

# Remains of WWII soldier to be returned to West Texas

**Lynn Walker**

Wichita Falls Times Record News  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced last week that a soldier from West Texas who was killed in World War II has finally been accounted for.

Pfc. Orville J. Cox, 19, was a member of 34th Pursuit Squadron, 24th Pursuit Group, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941.

According to historical records, Cox died Feb. 8, 1942, during the Battle of the Points on the Bataan Peninsula near Agloloma Point. Casualties from the battle were buried at several cemeteries on the peninsula, including Mariveles No. 3 Cemetery.

In November 1945, American Graves Registration Service personnel exhumed 40 sets of remains from the American section of the cemetery. At the time, 17 individuals were identified, but 23 others remained unknown.

In subsequent analysis, five additional remains were identified, leaving 18 unknowns. Those remain-

ing unknown bodies were buried at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial.

In December 2022, personnel exhumed the remains from the cemetery, including those believed to be Cox, and sent them for analysis.

Scientists used dental, anthropological and mitochondrial DNA analysis to identify Cox.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency said in a news release Tuesday that Cox's grave was meticulously cared for over the past 70 years by the American Battle Monuments Commission, along with others still missing from World War II. Cox is memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila cemetery and a rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Cox had graduated from rural Paint Creek High School in 1940 and enlisted in the Army Air Corps as a mechanic in Gen. Douglas MacArthur's forces, according to newspaper articles at the time.

Cox will be buried in the West Texas town of Haskell on a date to be determined. Family and funeral information will be available at the Army Casualty Office at 800-892-2490.



The remains of Pfc. Orville Cox, who was killed in World War II, will be returned to Texas for burial 82 years after his death. COURTESY DPPA