Del Norte Triplicate

NEWS

Adolph P. Aguirre, 21, is finally accounted for

By Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency September 10, 2026



WASHINGTON—The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced today that U.S. Army Air Forces Sgt. Adolph P. Aguirre, 21, of Exeter, California, who was killed during World War II, was accounted for on May 29, 2026.

Aguirre's family recently received their full briefing on his identification, therefore, additional details on his identification can be shared.

In the summer of 1943, Aguirre was assigned to the 67th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 44th Bombardment Group (Heavy), in Libya. On Aug. 16, he was the assistant radio operator aboard a B-24D Liberator bomber on a mission to San Nicola, Italy, near the city of Foggia. That morning, Aguirre's bomber was one of 25 making an attack on the airfield there. After a successful run, the bombers were targeted by intense, accurate anti-aircraft fire. Aguirre's bomber was one of nine to go down. With the area around San Nicola under enemy control, it was impossible for Allied forces to search for possible survivors. With no news of Aguirre's survival and no record of him being captured, the War Department issued a presumptive finding of death on Aug. 17, 1944.

Beginning in 1946, the American Graves Registration Service, the organization tasked with recovering missing American service members in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, searched for Aguirre, his crewmates, and signs of their plane, but were unsuccessful in finding anything that could be identified as belonging to Aguirre or the plane. Aguirre was declared non-recoverable on Nov. 15, 1950.

In 2019, DPAA historians began researching five sets of unknown remains that had been recovered from the town of Lacedonia, Italy, about 30 miles south-southwest of San Nicola. They had been reported to British Graves Registration personnel in February 1945 and investigated by the AGRS in April 1945. During the investigation, no evidence could be found identifying the remains or the plane that had crashed. AGRS disinterred the remains in Lacedonia and reburied them at the U.S. Military Cemetery Naples. After much research, DPAA historians recommended the five Unknowns be disinterred for scientific comparison to Aguirre and his crew. In June 2022, the Department of Defense and the American Battle Monuments Commission disinterred the five Unknowns and transferred them to the DPAA laboratory for scientific analysis.

To identify Aguirre's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological and dental analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used nuclear single nucleotide polymorphism DNA analysis.

Aguirre's name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at Carthage American Cemetery, an ABMC site in Carthage, Tunisia, along with the others missing from WWII. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. Aguirre will be buried on Sept. 18, 2026, in his hometown.

For family and funeral information, call the Army Casualty Office at (800) 892-2490.

For additional information on the War Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving their country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil or on social media at www.facebook.com/dodpaa, https://www.linkedin.com/company/dodpaa, https://www.instagram.com/dodpaa/, or https://x.com/dodpaa.

Aguirre's personnel profile can be viewed at: https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt000001EhN2dEAF.