Archives.

Mr. Conn also cautioned Cabanatuan Project staff about relying on identifications that had been made solely on the basis of the presence of identification media. The team had discovered several incidents where, based upon the date of death, a particular individual should have been buried in a grave other than the one from which they were subsequently identified. To illustrate the problem, Memorial Division personnel gave as an example, the death, burial, and identification of Sgt Barnes Olmstead, 38011833. Sergeant Olmstead's death had been reported on 10 October 1942. The "558-2, Death Report, Cabanatuan" gave his burial location as grave 512. Instead, 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon members had identified remains from grave 719 as Sgt Olmstead's based upon the presence of an identification tag. Other men recovered from grave 719 had dates of death of 17 November 1942. In explaining what might have happened, Mr. Conn proposed the following scenario:

Well now, let me tell you how it could happen. Let us say that this man passes away. The doctors or the corpsmen taking the body out of the ward ask who it is, and this man next to him positively identifies him as being Olmstead. Then, let us say that Olmstead, before he died, had given his wallet or some other means of identification to this man lying next to him. Let us say a month later this man lying next to Olmstead passes away. The wardman asks who he is and the boys say "We don't know. Let's see what he's got." They examine him and find that his identification indicates that he's Olmstead because it is the identification which Olmstead had given to him.⁴⁴

When Mr. Conn visited the Memorial Division staff on 6 and 7 November 1950, he cautioned them that identifications made on the basis of tags were "not worth anything."⁴⁵

With these clarifications in mind, Cabanatuan Project staff divided up the cases by grave numbers and set about analyzing the rosters they had created to match up unknown remains with unidentified casualties. In December 1950, they sent an initial request for the field to reprocess thirty-one identified remains that were then buried in Fort McKinley cemetery. The request covered burials originally made at Cabanatuan from 3 June through 6 July 1942, and asked that Central Identification Point field staff simultaneously process previously identified individuals with unknown remains in an effort to associate some of the still unidentified individuals with either mistakenly identified remains or remains currently designated as unknown.

The Central Identification Point could not consider remains that had already been identified but shipped to the U.S. for burial, so each of the reprocessing requests necessarily dealt with only a fraction of the total number of remains thought to have come from any particular grave. This request, like others that would follow, also asked the field office to consolidate any extra skeletal parts found into either the identified or the unknown remains from the grave. In this way, and from a great distance, the Cabanatuan Project staff directed the field office to make the numbers of sets of remains add up to the number of individuals originally reported buried in a particular grave. While this request was likely made in good faith, and in an effort to sort out remains presumed to be commingled due to their having been buried in common graves, it had the

⁴⁴ Captain J. F. Vogl, et al, "Transcript Outgoing Telephone Call," RG 92, National Archives.

⁴⁵ "Notes on Conversation in Washington Office with Mr. Robert E. Conn, 6 & 7 November 1950," Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

potential unintended consequence of losing some of the individuals who may have been mistakenly documented as coming from a particular numbered grave at the time of initial disinterment. Cabanatuan Project staff seem not to have considered the possibility that some of the remains they documented as unrecovered might instead have been recovered, but noted by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon as having come from a different grave than that listed in the "558-2, Death Report, Cabanatuan."⁴⁶

The Identification Branch continued to assign the Cabanatuan cases in chronological order and to make requests to the field for reprocessing of remains. This work resulted in some additional identifications, but it did not proceed in an uncomplicated way or at the pace originally predicted by Memorial Division staff. Misidentifications based on the presence of identification media continued to be a major concern, and as project staff reviewed common graves, they found that these misidentifications caused cascading problems both within and between graves. A misidentified set of remains incorrectly excluded the named individual from consideration when reviewing other sets of remains. In circumstances where many deceased individuals had similar physical and dental characteristics, and the staff trying to make identifications had limited tools for discriminating particular features or circumstantial evidence to establish identity, a series of misidentifications could affect all of the subsequent efforts to identify the unknowns. These issues created, and still create, additional uncertainty and doubt about the entire project.⁴⁷

The interim report of the project filed on 13 April 1951 included with it a "Major Discrepancies" roster noting that, among the graves reviewed to that point, Cabanatuan Project staff suspected 110 misidentifications from 148 graves. These misidentifications, occurring as they did from common graves containing both identified and unidentified casualties, impacted a total of 1,319 remains. The report, being interim, represented an assessment of approximately 49% of the total number of remains to be examined in the course of the project. Of the cases tagged as potential misidentifications, forty-three were noted to have already been sent to the United States, all but two having been delivered for burial. The interim report was accompanied by a recommendation

⁴⁶ Virginia W. Lee, with concurrence from Captain Wasson, QMC, "Subject: List of Required Reprocessings as of 21 November 1950 (Cabanatuan Project)," 8 December 1950, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** In his phone conversation with Lenora Rowinski of the Identification Branch, Mr. Gilbert Zehner, who had overseen the disinterment of the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery, reported to her that the number of remains found in any particular grave did not always correspond with the information they had concerning what they should expect to find in each location. See footnote 27. In reference to requests from Cabanatuan Project personnel regarding reprocessing of remains in Manila, it is also worth noting that none of the personnel making the requests understood the condition of the remains. Not until Dr. Trotter visited Manila to assess the project (see page 19 below) did anyone in Washington, D.C. learn that the remains were degraded and eroded to such an extent that they could not be segregated into discrete individuals.

⁴⁷ **NOTE:** As an example of these potential ramifications, Cabanatuan Project staff continued to have difficulty sorting out and associating groups of deceased individuals with the common graves as they had been numbered in the Camp #1 Cemetery. In particular, for the period 7-14 June, the project staff had difficulty aligning the resolved individuals with the grave numbers from which they assumed they should have been recovered. Rather than concluding that misidentifications might be playing a role in the problem, the staff concluded that the grave details had not adhered to their own burial practices. In an attempt to sort out the graves and the remains originally contained within, they sent a request to the field dated 14 September 1958 asking that all the unknowns from this period be considered and processed together. This request had the effect of combining for identification processing cases concerning 156 individuals, seventy-one of whom were not identified. They did not request inclusion of graves 1009, 1015, 1016, or 1101, which represented an additional thirty individuals. These graves were excluded from comparison because project staff considered them "cleared," meaning that no unidentified individuals continued to be associated with the grave numbers.

not to disturb those forty cases, but to only attempt to fix the problems of identification where the remains were still in the custody of the AGRS.⁴⁸

By this time, the Central Identification Point of the Manila Mausoleum had employed anthropologists to help with the processing and identification of remains. Mr. Robert Fox, then the curator of anthropology for the Philippine National Museum, processed remains at the Central Identification Point until May 1951 when Mr. Charles Warren replaced him. Mr. Fox returned to the University of Chicago to complete his doctorate. The anthropologists worked strictly at the request of the records division in the field or the Identification Branch of the Memorial Division. They did not have access to the records themselves, and so did not make associations between unknowns and unidentified personnel. Rather, they responded to the requests for specific examinations of the remains, either to check for a particular trait, fracture, or malformation, or to reprocess and segregate commingled remains. They produced a report documenting their work, but as Mr. Warren would later note: “Unfortunately, there was no feedback; I never learned the results of my anthropological findings or related work nor did I experience any satisfaction from an awareness of positive contributions leading to the identification of any of the unknowns.”⁴⁹

With concern growing over the complications of the project, the Memorial Division sent three Cabanatuan Project personnel, Mrs. Virginia Lee, Mrs. Marie Holden, and Major Robert Lay to Manila to work from within the Manila Mausoleum. They began work on 17 September 1951, and quickly reported finding additional records concerning Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery casualties available in the Records Division of the field office.⁵⁰ All three worked directly with the AGRS field staff to approve identifications and “clear” graves, by identifying either individually or in groups, all the remains associated with a particular grave number. In her report from the field, Mrs. Lee noted that the additional information available sometimes “changed the picture of the graves completely, as a result of which we are now convinced that no associations should be made unless all the data for the identified remains is available.” Major Lay noted that 31 October 1952 might be best regarded as the target date for completion of the Cabanatuan Project, though it is not clear whether he was taking into account the imminent arrival of Dr. Mildred Trotter to help with reprocessing Cabanatuan cases.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Chief, Identification Branch, memorandum to the Chief, Memorial Division, “Subject: Cabanatuan Project – Interim Report,” 13 April 1951, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁴⁹ Charles P. Warren, “Forensic Anthropology in a Military Setting,” *Human Organization* 40, no. 2 (1981), 173.

⁵⁰ **NOTE:** The additional documentation located consisted of summary forms reporting the physical and dental characteristics for some of the remains that had already been identified and that same information from some of the service records of the casualties. Until finding the records in Manila, and based upon an inability to obtain them from the records center in St. Louis, Cabanatuan Project staff had assumed they would not have these details for every case.

⁵¹ Virginia W. Lee, letter to Colonel King, 13 October 1951; Colonel James Clearwater, letter to Major Robert Lay, 19 October 1951, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** In his response back to Major Lay, Colonel Clearwater remarked that he was “somewhat mystified” by the proposal that the Cabanatuan Project would end in October 1952, a date which extended the project ten months beyond the possibility of using Congressionally allocated funds to complete it. He reiterated that 31 December 1951 should be the date at which project personnel aimed to have things wrapped up.

Shortly after the arrival of the Cabanatuan Project staff in Manila, Captain John Shypula, an AGRS field officer stationed there, traveled to the site of the former Cabanatuan POW Camps to conduct a final field investigation in the hopes of recommending that a team return to the cemetery to disinter graves that might have been overlooked by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon. On 25 September 1951, Captain Shypula visited the site of the cemetery with Cabanatuan City Mayor, Mr. O'Campo, but nothing could be definitively established as the entire area had been converted into rice paddies and flooded with water. Captain Shypula then contacted Mr. Alejo Malcber who had been employed as a gravedigger at the cemetery during disinterment operations, but Mr. Malcber had no additional information. On the following day, Captain Shypula returned to the cemetery and determined that the former landmarks within the cemetery had been obliterated and could not be reestablished. Since no test digging could be conducted nor anything further determined, Captain Shypula departed.⁵²

Meanwhile, Colonel Clearwater, chief of the Memorial Division, had retained Dr. Trotter, a professor at Washington University, St. Louis, as an expert anthropologist with prior experience identifying World War II dead. She first traveled to Hawaii, departing St. Louis on 8 October 1951. She worked in Hawaii for a few days at the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) at Schofield Barracks before traveling on to Manila with Lieutenant Colonel Abel, an AGRS officer then stationed at the CIL in Hawaii.⁵³

Lieutenant Colonel Abel and Dr. Trotter, both of whom had extensive prior experience in the identification laboratories of the Pacific theater, reviewed the Cabanatuan remains available in Hawaii and then moved on to the Philippines where they found that the identifications being put forward to the Memorial Division could not be further substantiated by studying the remains and the accompanying paperwork at the same time. Dr. Trotter was dismayed to learn the history of burials, disinterments, identifications, and reburials of the Cabanatuan casualties. She wrote:

During this entire period, I have learned some of the details of the history of these remains since they were first buried in 1942. This history includes a record of burial, disinterment, reburial, etc., etc., a series of processings with resultant papers for three or four or perhaps more successive years; signatures on the papers which do not carry weight scientifically; identifications made and the next of kin notified; questioning of the identification with recommendations for correction by personnel who study the papers at a distance of more than 8,000 miles from the remains.⁵⁴

Dr. Trotter found the remains to be in a terribly eroded state, first from being buried and left in ground sodden with water for several years, and then from being handled too often during processing. She emphatically reported the remains to be “jumbled beyond belief,” “eroded much beyond a state that [could] be illustrated on a black-out chart,” and in “such a state of deterioration that evidence on which identification depends had been largely obliterated.” She

⁵² Captain John Shypula, “Disposition Form re: Cabanatuan Project,” 27 September 1941, Declassified Classified Miscellaneous Files; Graves Registration Service; Office of the Quartermaster General; Record Group 92; National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁵³ Mildred Trotter, letter to Col James Clearwater, 1 November 1951; Mildred Trotter, draft report, “Subject: Report of Official Travel,” 27 December 1951; Mildred Trotter Papers, Special Collections of the Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University, St. Louis.

⁵⁴ Mildred Trotter, letter to Col James Clearwater, 1 November 1951, Mildred Trotter Papers, Special Collections of the Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University, St. Louis.

saw no way to substantiate the identifications being proposed by Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Holden, and noted that she and Mr. Warren “came to odds when he wanted to make identifications to please the two women clerks who had been sent to Manila to shuffle and sort earlier records and who had made identifications from these earlier records.”⁵⁵

Lieutenant Colonel Abel, Dr. Trotter, and Major Lay assembled a package documenting the problems of the Cabanatuan Project for Colonel Clearwater’s consideration. Lieutenant Colonel Abel seconded Dr. Trotter’s concerns about the lack of ability to prove any proposed segregations of commingled remains and noted “much evidence” of exchanges of remains in prior processings, particularly in the swapping of skulls with post-cranial remains. In addressing the attempts to have anthropologists make the identifications that Memorial Division staff assumed possible when looking only at their project rosters and associated paperwork for the remains and casualties, Lt Col Abel noted that the comparisons were impossible because estimates for stature and age could not be made from the remains present, and the dentition available with the remains did not match the available records for individuals who should be associated. Major Lay, for his part, emphasized that any attempts to “clear” graves were partial at best because too many remains had already been shipped to the U.S. He added concerns arising in working with the contractor who was attempting to finalize burials at Fort McKinley cemetery so it could be handed over to the American Battle Monuments Commission for care and maintenance, and noted that the project could not be fully completed on the timeline desired by Memorial Division leadership.⁵⁶

Based upon the package put forward by Lt Col Abel, Dr. Trotter, Major Lay, and Captain Shypula, Col Clearwater “reluctantly concluded that the continuance of this project under such conditions would be neither productive or advisable.” Those families who had already been notified that the remains of their loved one had been recovered received remains for burial, and cases already in processing continued until finished. As for the rest, on 3 January 1951, Col Clearwater rendered a decision to declare the rest of the unknowns associated with the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery unidentifiable. The remains were then permanently interred in the Manila American Cemetery.⁵⁷

VI. Current Research on Unidentified Casualties from the Cabanatuan POW Camps

Initial work by historians of the former Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (now part of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency) reconstruct the history of the casualties of the Cabanatuan POW Camps began in 2004 with a request from a family member of an

⁵⁵ Mildred Trotter, letter to Colonel James Clearwater, Mildred Trotter Papers; Mildred Trotter, letter to T. Dale Stewart, 10 November 1954, Mildred Trotter Papers; Mildred Trotter, letter to Charles Warren, 13 July 1982, T. Dale Stewart Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Museum Support Center, Suitland, MD.

⁵⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Stewart Abel, letter to Colonel James Clearwater and Colonel Chester Elmes, 1 November 1951, with enclosures from Captain John Shypula, Dr. Mildred Trotter, and Major Robert Lay, Cabanatuan Project; General Correspondence, Classified Miscellaneous file, 1946-52; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

⁵⁷ Chief, Memorial Division to Chief Identification Branch, “Intraoffice Reference Sheet,” OQMG Form 638, 6 November 1951, Cabanatuan Project; General Correspondence, Classified Miscellaneous file, 1946-52; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD; “Memorandum for Record: (Salser 72947), Subject: Cabanatuan Project,” 3 January 1952, Memoranda and Reports, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD.

unaccounted-for serviceman who had died in Cabanatuan Camp #1. That early research resulted, in 2005, in the first draft of this memorandum. Additional archival research, study of the memoirs of survivors, and of the histories of the war in the Philippines has continued to expand our understanding of the specific circumstances of death and burial of the casualties from these camps. Work to develop data concerning deaths in Cabanatuan, reconstruct the Cabanatuan Project, and assess the identifications made from 1946-1951 is ongoing. Documents reviewed so far confirm and reinforce the concerns expressed at the end of the Cabanatuan Project and show the impact of early misidentifications to be more widespread than Cabanatuan Project staff understood. Ongoing reviews of the Individual Deceased Personnel Files of casualties identified at the graveside by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon reveal many discrepancies between the physical and dental information available for the service member when compared against the physical and dental description of the remains. Further, documentation available concerning the multiple processings for identification show that, among both identified casualties and unknown remains, the teeth represented as present in 1946 at initial disinterment are often not the teeth represented as present when the remains moved through final processing.

A review of cases reprocessed during the Cabanatuan Project yields further difficulties. These cases show that Memorial Division personnel sometimes corrected misidentifications and notified family members, but that they also sometimes left them in place. In one instance, paperwork showing a reprocessing of the remains associated with grave 419 appears in archival documents found at the National Archives, but does not appear in the Individual Deceased Personnel Files or the Unknown Files for the associated individual remains. This is problematic, in that it calls into question our ability to adequately reconstruct all of the attempts at identification any particular set of remains may have gone through, and, given that it is the last processing that is not present, it also suggests that the remains present in the casket might not be the remains suggested to be present by the paperwork included in the IDPF or Unknown file, making it difficult to offer assessments concerning the feasibility of current or future identifications of unknowns based on the records available. These difficulties do not preclude attempts to disinter and identify unknowns associated with the Cabanatuan POW Camp Cemeteries, but they do point to a complex set of burials, identifications, and misidentifications that make it difficult, based upon historical documentation alone, to set boundaries for disinterment projects focused on individual cases or even upon clustered groupings of cases.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Individual Deceased Personnel File for Pvt Earl L. Charles, 35001419, Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, MD; Unknown file X-1755 Manila #2, Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, MD; Mildred Trotter, letter to Colonel James Clearwater, 3 December 1951, Continuing File, 1946-52, 293 GRS Pacific (Cabanatuan); General Correspondence, Miscellaneous File, 1939-54; Record Group 92: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives, College Park, MD. **NOTE:** For an example of a case where the family did receive notification of a misidentification, see the IDPF for Pvt Dean E. Cederblom, 20900696.



Figure 1. Map showing location of the Republic of the Philippines relative to Southeast Asia.

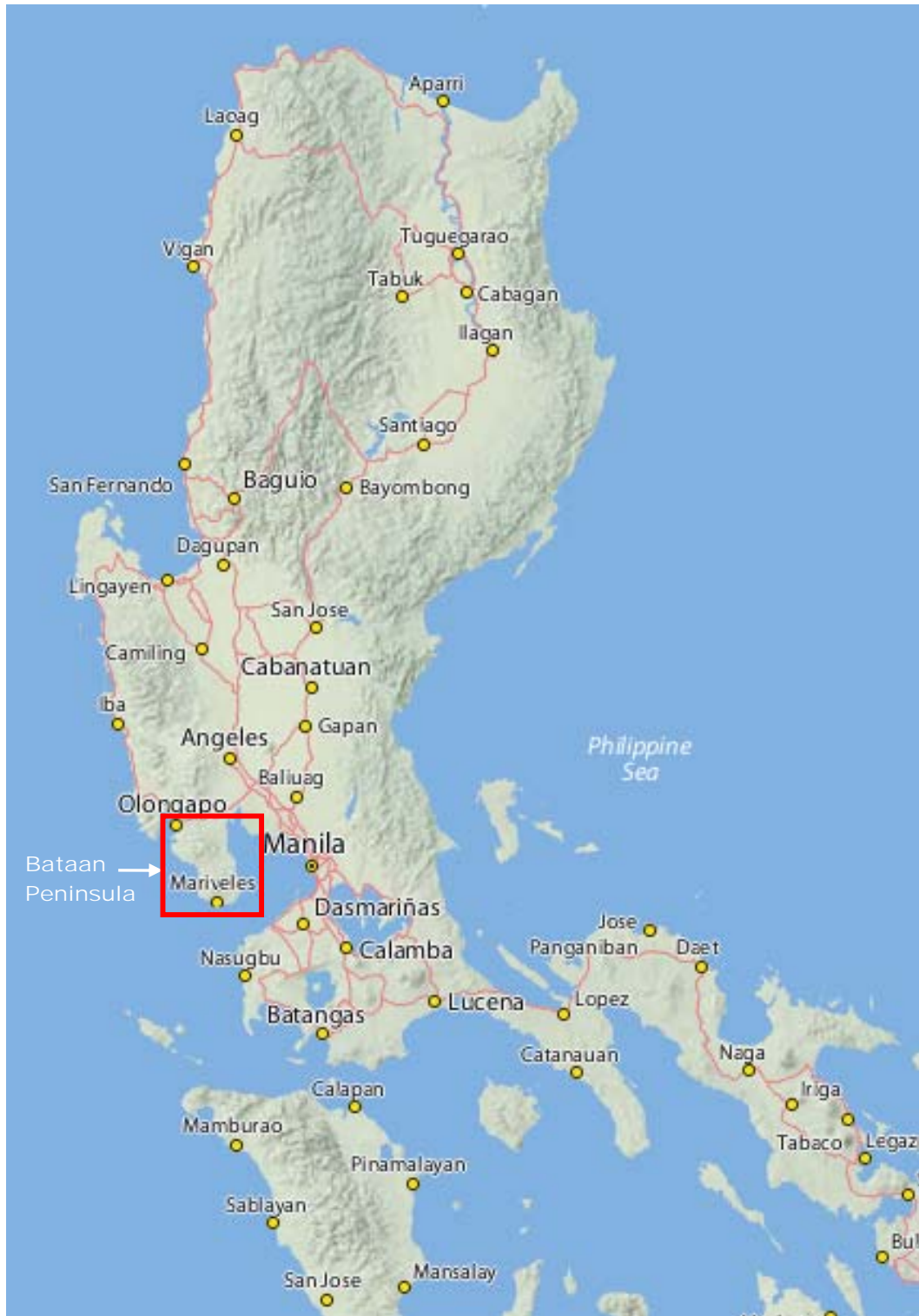


Figure 2. Map of Luzon Island. U.S. and Filipino forces had been distributed throughout the island at the outbreak of war. By December 1941 and until surrender, they were concentrated on the Bataan Peninsula.

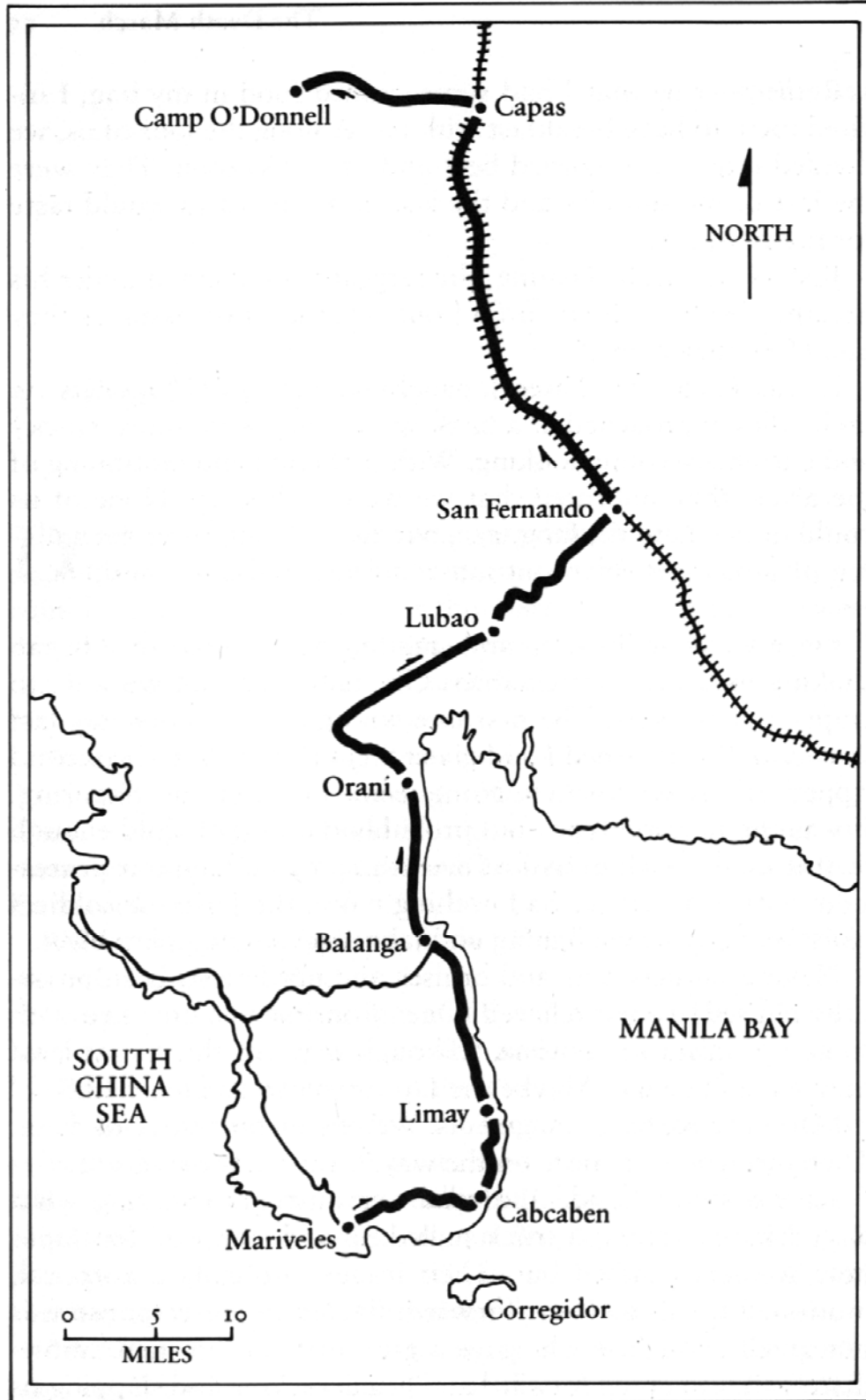


Figure 3. The route of the Bataan Death March. (Source: Lawton, *Some Survived*, 184.)

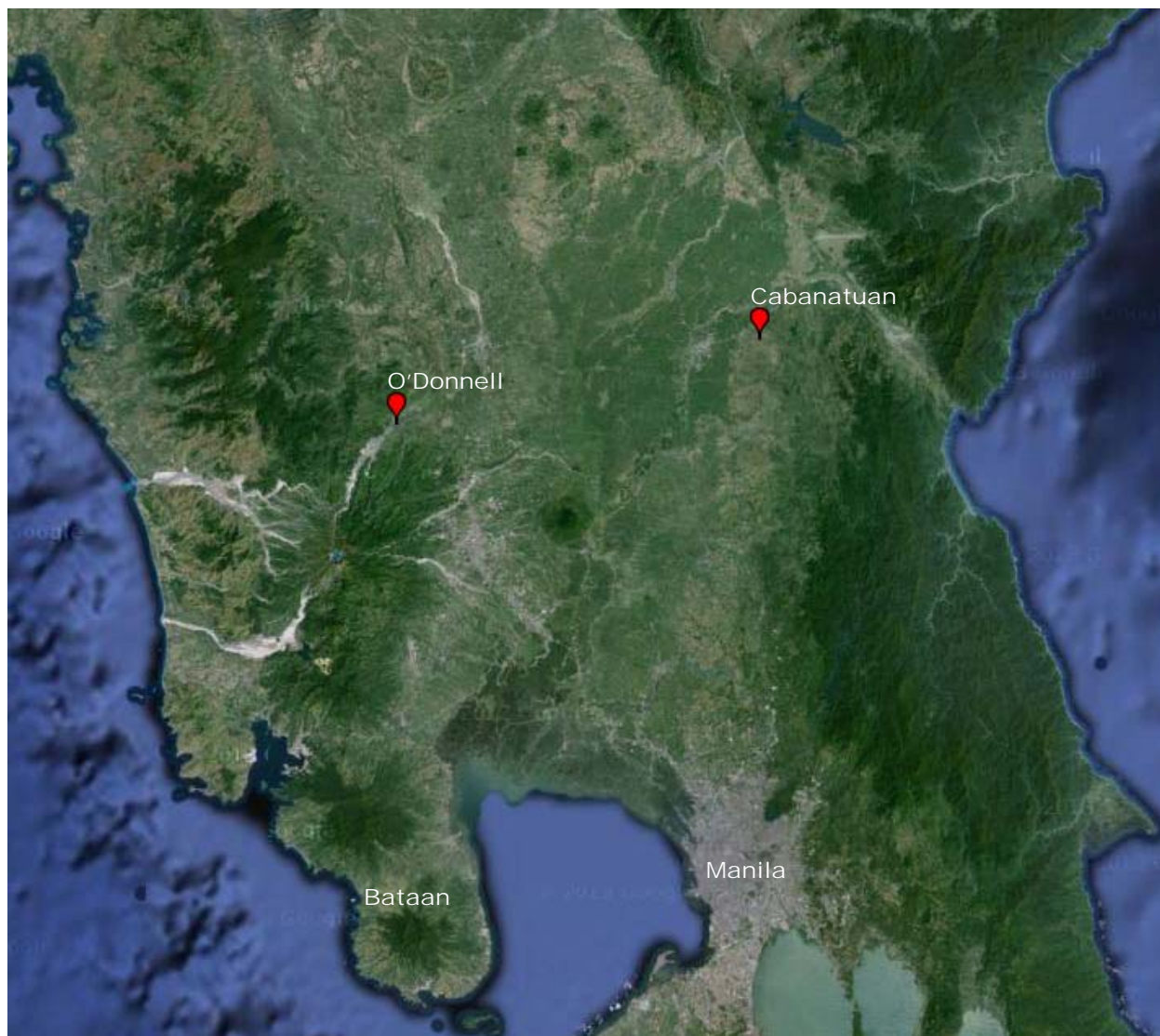


Figure 4. Satellite image of a portion of Luzon Island with the locations of O'Donnell, Cabanatuan, Manila, and the Bataan Peninsula marked. The straight-line distance between O'Donnell and Cabanatuan is 68 kilometers/42 miles.

Month and Year of Death	Number of Individual Identifications	Number of Individuals in Group Identifications	Number Unaccounted-for	Total Casualties for the Month
May 1942	11	0	2	13
June 1942	293	51	197	541
July 1942	365	11	421	797
August 1942	159	28	114	301
September 1942	196	32	49	277
October 1942	190	19	57	266
November 1942	180	16	102	298
December 1942	94	18	37	149
January 1943	57	9	12	78
February 1943	10	0	0	10
March 1943	5	0	4	9
April 1943	2	0	0	2
May 1943	2	0	1	3
June 1943	3	0	0	3
July 1943	2	0	1	3
August 1943	2	0	0	2
September 1943	0	0	1	1
October 1943	0	0	2	2
November 1943	0	0	1	1
December 1943	0	0	1	1
January 1944	0	0	0	0
February 1944	0	0	1	1
March 1944	1	0	0	1
April 1944	0	0	0	0
May 1944	0	0	0	0
June 1944	0	0	0	0
July 1944	0	0	0	0
August 1944	0	0	1	1
September 1944	1	0	1	2
October 1944	0	0	2	2
Totals	1,573	184	1,007	2,764

Figure 5. Listing of casualty figures for the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camps arranged by month and year of death, as well as current casualty status. The figures include deaths at Camp #1 and Camp #3, as well as isolated graves within the vicinity of the camps.

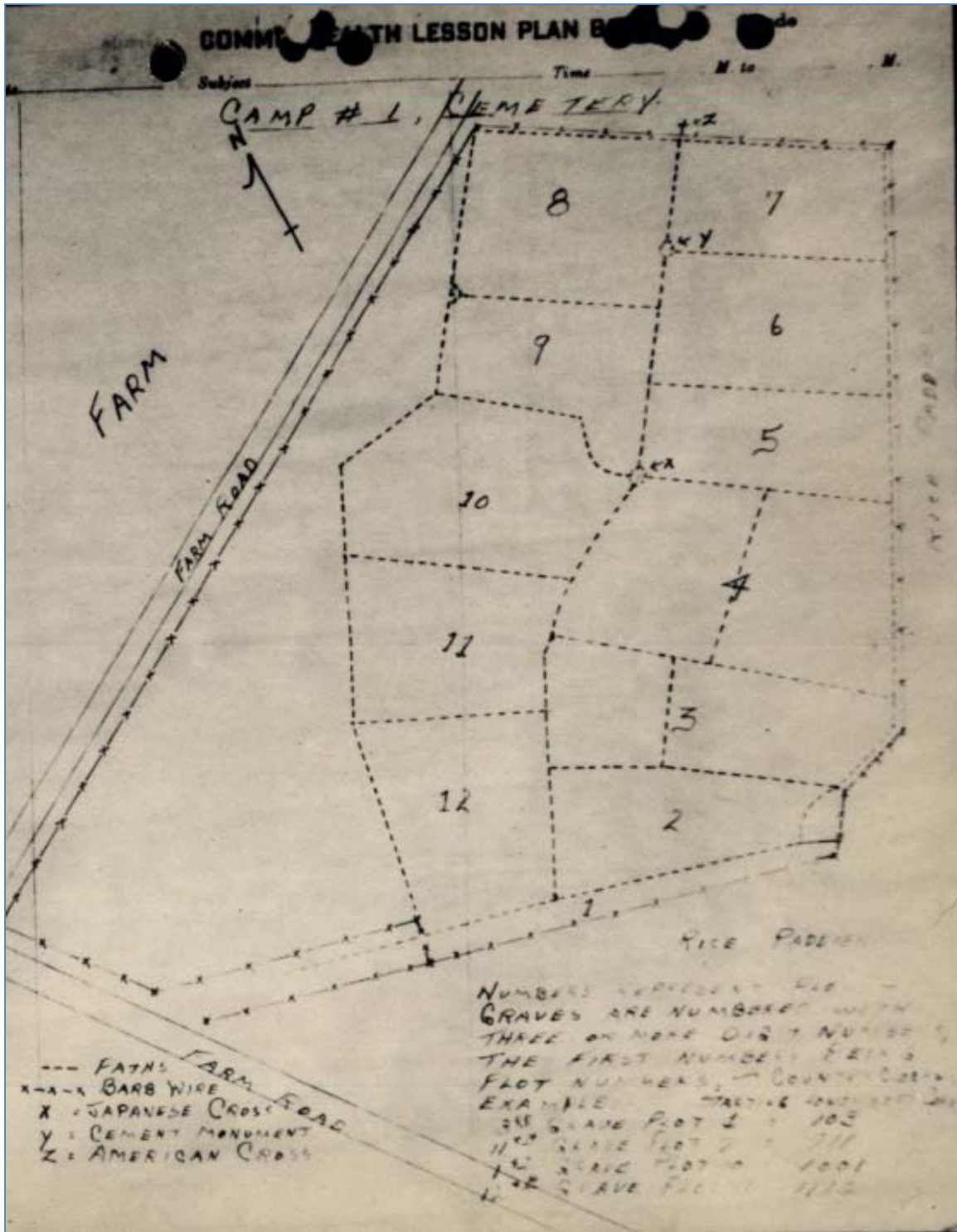


Figure 6. Sketch map of the Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery from Captain Conn’s “558-2 Death Report, Cabanatuan.” This image is taken from a facsimile of the original, but even the original is difficult to read because it was buried at the camp from 1944 until after liberation.



Figure 7. Sketch map of Cabanatuan Camp #1 Cemetery created by the 111th Quartermaster Graves Registration Platoon in August 1945.

293 FILE		DATA ON REMAINS NOT YET RECOVERED OR IDENTIFIED			REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL GMO-26
NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) <i>293</i> BABBAIN, Joseph J.		GRADE Sgt		PRESENT SERIAL NUMBER 11 014 157	
ORGANIZATION		RACE W	CREED	FORMER SERIAL NUMBER (If applicable)	
DATE OF DEATH/MIA 11 Jun 42 (5:30PM)	CAUSE OF DEATH		PLACE OF DEATH OR PLACE LAST SEEN IF MIA		
DATE OF FOD					
HEIGHT 5'7"	WEIGHT 125	COLOR EYES	COLOR HAIR BROWN	SHOE SIZE	
DENTAL CHART 25 Sept 40					
UPPER RIGHT X 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1			UPPER LEFT plate)X X 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8		
LOWER RIGHT X X 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9			LOWER LEFT 9 10 11 12 X X X X 13 14 15 16		
X—Extracted		0—Carious		1—Carious Non-Restorable	
FRACTURES AND/OR BREAKS			TATTOOS AND/OR BIRTHMARK		
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION					
Date of Birth: 30 Jan 1915			Associated with grave 470		
Reporting Date: Not reported on Hospital Register			Cabanatuan Roster Line No. 106		
<i>File NAM HARR J.R.W. J.J. Gans</i>					
GMOG FORM 371 24 JAN 51		DATE FORWARDED TO FIELD			

Figure 8. Example of a “screening sheet,” or “293 file” created by Cabanatuan Project staff. Excerpted from the IDPF of Sgt Joseph Babbain, 11014157.

1030	Bryce, George G.	Pvt	53	692458	23	1/1/29	6100	PM	7/28/42	1030	M.H.	Mrs. Ethel G. Brown; 104 LaPalma Ave., Alhambra, Calif.
1031	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1031	M.H.	G. T. Klabbe; Pomona, Wash.
1032	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1032	M.H.	Mrs. Nancy Bell; 250 Rice Ave., West Brighton, N. Y.
1033	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1033	M.H.	J. J. Sloan; 213 Sheridan Ave., Houston, Texas.
1034	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1034	M.H.	Mrs. L. Colson; 1017 Valley Ave., Baker, Ore.
1035	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1035	M.H.	Arthur J. Christy; Rt. #6, Box 182, St. Joseph, Mo.
1036	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1036	M.H.	Mrs. Ina Gilliam; Decatur, Ga.
1037	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1037	M.H.	Mrs. Joseph Kestelick; Rt. 2, Hubbard, Ohio.
1038	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1038	M.H.	Mrs. Joseph Kestelick; Rt. 2, Hubbard, Ohio.
1039	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1039	M.H.	Mrs. Joseph Kestelick; Rt. 2, Hubbard, Ohio.
1040	Wright, Harry A.	Pvt	21	697774	26	3/27/28	4130	PM	7/28/42	1040	M.H.	Mrs. Joseph Kestelick; Rt. 2, Hubbard, Ohio.

Figure 9. Pages excerpted from Captain Conn's "558-2 Death Report, Cabanatuan. The top page records burials in July 1942, note that, with the exception of one officer buried in a single grave, no grave numbers are listed on the far right side of the sheet. The bottom page, covering burials in August 1942, does contain grave numbers added in after beautification of the cemetery in the spring of 1943.

ROSTER OF BURIALS
MILITARY CEMETERIES OVERSEAS

Page 17

CEMETERY CODE	PLOT	ROW	GRAVE	NAME	RANK	TIME	UNKNOWN		UNIDENTIFIED		JULY	
							DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME		
R	417	4	417	JONES, Carl W.	3	12:30 PM	C-955	NOK	Aug 7		3 - 3:15 PM	4
	417	4		BUSBIN, Earl J. <i>Craig</i>	3	1:00 PM	C-956	NOK	Aug 11		3 - 5:00 PM	4
	417	4		KEENER, John R.	3	1:10 PM	C-957	NOK			3 - 5:50 PM	4
	417	4		GROWER, Henry F. <i>(DIA - Robert Hitchcock?)</i>	3	2:00 PM	C-958	NOK			3 - 8:00 PM	4
	417	4		BALL, John E.	3	3:00 PM	2370	NOK	Aug 1		4 - 1:30 AM	4
	417	4		Mae DONALD, Frederick W.	3	3:10 PM	2371	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 AM	4
	417	4		BOEPPLE, Bernard C.	3	4:00 PM	2372	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 AM	4
	417	4		BAPTISTA, Edward J.	3	11:30 PM	2373	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 AM	4
	417	4		PARKER, John W. <i>Aug 6 - Singapore - Craig</i>	4	12:30 AM	2375	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 AM	4
	417	4		BLEDIGER, David R. <i>Aug 2 - Craig</i>	4	2:00 AM	C-964	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 AM	4
	417	4		STIMINGTON, John F. <i>Aug 2 - Singapore - Craig</i>	4	2:00 AM	C-965	NOK	Aug 1		4 - 3:00 AM	4
R	417	4		WHITE, Clyde J.	4	2:30 AM	C-966	NOK	Aug 3		4 - 3:00 AM	4
	417	4		NORRIS, Walter R. <i>Aug 2 - Singapore - Craig</i>	4	2:30 AM	2378	NOK	Aug 1		4 - 4:00 AM	4
	417	4		STAHLMAN, Paul W. <i>Singapore</i>	4	4:00 AM	2379	NOK	Aug 5		4 - 5:00 AM	4
R	417	4		HARRIS, CLYDE L. <i>Singapore</i>	4	9:15 AM	2380	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 7:30 AM	4
R	417	4		UNES, Donovan L.	4	10:00 AM	2381	NOK				4
							<i>15 Unknown - 15 Unidentified</i>					
R	409	5	409	SMITH, Roy L.	4	2:00 PM	2155	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 1:00 PM	5
R	409	5		LOONEY, Robert K. Jr.	4	3:30 PM	2156	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 1:30 PM	5
R	409	5		De MARBY, Ralph F.	4	10:00 PM	2157	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 2:00 PM	5
R	409	5		LOFTON, Woodrow P.	5	12:30 AM	2158	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 3:00 PM	5
R	409	5		FITZGERALD, David F.	5	2:00 AM	2159	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 4:00 PM	5
R	409	5		DONDICH, Alexander	5	2:00 AM	2160	NOK	Aug 1		4 - 4:10 PM	5
R	409	5		LAVIGNE, Richard F. <i>Aug 2 - Singapore - Craig</i>	5	3:00 AM	2161	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 4:30 PM	5
R	409	5		MISLAY, Michael A.	5	4:00 AM	2162	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 4:30 PM	5
R	409	5		BENNER, Charles A.	5	4:00 AM	2163	NOK	Aug 2		4 - 6:00 PM	5
R	409	5		ZEMBO, Henry J.	5	7:30 AM	2164	NOK	Aug 4		4 - 6:00 PM	5

Figure 10. Page extracted from the Memorial Division Cabanatuan Project’s “Chronological Listing of Deceased by Accountable Burial Period and Grave.” On the left hand side, Cabanatuan Project personnel have associated Cabanatuan deceased buried from 3-5 July 1942 with graves 417 and 409. This association is based upon remains recovered and identified from this grave through the presence of ID media. On the right hand side, the team has listed the unknowns associated with the grave along with the individuals not identified from that grave. Note that they have assigned the unidentified individuals to the unknowns based upon the day and hour of their death. Project personnel would later learn that the burials did not occur in the cemetery on this basis, but rather on the basis of a 24 hour accountable burial period.

Authors: Heather Harris and Lisa Beckinbaugh