

Gone But Never Forgotten

Corporal DeMaret Marston Kirtley, a native of Kaycee, Wyoming, was born on March 5, 1929 to Ura Omer Kirtley and Stella Webb Kirtley. He was the youngest of six children and was known by family and friends as Marston. He lived most of his life in Antelope Basin, north of Kaycee, where he spent much of his time working on his parent's sheep ranch with his father and brother Locke. He attended elementary school in Antelope Basin and high school in Buffalo, Wyoming.

Cpl. Kirtley proudly enlisted in the U.S. Army on February 24, 1950. In July of the same year, after receiving basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas, he would make one last trip home to Kaycee to visit his parents before leaving for Japan to fight in the Korean War. In late November 1950, Kirtley was assigned to Battery A, 57th Field Artillery Battalion. Approximately 2,500 U.S. and 700 South Korean soldiers assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team, which was deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. It was attacked by an overwhelming number of unexpected Chinese forces resulting in many American casualties. Kirtley was reported missing in action on December 6, 1950, when he could not be accounted for after the American forces withdrew to the south. He was last seen in the vicinity of Hagaru-ri, Hamgyeong Province, North Korea. Kirtley's name did not appear on any prisoner of war lists and no returning Americans reported Kirtley as a prisoner of war. Due to the lack of information regarding his status, the Army declared him deceased on December 31, 1953.

In 1954, an agreement was reached between the United Nations, North Korea, and China regarding the recovery and return of each side's dead. The agreement was known as Operation GLORY. Kirtley was among the 416 sets of remains that could not be identified and so these remains were sent to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, for burial as "Unknowns". One set designated as "X-15900 Operation GLORY" was among a group of remains that were unilaterally turned over, reportedly being recovered from isolated burial sites on the east side of the Chosin Reservoir. On May 8, 2017, "X-15900 Operation GLORY" was disinterred and the remains sent to the laboratory to be identified. Cpl. DeMaret Marston Kirtley had been finally been found. Mitochondrial DNA analysis, dental and anthropological analysis were used to identify the remains.

Cpl. Marston Kirtley's parents, Ura and Stella, and siblings Mary Kirtley Sherburne, Sydney Lawrence (SL), Locke, and Zaide Kirtley have all passed. He is survived by his nieces Zena Husman (Jon Teigland) and Karmen Kirtley (Ira Tropp), great nieces Suzanne (Dwyane) Krenzelo and Kari Husman (Darren Warner), and great-great nieces and nephews Piper, Beck, and Rowan who are all very proud to welcome him home. Sixty-nine years after he served his country with pride and honor, Cpl. Kirtley will be returned to his home in Wyoming.

In Loving Memory Of Marston Kirtley



March 5, 1929 - December 6, 1950



Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.



*In Loving Memory Of
Corporal DeMaret Marston Kirtley*

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Thursday, June 27, 2019 ~
Arriving From Hawaii to Billings, MT.

Friday, June 28, 2019 ~
Public Viewing, 0945 - 1245
Kane Funeral Home, Sheridan, WY

Saturday, June 29, 2019 ~
Public Viewing, 0930-1000
Harold Jarrard Park

Service Immediately Following Viewing

OFFICIATING

Pastor Randy Sawyer

MUSIC

I Will Stand, Amazing Grace, I Will Rise

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Father ~ Ura Omer Kirtley
Mother ~ Stella Webb Kirtley
Brother ~ Ura Locke Kirtley
Sisters ~ Zaide Kirtley & Mary Kirtley Sherburne

Interment With Full Military Honors
Kaycee Cemetery

A reception will follow at the Harold Jarrard Park.



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