

May 30, 2014

Contact Jed Henry at:
(608) 239-2228
henryj4123@yahoo.com.com

For Immediate Release:

US Army Soldier from WWII found in a German Cemetery in France has been Identified by DNA.

The family of PFC Lawrence S. Gordon would proudly like to announce that their relative has been officially accounted for with the US Government and the US Department of Defense almost 70 years after his death in WWII. The news comes after three independent laboratories were able to get positive DNA results from multiple bone/tooth samples. These results come on the heels of months of cooperation by the French and German governments with PFC Gordon's family and years of difficulties with the US Government. On August 13, 1944 US Army Private First Class Lawrence S. Gordon a member Reconnaissance Company, 32nd Armored Regiment, 3rd Armored Division, was killed in action in support of American operations to close the Falaise Gap and stop the German 7th Army from escaping east during World War II in France. PFC Gordon a Canadian citizen born to American parents, decided to enlist into the US Army instead of the Canadian Army shortly after Pearl Harbor because he reasoned it was better equipped.

Despite little assistance from the US Government's Accounting Community who is tasked with bringing home our missing US servicemen, four volunteer researchers/historians in their spare time with the assistance of former accounting community employees and the cooperation of the German and French governments were able to track down PFC Gordon's remains in a German Cemetery in Huisnes Sur-Mer, France. Team leader Jed Henry of Middleton, WI said it was extremely disappointing to see how disinterested the US Accounting Community was in this case and he sees a difficult road ahead. "Until there is a true commitment and the right people are put in key leadership positions, I will continue to have little hope for the future recovery and identification of our Missing. Until then, private and public partnerships offer the greatest hope to our Missing and the governments role will continue not to be a mission but rather a public relations campaign to convince young men and women that are thinking about joining the military that we do not leave soldiers behind, when in fact the evidence clearly suggests we do. Until this is corrected the military's idealism of brotherhood will continue to be eroded." Henry added "While the US government continues to spend over 100 million dollars annually to account for our Missing servicemen this case highlights that there are other ways to account for our Missing personnel that provides better accuracy at a fraction of the cost. To date we estimate that the entire project of finding and identifying PFC Gordon has cost about \$25,000 which has been paid for by the Gordon family or the volunteer research team."

DNA Testing

The DNA testing on PFC Gordon's remains was performed by the national crime lab in France, l'Institut National de Police Scientifique(INPS), Dr. Joshua Hyman at the University of Wisconsin's DNA Sequencing Facility and also by Bode Technology under the supervision of Ed Huffine, former Chief of AFDIL's mt-DNA section. Mr. Huffine feels this case shows the capabilities of DNA technology and its potential for future cases. "The PFC Gordon case is a beautiful example of how the power of DNA testing to aid in the identification of our missing soldiers can be utilized. In this case the anthropological, dentition,

and circumstantial analyses were deemed to be inconclusive at best. But, DNA testing matched the skeletal remains to the family of PFC Gordon with a 99.995% certainty, demonstrating with a very high probability that these were PFC Gordon's remains. This case shows how a DNA-Centric system can accelerate the rate of identification of our fallen soldiers, as well as provide closure to cases where no other forensic analysis is able to." says Ed Huffine, VP for Humanitarian Missions for Bode Technology. Charles Konsitzke, Associate Director of the University of Wisconsin's Biotechnology Center in Madison, WI said "At the University of Wisconsin we believe firmly in the Wisconsin Idea which says the university should improve people's lives beyond the classroom and that's why we are so proud to support PFC Gordon's family. This case shows that a collaborative approach and the use of the latest DNA techniques like those used here at the University of Wisconsin can have a great impact on the identification of our Missing servicemen and our society."

Honoring a Commitment

Lawrence R. Gordon, a lawyer in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada was named after his uncle who was killed six years before he was born. He says that when he was growing up his dad told him that he was named after his uncle in honor of him and so his name would not be forgotten. Upon hearing the news that the US Accounting Community accepted the DNA results organized by the Gordon family, Lawrence R. Gordon said "I want to thank DASD Winfield for his foresight and initiative in using DNA analysis as the initial step in identifying my Uncle, PFC Lawrence S. Gordon, who has been Missing In Action since August 13, 1944. It is important to note that the traditional method of identifying MIA soldiers is to examine all of the facts, draw a conclusion as to the identity, and then *try* and get authorization to do DNA analysis that would confirm the identity. This case has started with DNA analysis performed by three completely independent laboratories—INPS (the national crime lab of France), Bode Technology, and the University of Wisconsin. The result is that the process has been much faster, much more accurate, and much cheaper." Gordon went on to say, "I also want to thank the German Volksbund, INPS, and all of the officials in the French and German governments who have worked co-operatively with us to allow the DNA sampling and analysis to go forward." Gordon also said that when you consider the circumstances, he was glad his uncle's remains accidentally got turned over to the Germans because if the Americans still had possession of them he would never have been able to convince them to authorize DNA testing.

Lawrence R. Gordon said that when he was growing up he made a promise to his father that he would one day visit his uncle's grave. In 2000 Gordon traveled to France to visit what he thought was his uncle's grave only to learn that his uncle's name was on the Wall of Missing at Brittany American Cemetery in St. James, France. Now almost 14 years after that fruitless trip to France, Lawrence R. Gordon will witness a rosette being placed next to his uncle's name on the Wall of Missing which is the US Governments way of signifying that he has been identified. The next day on June 10th the German War Graves Commission (Volksbund Deutsche Kriesgräberfürsorge) will transfer stewardship of PFC Gordon's remains to his family and they will personally accompany their uncles remains back to the Madison, WI on June 11th aboard American Airlines flight 41 from Charles De Gaulle(Paris) to O'hare(Chicago).

On June 12th the remains of PFC Gordon will be examined by Dr. Leslie Eisenberg, Ph.D. Diplomate, American Board of Forensic Anthropology and also Dr. Donald O. Simley II, D.D.S. Diplomate, American Board of Forensic Odontology at the University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison, WI. The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command(JPAC) had committed to being present at this examination on June 12th but just this week they cancelled all activities citing the commander's orders. For the Gordon family this is just

one more example of JPAC's disinterest in this case. On August 6th the remains will be driven from Wisconsin all the way to Canada where they will be laid to rest one final time on the 70th anniversary of PFC Gordon's death.

The Gordon family would like to thank the following individuals personally for the service and dedication to the identification of PFC Gordon:

Commander Renee R. Richardson, Jed Henry (Amateur researcher), Alexis Boban(French historian/WWII Expert), Wesley Johnston (Historian 7th Armored Division), Patrick Gorman (Amateur researcher), Ed Huffine(DNA expert-Bode Technology), Josh Hyman(DNA expert-University of Wisconsin), Frédéric Dupuch(Director INPS), Ryan Knocke(formerly of Senator Herb Kohl's office), Margaret McInnis(Rep. Poca's office), Kelly Dean(Archivist at NPRC), Susan Kilianski(HRC), Josh Fennell(DPMO), Chris McDermott(JPAC)

Timeline:

June 7th The Gordon family will arrive in France

June 9th 2:30pm: Rosette placing at Brittany American Cemetery in St. James, France

June 10th 11:00am Ceremony at Mont-de-Huisnes German Cemetery transferring the remains to PFC Gordon's family

June 10th 2:00pm Reception at Chateau de Rânes in honor of PFC Gordon with a flyover at 2:35pm

June 11th: 2:25pm PFC Gordon's remains arrive at O'hare airport aboard American Airline's flight 41 from Charles De Gaulle.

June 11th: 4:00pm PFC Gordon's remains leave O'hare and are escorted by the Illinois Patriot Guard Riders and the Illinois State Police.

June 11th: 6:15pm PFC Gordon's remains arrive in Beloit Wisconsin where the Wisconsin Patriot Guard Riders and the Wisconsin State Police take over escort duties.

June 11th at 7:45pm PFC Gordon's remains arrive at UW Hospital 1111 Highland Ave. Madison, WI 53705 with Madison Police, Madison Fire Department, and UW Police all participating. The remains will be received there by the Wisconsin National Guard and will be examined by Dr. Eisenberg and Dr. Simley the following day.

August 6th: at 1:00pm there will be a reception the Viroqua, WI VFW giving PFC Gordon one final goodbye as his remains are driven to Canada.

August 13th: at 1:00pm PFC Gordon will be laid to rest for the final time at Riverside Cemetery in his hometown of Eastend, Saskatchewan, Canada near his father and his brother.