DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY

The Hürtgen Forest Project

Fulfilling Our Nation’s Promise
Germany

Netherlands

Belgium

Hürtgen Forest
Approximate battle lines in mid-October 1944
Approximate battle lines on 2 November 1944
Approximate battle lines in late November 1944
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.
AGRC recovery report form

Typical AGRC recovery narrative summary
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
Medical technician sprays disinfectant onto remains prior to storage.

Administrative personnel records personal effects found with remains.

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

Images from the 1946 AGRC Central Identification Point Photo Journal.
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

Translation

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

The Burgomaster
Team Assignments & Number of Missing Personnel

- **Team 1**: > 2,000
- **Team 2**: > 2,000
- **Team 3**: > 1,900
- **Team 4**: > 10,000
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
Geospatial Information System (GIS) layering of:
1. Modern aerial imagery
2. 1944 U.S. Army grid map
3. 12th Infantry Regiment overlay from 9 Nov 1944

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

- Red dot = Last known location of missing soldier
- Yellow dot = 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
Photographs of DPAA investigations in the Hürtgen Forest

Kall Trail

Brandenburger tor

Kommerscheidt

Wilde Sau

Raffelsbrand
University of Osnabrück magnetometry scan results
Pin flags marking metal detector “hits” at Hurtgen Forest site

Excavator scraping top layer of soil 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

Military artifacts found during excavation

Screening soil for material evidence during excavation