Activity: “Bring home my lone babe”: The Investigation for Francis L. Raub

Guiding question:
What lengths did the U.S. Army go to find the remains of servicemembers in World War II? How did the U.S. Army confirm the identity of the servicemembers found?

DEVELOPED BY ALAN BIRKEMEIER
Grade Level(s): 6-8
Subject(s): U.S. History, English/Language Arts
Cemetery Connection: Luxembourg American Cemetery
Fallen Hero Connection: Staff Sergeant Francis L. Raub
Overview

Using interactive technology (with an option for virtual reality), students will use primary and secondary sources to investigate the death of Francis Raub. Students will explore sources available to U.S. Army investigators in 1947.

Historical Context

Of the approximately 400,000 U.S. service members killed in World War II, nearly 79,000 of them remain unaccounted for, buried in unmarked graves, lost at sea, or declared missing in action. In an effort to return the soldiers to their loved ones, the U.S. Army established the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), which operated from 1945 to 1951. AGRS agents often went in search of missing troops by interviewing civilians and unit members, and exploring battle sites for temporary graves. Any remains discovered were sent to laboratories set up in the field for identification. Currently, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency continues to search for and, when possible, identify those still declared Missing in Action during World War II and subsequent conflicts.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Describe the lengths that the U.S. Army went to identify remains immediately following World War II through today; and
- Analyze the impact of the war on the families who did not have remains that could be identified.

Standards Connections

Connections to Common Core

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources
89th Infantry Division Insignia
Wikimedia Commons

90th Infantry Division Insignia
Wikimedia Commons

Francis L. Raub Individual Deceased Personnel File (excerpts)
National Archives and Records Administration- St. Louis

Francis L. Raub Official Military Personnel File (excerpts)
National Archives and Records Administration- St. Louis

Photograph, Francis L. Raub, October 1, 1944
Indianapolis News

Photograph, Members of a tank destroyer unit use the shutters of a damaged building to camouflage their gun as they set up in a position covering a road near France, September 11, 1944. National Archives and Records Administration (111-SC-193111)

Secondary Sources
Francis L. Raub Fallen Hero Profile ★
ABMC Education
https://abmceducation.org/understandingsacrifice/soldier/francis-l-raub

Materials

• Computer with internet capabilities
• Virtual Reality Systems (such as Google Cardboard) and Virtual Reality compatible phone
  ◦ Teacher Tip: This is optional - the tasks can be completed using a laptop or desktop computer.
• Investigation Journal
• Headphones to listen to audio components
Lesson Preparation

- Test out all technology/equipment.
  - **Teacher Tip**: If using a computer, the activity works best in Google Chrome.
  - **Teacher Tip**: If using Virtual Reality, you have the option to download the Google Explorer app to your device. You can find the program by searching for “Understanding Sacrifice: Raub Investigation.” Download the tour, then view through your virtual reality viewer such as Google Cardboard. A controller is recommended but not necessary on most devices.
  - **Teacher Tip**: Copies of the primary sources are included in the downloadable lesson, if needed.
- Provide students with the following link: [https://poly.google.com/view/bktiM1t_3eo](https://poly.google.com/view/bktiM1t_3eo).
- Divide the class into groups of two or three students each.
- Preview the Francis L. Raub Fallen Hero Profile for background information.

Procedure

Activity One: Virtual Reality (30 min)

- Lead a short discussion about the problems faced by those who lost family in World War II. Ask students about dog tags. *What information goes on dog tags? Why do soldiers wear them? What do you think happens when a soldier's body is unidentified? How would it feel to be a family member of someone whose remains were not recovered and identified?*
- Tell the students that they are going to engage in a simulation based on the 1947 identification case of U.S. soldier Francis Raub.
- Divide the class into groups of two or three students each.
- Distribute a copy of the Investigation Journal to each student. Tell students, *This is your investigation log. You will fill it out with information provided during the investigation in Raub’s death. It will help you discover what happened to Raub.*
- Provide students with the following link: [https://poly.google.com/u/0/view/8WVQ-PzK-8N](https://poly.google.com/u/0/view/8WVQ-PzK-8N).
  - **Teacher Tip**: For students using computers, make sure they turn on the narration. Click the gear button in the top right corner of the screen to turn on narration.
  - **Teacher Tip**: For students using virtual reality, tell students using their phones to put the phone into VR mode before inserting their phone into the VR headset. They will have to remove the phone in order to switch scenes.
- Tell students to begin with the point on the desk labeled, “Start here.”
- Help students navigate the investigation. If they have problems visit this webpage for help: [https://support.google.com/tourcreator/?hl=en](https://support.google.com/tourcreator/?hl=en).
Assessment

- Collect the Investigation Journal once students complete simulation to assess student learning.
- Lead a short discussion about what they learned. Possible guiding questions:
  - What steps did the U.S. Army take to find Raub’s remains?
  - How do you think Mrs. Raub would have felt about their efforts if she had survived?
  - Do you feel the cemeteries are an appropriate reminder of American soldier’s efforts in World War II?

Methods for Extension:

- Show students Francis L. Raub’s Fallen Hero profile on the ABMC Education website and discuss student reaction to the eulogy video.
- Teachers can enhance students’ interest in the challenge of identifying missing service members by exploring these related lesson plans on ABMCEducation.org:
  - Some Gave All
  - Until They All Come Home: Locating and Identifying Missing Service Members

Adaptations:

- Teachers can adapt the project to younger learners by changing the focus of the last activity to a shorter letter. It could also be adapted to English Language Learners in a similar way.
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

Francis L. Raub Dental Records
Francis L. Raub Individual Deceased Personnel File, National Archives and Records Administration- St. Louis

These are Francis L. Raub’s dental records. All American service members in World War II received a complete dental examination. The U.S. Army kept dental records for identification purposes.

Photograph, Francis L. Raub, October 1, 1944

*Indianapolis News*

This photograph is of Francis L. Raub. It was taken sometime between when he was drafted and when he died on September 15, 1944. The Indianapolis News published the photo on October 1, 1944 to announce Raub’s death.
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files
Letter, Ella Robb to her member of Congress, October 22, 1945
Francis L. Raub Individual Deceased Personnel File, National Archives and Records Administration- St. Louis

Ella Raub, Francis' mother, wrote this letter to her member of Congress on October 22, 1945. That Congressman expressed interest in the case, initiating the investigation by the U.S. Army.

Adj. General will you please grant this my last request that my lone baby be returned to rest in our family lot.

Sgt. Francis Raub
3509910 - A.P. O. 90.

Please, I am 74 years old[,] a widow + he is our only child. I’ve been sick a year and I want him home so bad while I am here. Please help.

Mrs. Ella Raub Indpls, Ind.

God Bless you in your effort.
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

Data on Remains Not Yet Recovered or Identified

Francis L. Raub Individual Deceased Personnel File, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis

This form contains a basic description of Raub’s physical characteristics. These will be important to help identify the body.

![90th Infantry Division Unit Insignia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:90th_Infantry_Division_90th_division.png)
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files
Francis L. Raub Official Military Personnel File
National Archives and Records Administration- St. Louis

These are excerpts from testimonies given by soldiers who witnessed Raub’s death.

“We sent Sargent Raub ahead to investigate a farmhouse. He was off to my left when I heard a shot. I looked over and saw his glasses were knocked off and he had dropped. I hit the ground. I then fell back to the woods where the unit was. We wanted to go back and get him but the officers said it was too risky. We never did get back out there to check on him.”

-Soldier One

“I was observing Raub and two other soldiers advance through field glasses. They were headed to the farmhouse to check for enemy soldiers. Raub fell and the others dropped back. I continued to watch Raub for another ten minutes. He made no movements or any other signs of life. The men wanted to return to him but it was too dangerous to send them into sniper fire. Then, artillery shells rained down. We sent two French men to check the area the next day they did not find anything. Then Germans retook the area for another 15 days. By that point his body was lost.”

-Soldier Two

Photograph, Members of a tank destroyer unit use the shutters of a damaged building to camouflage their gun as they set up in a position covering a road near France, September 11, 1944.
National Archives and Records Administration (111-SC-193111)
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

Sworn Affidavits from Area Residents

Francis L. Raub Individual Deceased Personnel File, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis

These are sworn affidavits from locals who were in the area when the fighting occurred. One is from the town’s mayor and another is from a local woman. Your team has conducted several interviews like this and they all produced the same results.

I, the undersigned, Miss KLINGER, declare to the best of my knowledge that there is no American soldier by the name of RAUB Francis A interred in the commune of Marange-Sylvange.

9.1.47 /s/ Klingler
(Hillinger)

TOWN HALF OF PIERREVILLES
(Moselle)

STATEMENT

We, the undersigned, Mayor of the commune of Pierrevillers, herewith certify that the American soldier RAUB Francis is unknown to us. As far as we know there are no graves of American soldiers in the territory of the commune of Pierrevillers. In connection herewith we certify that the notices and posters affixed in the commune did not reveal any declaration of the population.

Made at Pierrevillers, 2 January 1947
The Mayor:
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

Body Recovery Number One

A body has been found near the area where Raub was killed. Here are the dental records of a body found in the area. Examine them and compare them to Raub’s records.
Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

Body Recovery Number Two

A body has been found. This insignia was on the body’s uniform. However, it is missing a skull, thus making identification by dental records impossible. It was also found several kilometers from here.
### Francis L. Raub: Investigation Files

**Photograph, Wall of the Missing, Luxembourg American Cemetery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<tr>
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<td>CPL</td>
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<td>Robinson Micke N</td>
<td>PFC</td>
<td>110 INF 28 DIV</td>
<td>SOUTH CAROLINA</td>
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**Virtual Reality Credits:**

- **Narrator:** Alan Birkemeier
- **Ella Raub:** Dr. Cathy Gorn
- **Soldier One:** Chris Johnson
- **Soldier Two:** Dr. Christopher Hamner
- **Mrs. Klinger:** Kaat Vanderjeugt

**Special thanks to:**

- The Ebell of Los Angeles
- Bartholomew County Library’s Digital Underground
Investigation Journal: Recovered Remains

Investigator Name: ____________________________

Subject: ______________________________________

(rank)   (name)    (unit)

Name of next of kin/Relationship: ____________________________

Physical Description of the Subject: ______________________________________

______________________________________________________

Description of Dental work: ______________________________________

______________________________________________________

Country where the subject died: ____________________________

Theater of War:   Europe    Africa    Pacific    Homefront

Cause of Death: ______________________________________

______________________________________________________

Circumstances of Death: ______________________________________

______________________________________________________

In your opinion were the remains found this soldier? Why or why not?

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________
Investigation Journal: A Letter to Mrs. Raub

Complete the entire form and then draft a brief letter to Mrs. Raub about your investigation’s findings. Be sure to answer whether or not you could identify the bodies found as that of her son. Remember, this is a grieving mother. Be delicate.

Mrs. Ella Raub
910 Oliver Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Mrs. Raub,


Sincerely Yours,
Synthesis Questions

In what ways are service members memorialized at ABMC cemeteries?

Do you feel that it is important to memorialize service members who were not identified? If so, why? If not, why not?