

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# FINDING TED HALL

In June 1941, two friends, Ted Hall and Don Lowery, enlisted in the Marine Corps. After completing boot camp, they were assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma and stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The United States had not yet entered World War II, and on the first weekend of December, Hall and Lowery enjoyed some leisure time, shopping and mailing Christmas cards. When interviewed later about his friend, Lowery commented, "No matter how bad the food was, [Hall] never missed a meal."<sup>1</sup> On the morning of December 7, 1941, Hall tried to wake Lowery for breakfast, but Lowery was not interested: "I didn't even open my eyes. I didn't feel the food was worth it," he recalled.<sup>2</sup> This decision to stay in bed may have saved Lowery's life.

At about 7:50 a.m., the USS Oklahoma was struck by several torpedoes dropped by Japanese planes as part of their surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. As the ship filled with water, Lowery made his way to the deck, but was then blown into the water by an explosion on the nearby USS Arizona. Lowery safely boarded another ship and survived the attack without injury. His friend Ted Hall, however, did not make it off the Oklahoma alive. According to Lowery, "He went to breakfast that morning. I was told he was down there when one of the torpedoes hit and one of the gear lockers turned over on him. He was crushed."<sup>3</sup> The Oklahoma rolled over and sunk within 20 minutes of the first torpedo hit, taking with it more than 400 men. The attack on Pearl Harbor prompted the United States to enter World War II.

Over the next few years, the Navy and the U.S. Army American Graves Registration Service worked to recover and identify the remains of the Oklahoma crew. Their efforts were limited by the technology available at the time, however, and they were able to identify only 35 crew members. The rest of the recovered remains, including those of Ted Hall, were buried in group graves at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

In 2015, armed with new DNA analysis technology, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) and the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) launched an ambitious effort to exhume and identify the remains of the USS Oklahoma crew. They contacted family members of the crew to collect DNA samples they could use to match with the unidentified remains.

## Reflection

Why do you think the military makes such an effort to identify the remains of fallen service members?

Multiple sets of brothers were killed aboard the USS Oklahoma. How might this have complicated the use of DNA identification? What other methods could be used to identify them?

What other applications could DNA identification be used for?

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Haley, "Japanese Bombs Exploded Lazy Pearl Harbor Sunday," *The Kansas City Times*, December 7, 1973, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.