

# DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY

## The Hürtgen Forest Project



Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise



**NETHERLANDS**

**GERMANY**

**BELGIUM**

Hürtgen  
Forest

Aachen

Liège

Verviers

Cologne

Cologne

Bonn



25.0 mi

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Image Landsat / Copernicus



~~SECRET~~

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Authority NND735017

SIEGFRIED LINE.  
9th Infantry Division, 2nd Battalion, 15 September to 26 October, 1944.  
39th Infantry Regt, 2nd Battalion, 15 September to 26 October, 1944.  
Interviews: Lt. Col. Frank L. Gunn, c.o. and Capt. Frank E. Bryant, Liaison Officer, 26th FA.

Prepared by: F. L. Hadsel, 2nd Lt. 2nd Information and Historical Service, 1st U.S. Army.

(Note: This account to be considered in connection with accounts received from E and F companies)

LAMMERSDORF

15 Sept. During most of the morning the battalion remained in reserve south of Lammersdorf, holding a position in the vicinity of 929289. The 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry, was ordered to attack in a wide front from the rear of the fortified position (the fortified position 929289).

2nd bn - 39th Inf  
6-26 Oct -  
Ger: 1/25,000  
5203, 5204  
5303, 5304

Hürtgen

6 Oct

9 Oct

11 Oct

3rd bn returned 11 Oct

1st bn returned

Germeten

Richels kaul

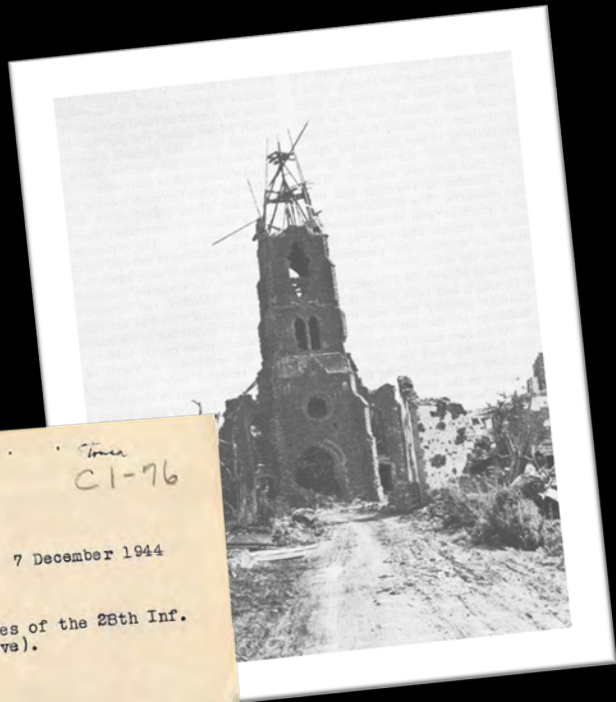
Vosser nack

33

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Tom  
C1-76

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority: AWD 735 617

HEADQUARTERS 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
OFFICE OF THE SURGEON  
APO 28, U. S. ARMY

7 December 1944

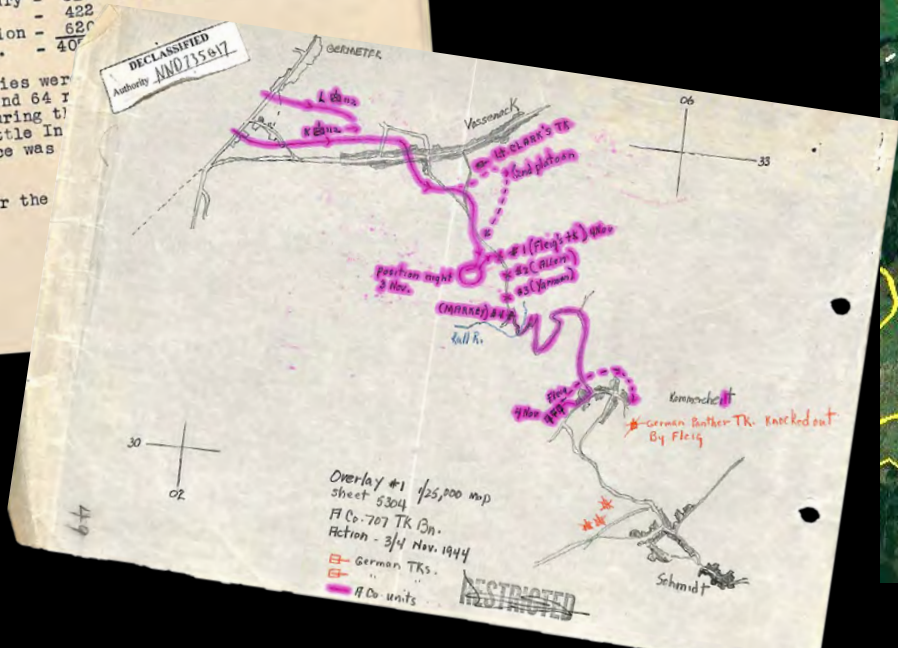
SUBJECT: Battle Casualties.

1. The following is a list of battle casualties of the 28th Inf. Div. from the 2 Nov 1944 to the 30 Nov 1944 (Inclusive).

Wounds	- 1665	(674)
Battle Injury	- 1037	(64)
Non Battle Injury	- 310	(64)
Disease	- 422	
Combat Exhaustion	- 620	
Total B.C.	- 4074	

2. A total of 738 casualties were reported as Battle Injury and 64 r This was due to the fact that during t Trench Foot was changed from Battle In higher headquarters. This office was Surgeon's Office, VIII Corps.

For the

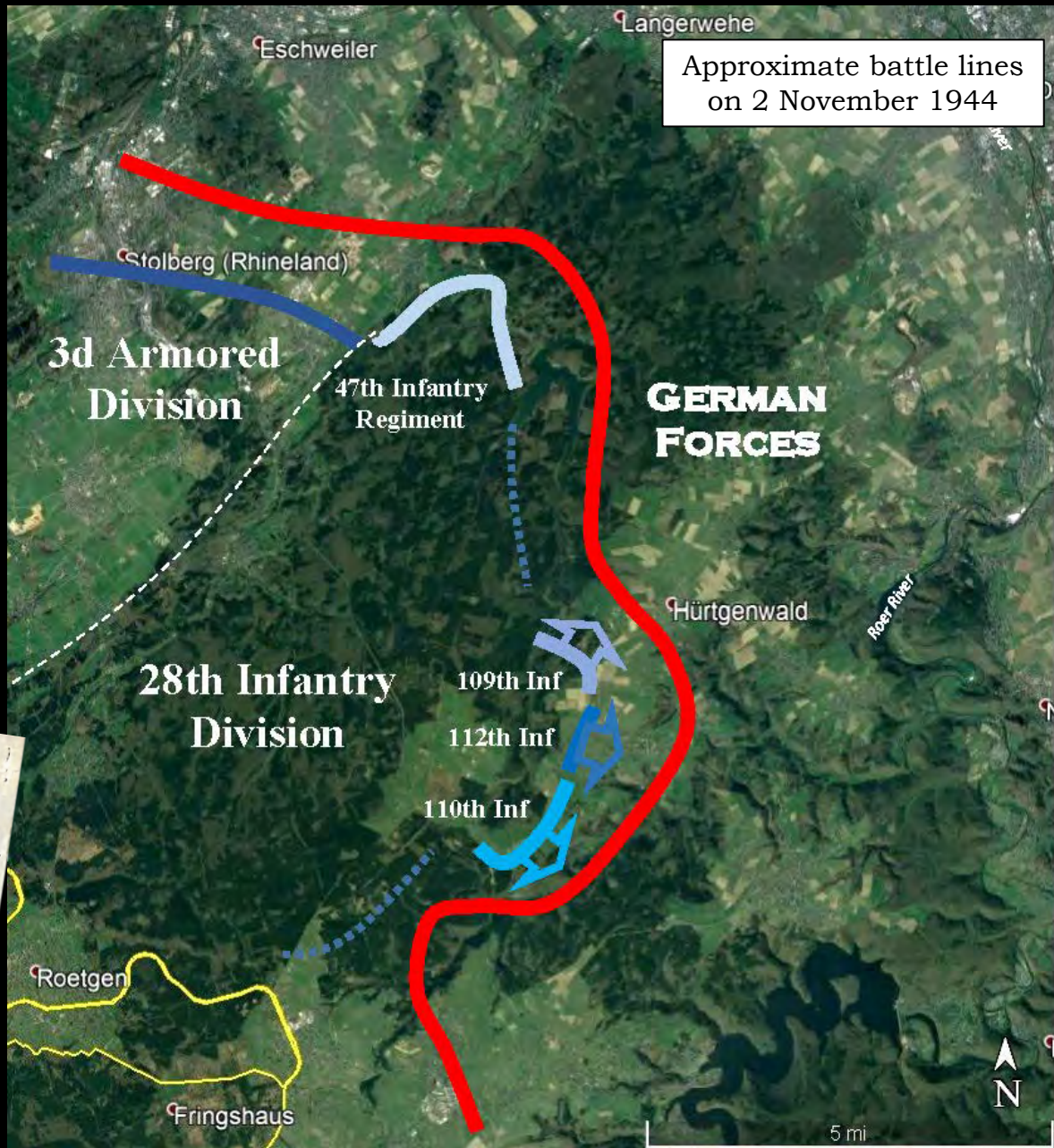


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Overlay #1  
Sheet 5304  
7 Co. 707 TR Bn.  
Action - 3/4 Nov. 1944

German TKS.  
A Co. units

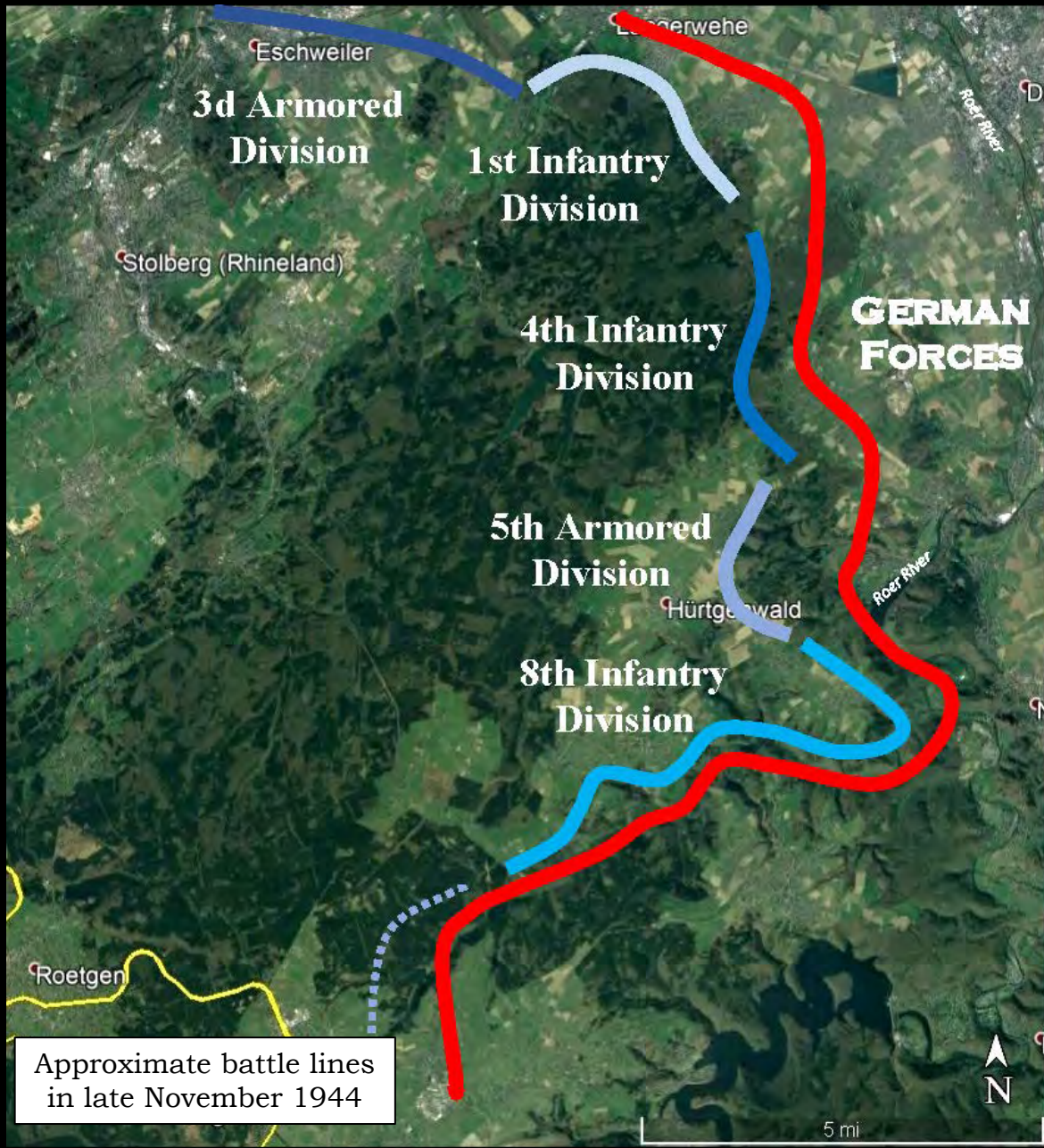
RESTRICTED



Approximate battle lines  
on 2 November 1944



5 mi



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Authority NND 735617

BATTLE OF HURTGEN FOREST (20-24 NOVEMBER)

121st Inf, 8th Inf Div

Interview with Col. John R. Jeter, Commanding Officer, 121st Inf (20-24 November. ~~Relieved of command; now commands regiment in another division.~~)

Interview at V Corps Rear, 30 Nov 44.

Overlay: Rough sketch taken from positions as indicated by Col. Jeter. 1:25,000 map, sheets 8204 and 8304. Prepared by Capt Howe.

Interviewer: Capt John S. Howe (V Corps).

To begin with, the division was ordered to move north to relieve the 28th Infantry in the Hurtgen Forest and the vicinity of Vossenack. My combat team, was the 1st combat team of the 8th Division to move North, and was scheduled to be relieved by a combat team of the 28th Division (100th). This relief was to be so that I could march beginning at 0600 Monday morning 20th. Reconnaissance had been sent out earlier than expected would go into division reserve. About 12:00 Monday I was called by division and ordered to move out at the practicable time. That it was urgent was the explanation.

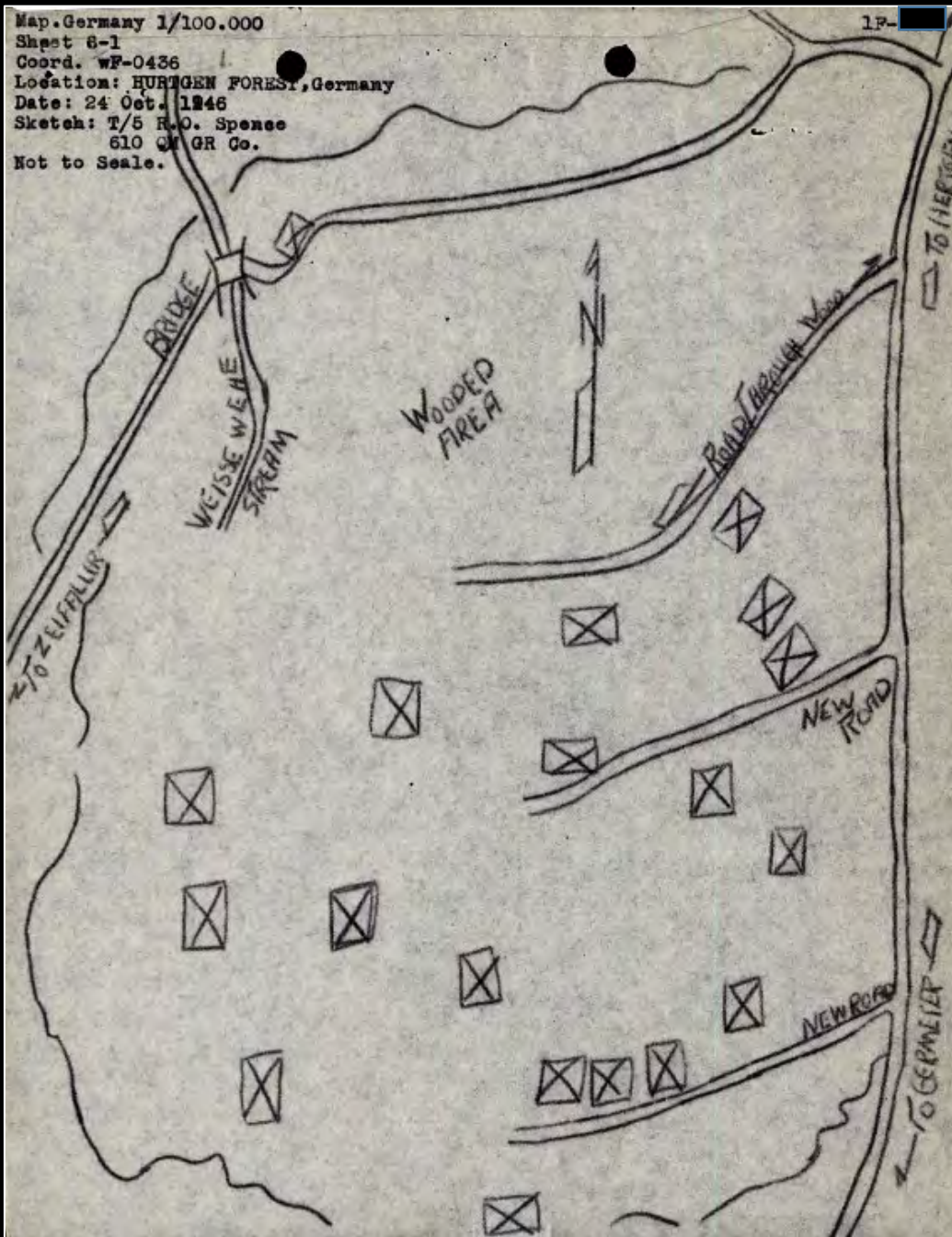
I sent out reconnaissance parties having gone forward of the 8-2 and 8-3, and selected the reconnaissance of the general area to my CP at Metternich. My party came up to the line on the remainder of the day.



American Graves Registration Command (AGRC) technicians preparing equipment to examine remains



German POWs excavating graves at a temporary U.S. cemetery in Europe



AGRC sketch map from 1946 showing the recovery locations of several sets of American remains in the Hürtgen Forest



EVACUATION NUMBER IF-1

**REPORT OF INVESTIGATION**  
**AREA SEARCH**

ATTN: REG. DIV. AG.R.C.  
FOR USE IN  
CASUALTY CLEARANCE

AGRC Form 10 (Revised)  
1 January 1946

26 MAY 1947  
Date

NAME Unknown X - 5450 RANK Unknown ASN Unknown  
ORGANIZATION Unknown A.G.F.  
MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION none

(All statements above this line will be completed, upon final processing, by the clerical staff at the unit processing point.)

SECTION A — GENERAL (To be completed by investigators in all cases)

1. Was positive identity acquired for the deceased through the surface investigation? NO If so, state the following information:
  - a. NAME \_\_\_\_\_ RANK \_\_\_\_\_ ASN \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_
2. Was partial identification established? NO If so, state the facts as to whom you believe the deceased to be:
  - a. NAME UNKNOWN RANK UNKNOWN ASN UNKNOWN
  - b. ORGANIZATION UNKNOWN
3. NAMES OF OTHER DECEASED BURIED IN IMMEDIATE VICINITY FOUR (4) UNKNOWN U.S. SOLDIERS

(Use reverse side for listing of crew members from MARC)

- a. Date of above burials NOT BURIED Common Graves?
5. Name and Type of Cemetery NOT BURIED  
(Military or Civilian)
6. Map Coordinates of the Cemetery
  - a. Town \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_
7. Give exact location in cemetery of the remains.
  - a. Section \_\_\_\_\_ Row \_\_\_\_\_ Grave \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Is Sketch attached? \_\_\_\_\_
8. If remains are not located in a cemetery, give exact location.
  - a. Town HURTGEN Coordinates WF-0336
  - b. Is Sketch attached? YES
  - c. Is area mined? NO
9. How is the grave marked? NOT BURIED
10. If grave is marked with cross, give exact markings thereon \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. From what source was this information obtained?  
(Identification tags, personal effects)
    1. By whom \_\_\_\_\_
11. Where are the cemetery records? NOT BURIED  
(Town Hall, cemetery, burgermeister's office)

AGRC recovery report form

Typical AGRC recovery narrative summary

EVACUATION NUMBER IF-1

NARRATIVE  
ON HURTGEN, GERMANY CASE.

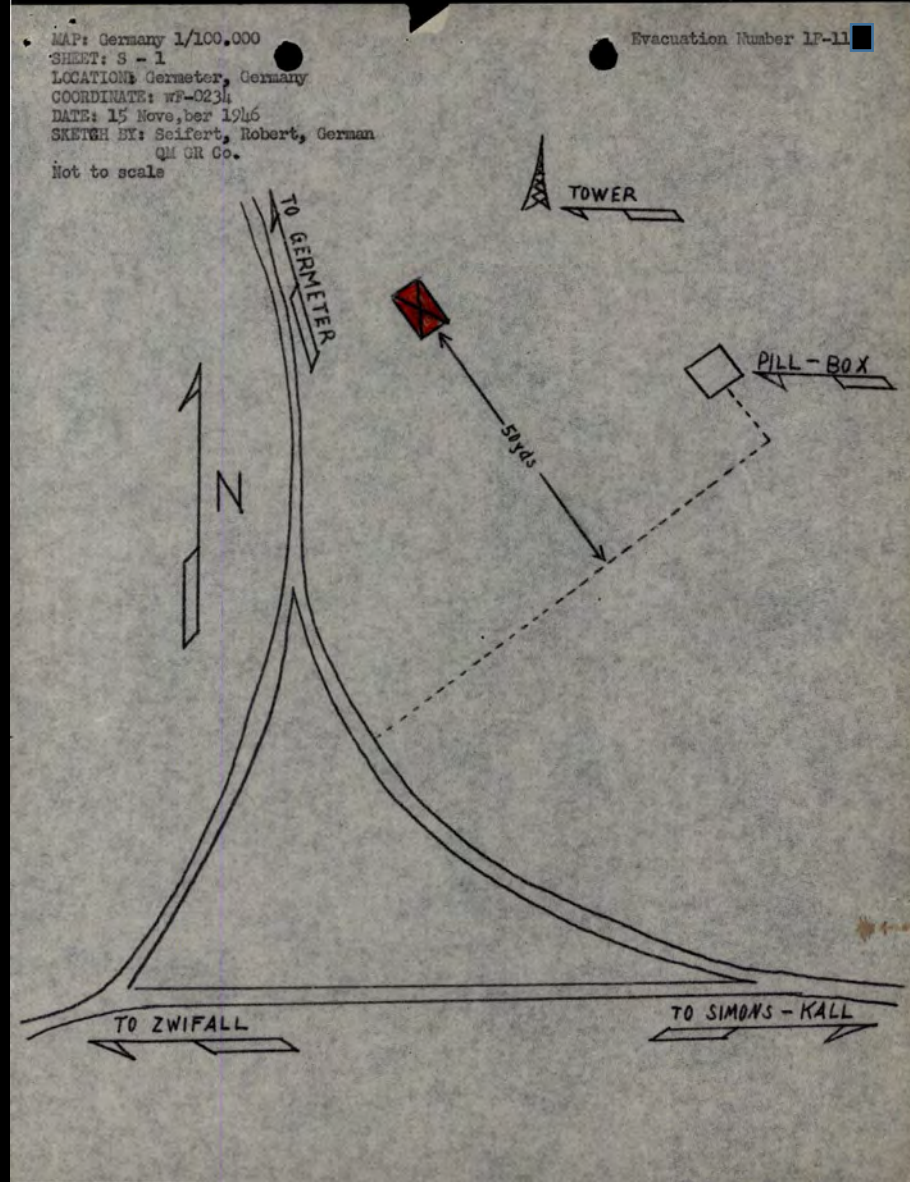
On 9 April 1947 we proceeded to the Hurtgen-Forest, District # 88, to disinter the remains of an American deceased found by forester LUDWIG PFAFFE, Germeter # 9.

LUDWIG PFAFFE found the remains on his regular course as a forester in this district.

The remains consist of dry bones remaining G.I. equipment. The deceased was recovered near a German Mine-Belt, leading through this area. Wild animals had access to the remains.

No I.D.-tags or other means of identification could be found on the remains.

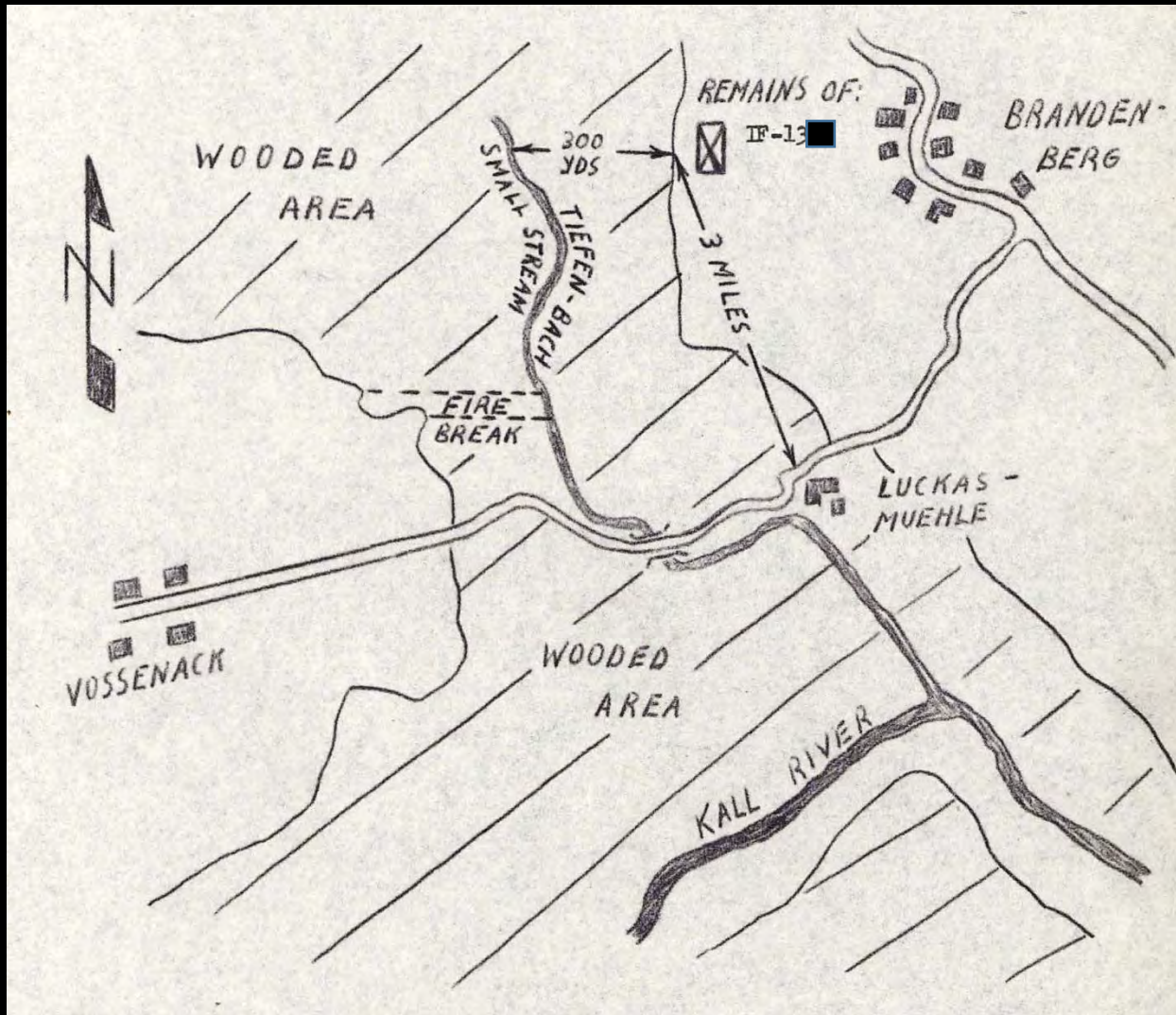
*William B Adams*  
William B Adams  
T/5 RA-6382982



1946 AGRC recovery sketch map



Modern satellite imagery of actual location  
Approximate recovery location marked by yellow circle



1947 AGRC recovery sketch map



Modern satellite imagery of actual location

Approximate recovery location marked by yellow circle

Images from the 1946 AGRC Central Identification Point Photo Journal

Administrative personnel records personal effects found with remains



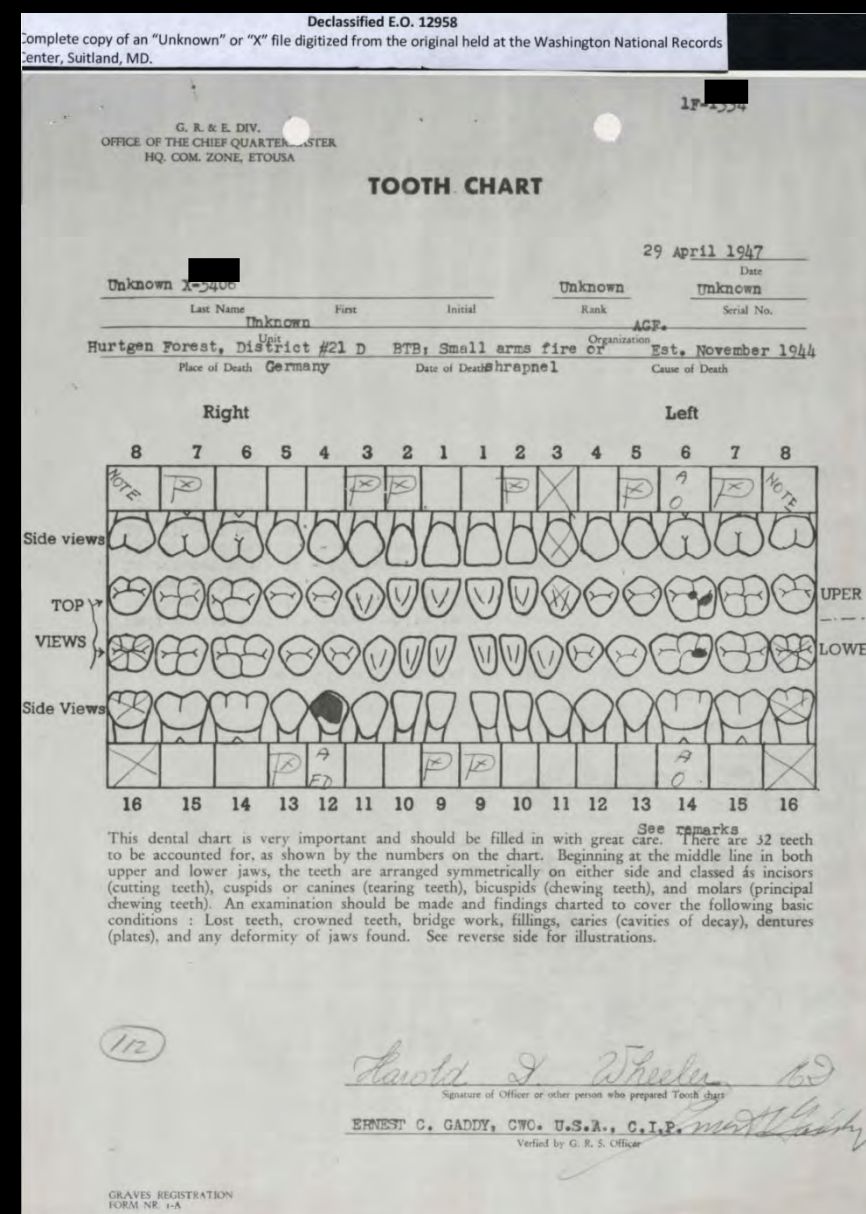
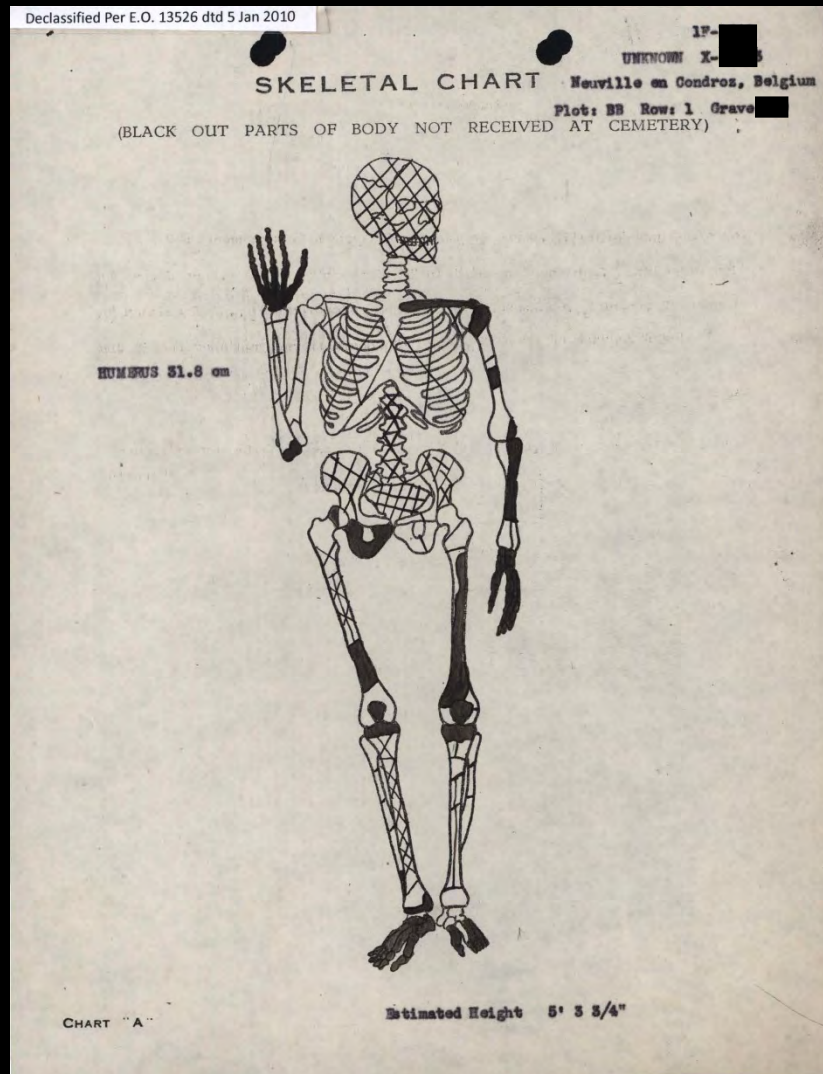
Medical technician sprays disinfectant onto remains prior to storage

Temporary U.S. military cemetery at St. Avold, France



# Example of a skeletal chart for an unidentified set of remains recovered in the Hürtgen Forest

(Portions in black are missing)



# Example of a tooth chart for an unidentified set of remains recovered in the Hürtgen Forest

## Photos from AGRC investigation in Hürtgen Forest



Photo # 1

TRANSLATION

You are now entering the former battlefield of the HURTGEN Forest. Do not leave the used roads and streets since there is still Danger of mines and explosives.

TheBurgomaster

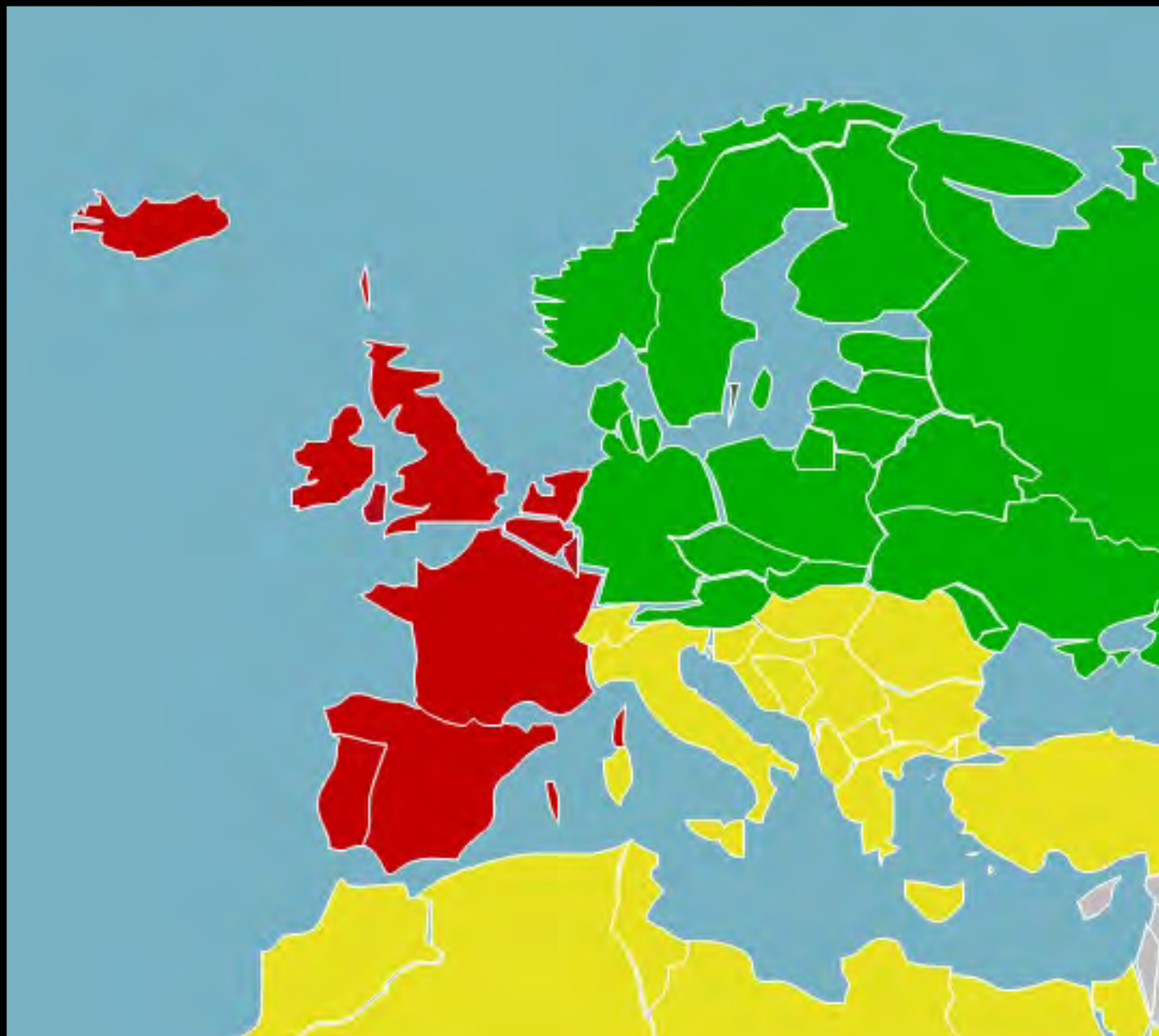
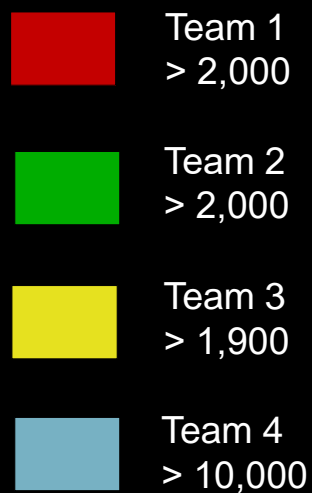


# DPAA

## EUROPE-MEDITERRANEAN DIRECTORATE

### MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS

Team Assignments  
& Number of Missing Personnel



# Hürtgen Forest Project

- Three main objectives
  1. Case summary report for each missing soldier
  2. Disinterment recommendation for each unknown set of remains recovered from the Huertgen Forest that has a greater than 50% chance of identification
  3. Field work



# Example of U.S. Army battle report and map overlay for combat in the Hürtgen Forest, collected from the National Archives

DECLASSIFIED  
 Authority NND 735017

S-3 PERIODIC REPORT

From : 242400 A Nov 44  
 To : 252400 A Nov 44  
 Issuing Unit : Combat Team 82  
 Place : GERMANY (006374)  
 Time of Issue : 252400 A Nov 44

NO. 130

MAPS: GERMANY, GSGS 4414, sheets #5203 "STOLBERG" & #5204 "LENDERSDORF", scale 1/25,000.

1. Our Front Lines: Overlay.
2. Location of Troops: Overlay.
3. Information of Adjacent Units and Supporting Troops: Overlay. The 44th Field Artillery Battalion, reinforced by the 20th Field Artillery Battalion; and Company "C" 4th Engineer (C) Battalion (less one platoon) remained in direct support of Combat Team; continuing with their usual support.
4. Weather and Visibility: Partly cloudy with occasional rain. Temperatures were moderately cold and visibility good.
5. Our Operations for the period;

a. Infantry: Enemy artillery and mortar fire continued in moderate intensity throughout the night 24-25 November.

The plan for 25 November was an attack by the 3rd and 2nd Battalions. The former was to envelop GROSSEHAU to the north and take the town from that direction. The latter was to reach the edge of the woods southwest of the town where direct fire could be placed on GROSSEHAU and KLEINHAU. The attack was to be made at an early hour without an artillery preparation, in the hope of surprising the enemy.

The 3rd Battalion attacked at 0745 hours. The attack of the 2nd Battalion, delayed by the inability of their armor to negotiate the poor roads available, jumped off without tanks at 0820 hours. Both battalions moved forward slowly despite almost immediate resistance from small arms, mortar, and artillery fire.

By 0845 hours the 3rd Battalion was north of GROSSEHAU (coordinates 048385). Fifty (50) prisoners were taken in this area and the battalion paused to reorganize before pushing south to the town. The delay was protracted when difficulties were met in moving tanks and tank destroyers to the forward elements. Enemy artillery and mortar fire increased and serious casualties were sustained.

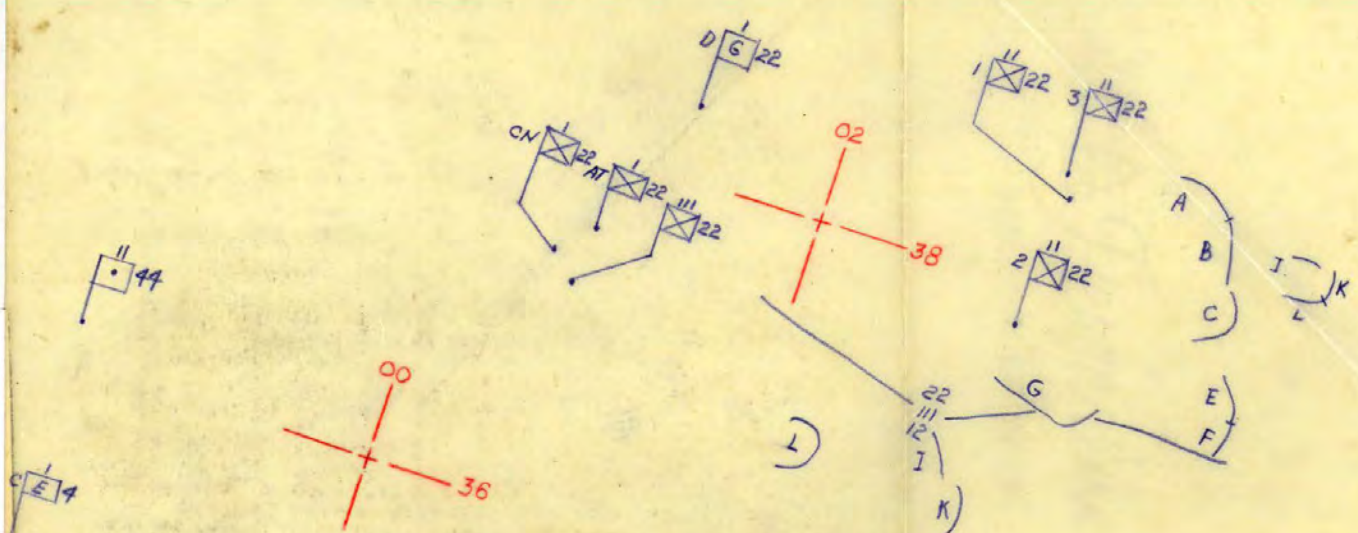
The 2nd Battalion continued their advance which was bitterly contested by the enemy, and at 1050 hours the leading elements of the unit were on their objective near the edge of the woods southwest of GROSSEHAU.

At 1145 hours the 3rd Battalion, supported by tanks and tank destroyers, attacked to the south across the open fields north of GROSSEHAU. The enemy reaction from the town was immediate and powerful. Enemy self-propelled guns, mortar, and small arms fire stopped the attack, disabling four (4) tanks and two (2) tank destroyers. Further attempts to reach the town from the north were repulsed; and at 1500 hours the 3rd Battalion dug in north of the town. Casualties were heavy from enemy mortar and artillery fire.

The 1st Battalion, in reserve, moved to the east following the attack of the 3rd Battalion. One company, astride the east-west road to GROSSEHAU, had the mission of clearing the area north of the 2nd Battalion as far as the edge of town.

#26

24th CAV SQN SCREENING  
 TO THE N BETWEEN CT-22 & CT-8



OVERLAY - ANNEX 1

TO S-3 PERIODIC REPORT NO 130 CT-22 & ADJACENT UNIT DISPOSITIONS AT 252400 A NOV 44.  
 MAP: GERMANY, GSGS 4414, SHEETS 5203 "STOLBERG" & 5204 "LENDERSDORF".  
 SCALE - 1/25,000.

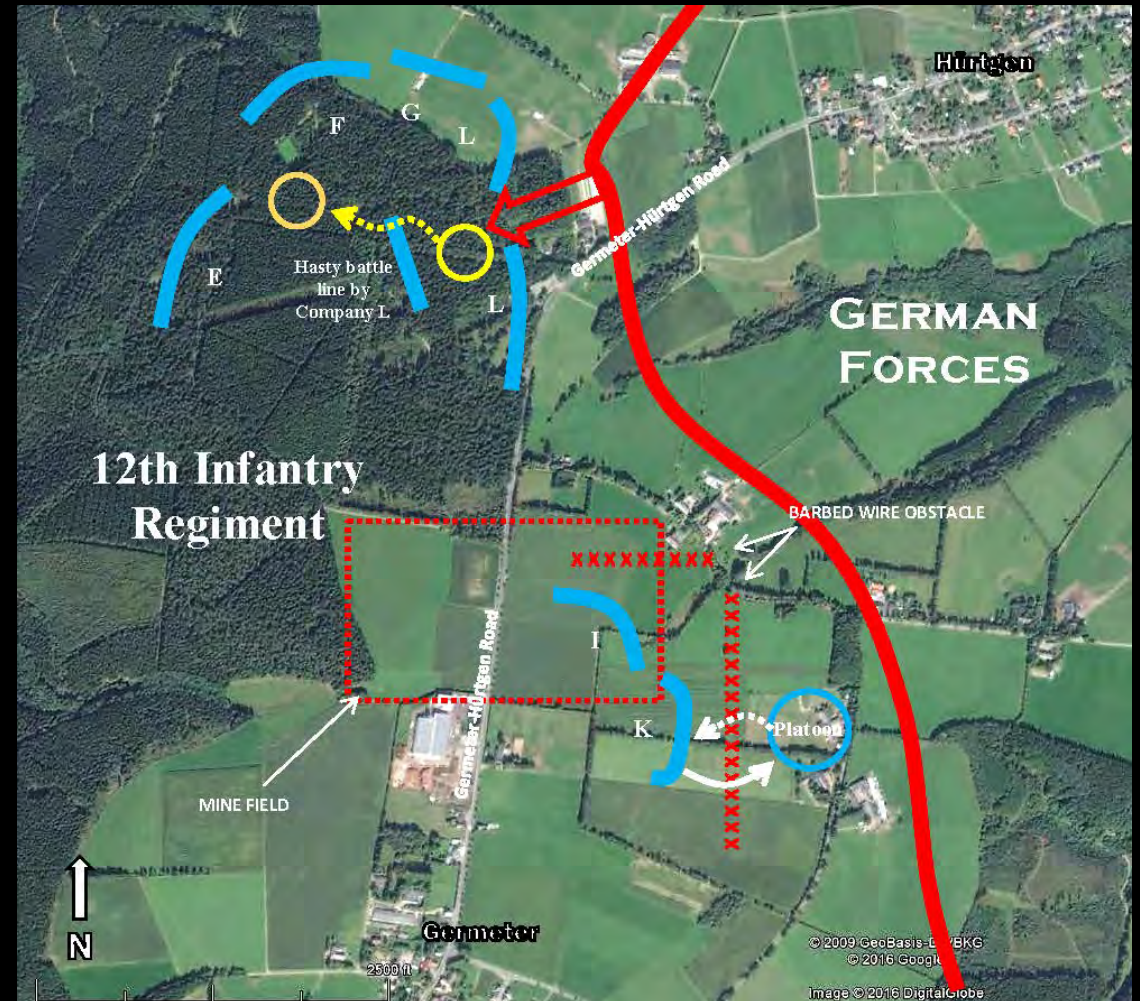
OFFICIAL:  
*Ricker B. Shauser*  
 RICKER B. SHAUSER,  
 ASST S-3

LANHAM, CO

DECLASSIFIED  
 Authority NND 735017

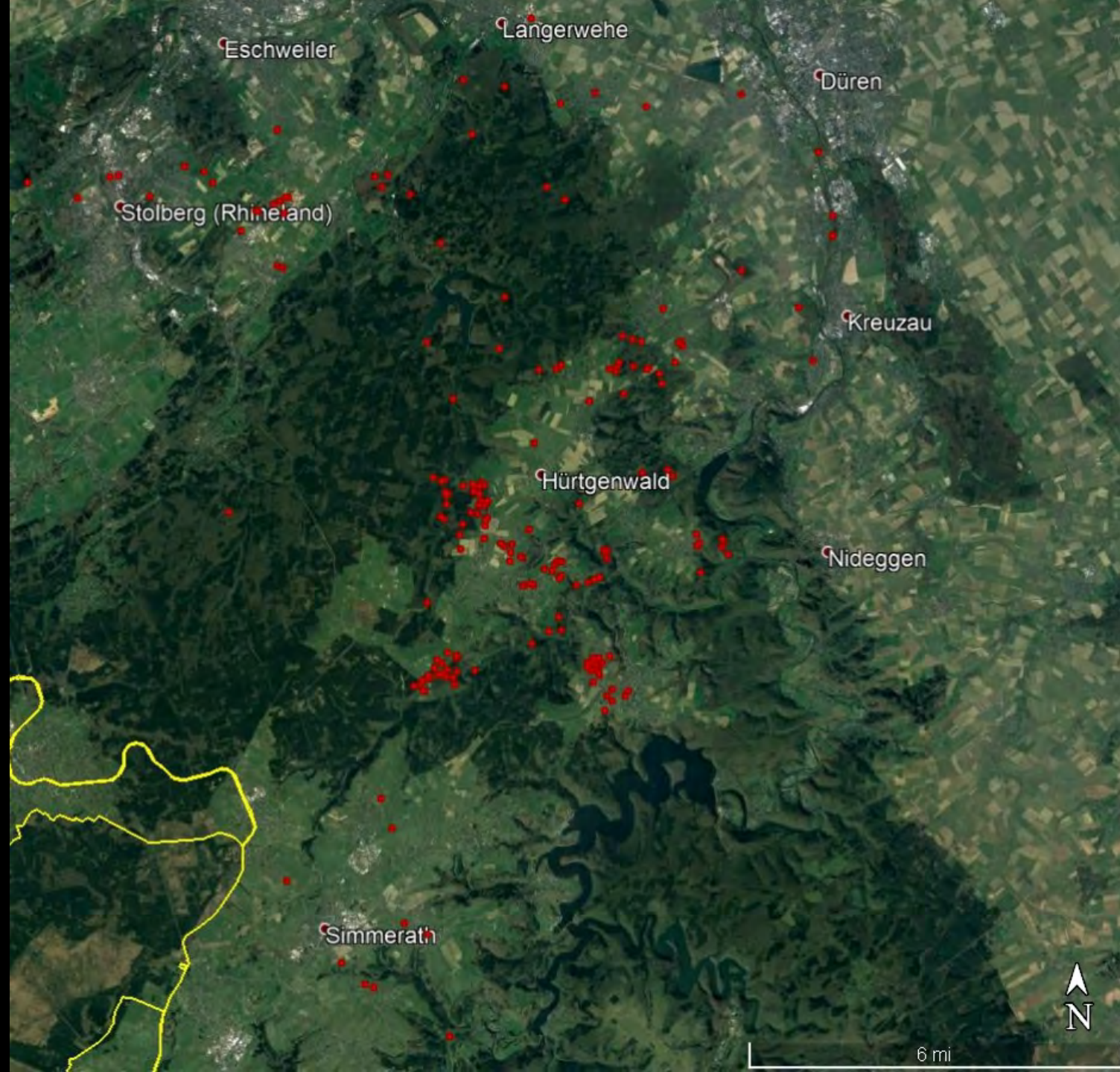


DPAAs battle analysis map based upon unit records, personnel files, and combat overlays



- Geospatial Information System (GIS) layering of:
1. Modern aerial imagery
  2. 1944 U.S. Army grid map
  3. 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment overlay from 9 Nov 1944

**Each red dot  
represents the  
approximate last  
known location of a  
missing American**



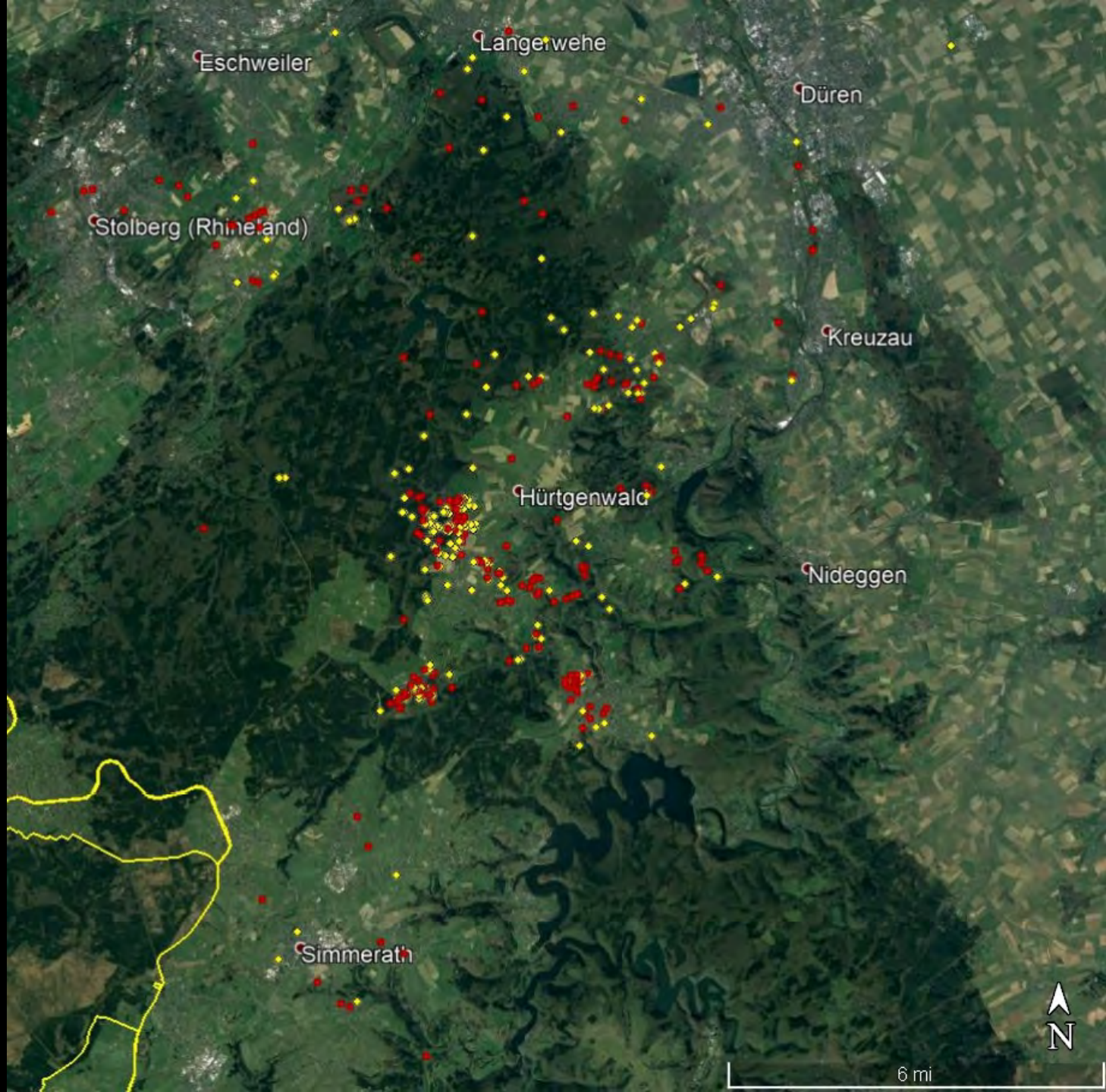
**Each yellow dot  
represents the  
approximate recovery  
location of an  
unidentified body**



# Comparison of loss locations with recovery locations of unidentified remains

● = Last known location of missing soldier

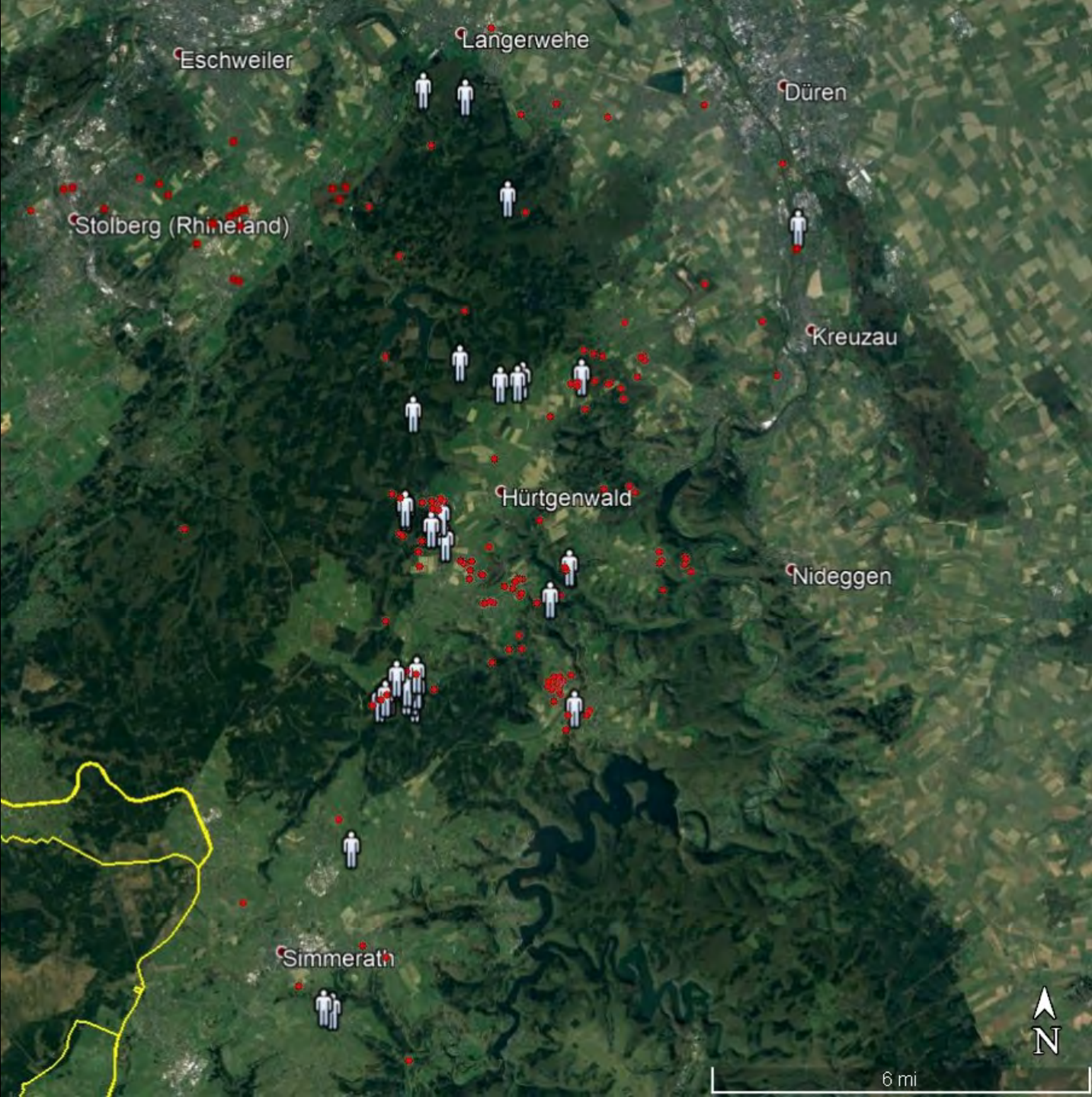
● = Unknown remains recovery location



# DPAA Identifications of Hürtgen Forest casualties since 2016

● = Last known location of still-missing soldier

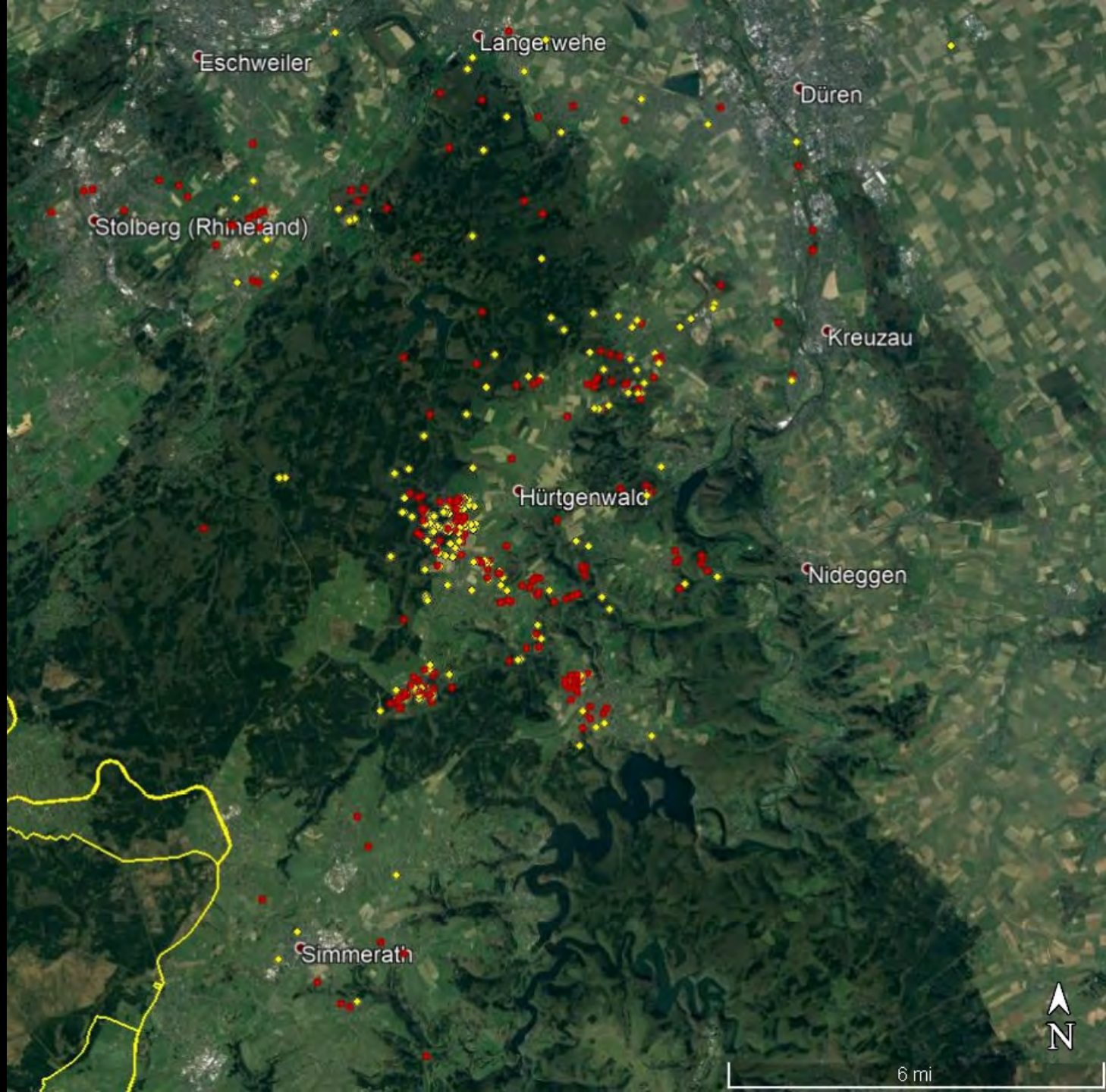
🧑 = Last known location of soldier identified by DPAA since 2016



# Comparison of loss locations with recovery locations of unidentified remains

● = Last known location of missing soldier

● = Unknown remains recovery location





**KALL TRAIL**



**WILDE SAU**



**RAFFELSBRAND**

**Photographs of DPAA investigations in the Hürtgen Forest**

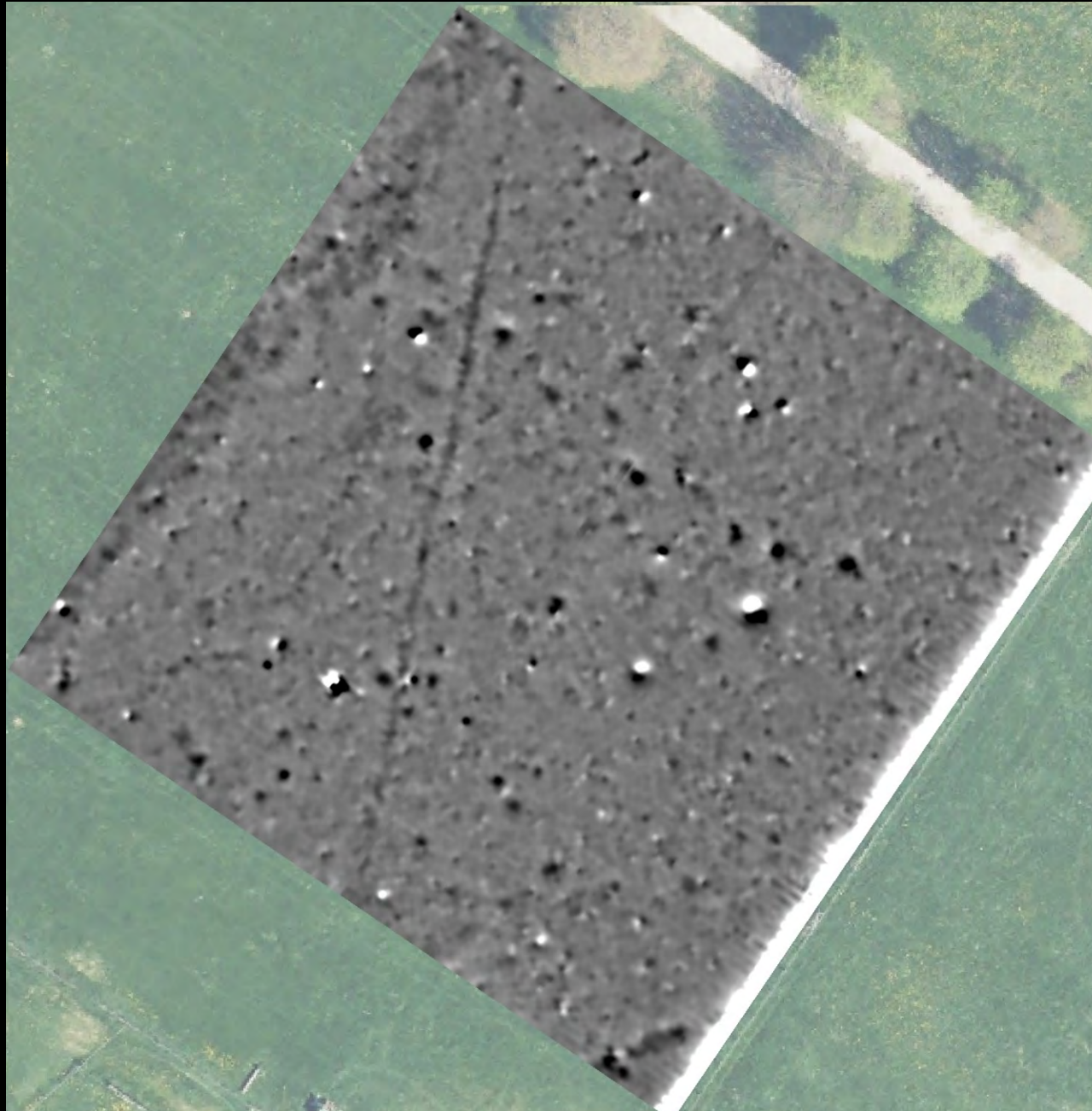


**BRANDENBURGER TOR**



**KOMMERSCHIEDT**





University of Osnabrück magnetometry scan results



Excavator scraping top layer of soil  
at Hürtgen Forest site

Pin flags marking metal detector “hits”  
at Hürtgen Forest site



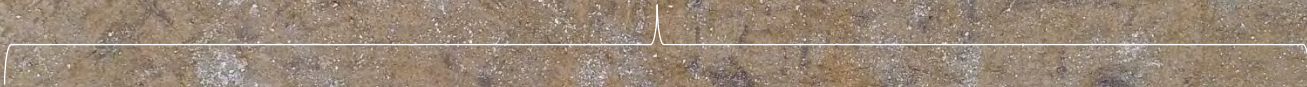
Aerial view of excavation at Hürtgen Forest site



Artillery craters

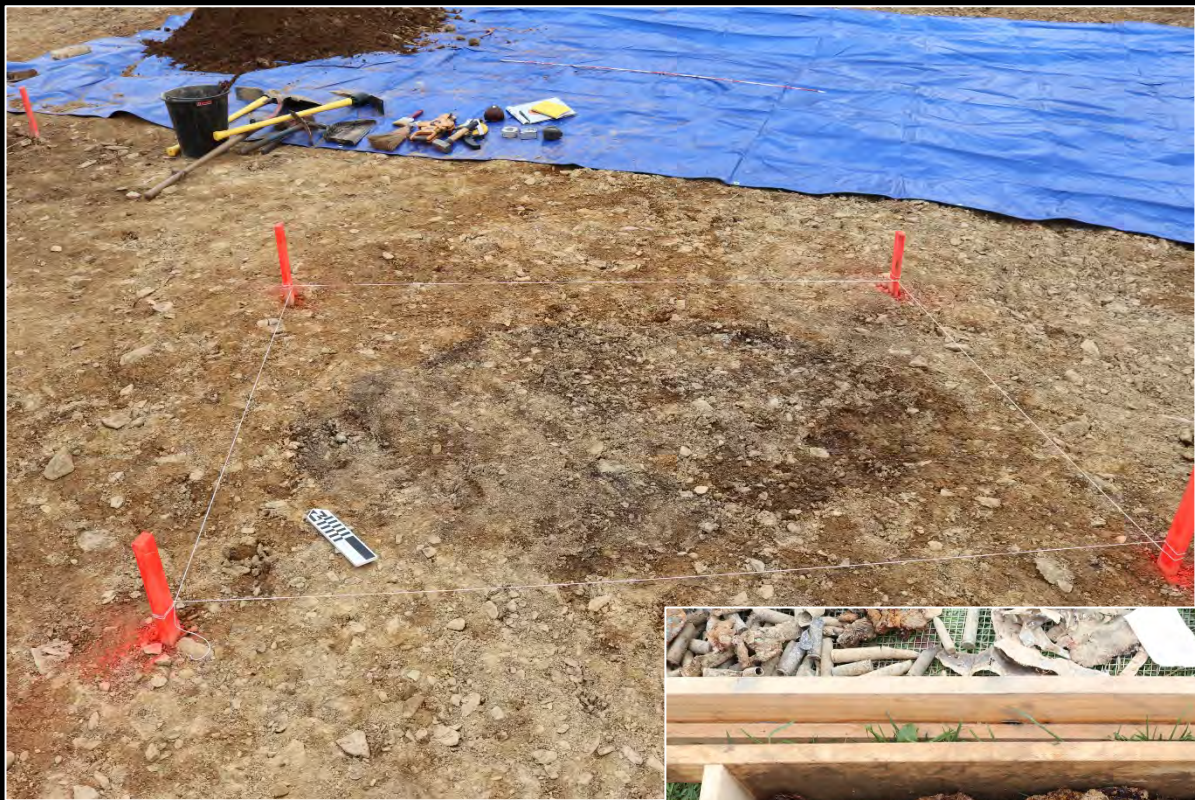


Line of foxholes



Intersection of former drainage trenches





Foxhole site before excavation



Screening soil for material evidence during excavation



Military artifacts found during excavation

