



News Release
Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
Washington, DC 20301-2900

Phone: (703) 699-1169

Fax (703) 602-4375

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSING WWII SOLDIER IS IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from World War II, have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Pfc. James C. Konyud, U.S. Army, of Cleveland. He will be buried Saturday in his hometown.

Representatives from the Army met with Konyud's next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

From mid-September 1944 to early February 1945, the U.S. Army was engaged against German forces in the Hürtgen Forest, along the Germany/Belgium border, in the longest continuously fought battle in American history. In early January 1945, elements of the 121st Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division were deployed defensively in the area southeast of Aachen. Konyud, a member of K Company, 121st Infantry Regiment, was reported missing near the location on January 1.

In 2007, a German Explosive Ordnance Disposal team working in an agricultural field between Vossenack and Hürtgen, found human remains and military related equipment, including Konyud's military identification tag. The remains and items were turned over to U.S. Army Memorial Affairs Activity-Europe officials for further analysis.

Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command teams traveled to excavate the site twice in 2007 and once in 2008, recovering additional remains and other military-related equipment—including a second identification tag for Konyud.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of Konyud's brother and niece -- in the identification of his remains.

More than 400,000 of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II died. At the end of the war, the U.S. government was unable to recover, identify and bury approximately 79,000 Americans. Today, more than 72,000 remain unaccounted-for from the conflict.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo or call (703) 699-1420.

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