

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY MEMORIAL AFFAIRS ACTIVITY, EUROPE
APO NEW YORK 09757

8 May 1978

SUBJECT: Recovery of suspected WW II remains, CASE NO. Unknown X-9443,
S & R #5127

1. CIRCUMSTANCES OF RECOVERY AND INVESTIGATION OF SUBJECT REMAINS:

a. On 17 January 1978, this office received a telephone call from Mr. Reinhard Scholtis, a German citizen residing in Cologne, West Germany with the following information: "On 14 Jan 78, I recovered human bones minus the head of an BTB/American in wooded area in Belgium near to Losheimer Graben which is on the German/Belgian border. No ID tag was found. I found parts of an American type, mine detector with inscription "HOLT" on it and an American helmet with the number "5007" painted on the inside, therefore I believe these to be remains of an American Soldier from WW II".

b. On 1 and 2 February 1978, the undersigned and two enlisted GR Specialists went to Cologne to investigate the recovery made by Mr. Scholtis.

I examined the recovered portions and determined they were insufficient for positive identification and requested Mr. Scholtis direct us to the recovery site for an attempt to recover additional portions and/or ID media. On 2 Feb 78, we drove to the German/Belgian border and had to turn back due to heavy snow in the area. We returned to the Frankfurt Mortuary with the recovered remains and equipment and promised Mr. Scholtis we would return after the spring thaw for another search of the recovery site.

c. On 30 April 78, the undersigned and two enlisted personnel (one was fluent in German) went to Cologne, picked up Mr. Scholtis and drove to the border. The following morning we departed for the recovery site and spent the whole day searching an approximate 100 square meter area around the site where he previously recovered the remains. Rusted and tattered remnants of hundreds of American and German WW II combat artifacts were observed. This included boots, clothing, food containers, vehicle and weapon parts, ammunition, etc., none of which could be associated with subject remains. In addition, several partially filled foxholes in the immediate recovery area were excavated by the team with negative results. No additional remains or ID media were found.

d. Through our interpreter (SSG Booth) I discussed Mr. Scholtis' previous recovery of remains and equipment on 14 January 1978. He stated at this time that all remains and equipment were recovered on the ground surface, scattered within approximately a 30 square meter area.

e. There was evidence that the entire forrest area we searched had been previously searched by many war souvenir hunters and the lower branches of most trees had been cut off by Forresters to thin it out for better growth.