



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION FROM THE KOREAN WAR IS IDENTIFIED**

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class W.T. Akins, U.S. Army, of Decatur, Ga. He will be buried on June 26 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

Representatives from the Army met with Akins' 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.

In November 1950, Akins was a member of the Medical Company, 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division then occupying a defensive position near Unsan, North Korea north of a bend in the Kuryong River known as the Camel's Head. On Nov. 1, elements of two Chinese Communist Divisions struck the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's lines, collapsing the perimeter and forcing a withdrawal. Akins was reported missing on Nov. 2, 1950 and was one of the more than 350 servicemen unaccounted-for from the battle at Unsan.

In April 2007, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.), acting through the intermediary of New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and former U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi, repatriated to the United States six boxes of human remains believed to be those of U.S. soldiers. The D.P.R.K. reported that the remains were excavated in November 2006 near Unsan in North Pyongan Province.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons in the identification of Akins' remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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