



## 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. Virgil L. Phillips, U.S. Army, of Columbus, Ind. He will be buried on April 19 in Loogootee, Ind.

Representatives from the Army met with Phillips' 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, Phillips was assigned to Company K, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division then operating in Unsan, North Korea near a bend in the Kuryong River known as the Camel's Head. On Nov. 1, parts of two Chinese Communist Divisions struck the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's lines, collapsing the perimeter and forcing a withdrawal. In the process, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was surrounded and effectively ceased to exist as a fighting unit. Phillips was one of the more than 350 servicemen unaccounted-for from the battle at Unsan.

In 2003, a joint U.S.-Democratic People's Republic of Korea team (D.P.R.K.), led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), excavated a burial site near the Camel's Head. The team recovered human remains and other material evidence. Information from the D.P.R.K. indicated that the remains were initially buried near the battle site, but were later moved to a location nearby because of construction in the area.

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 Phillips' 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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