

Is a dead body a person?

On the night of July 19, 1916, halfway through the First World War, troops from Australia and Great Britain attacked German positions in Fromelles, in northern France. The Germans were prepared. The battle ended the next day, after thousands of Brits and Aussies had died. It was, according to a magazine produced by the Australian government, “the worst 24 hours in Australia’s entire history.”

In 2002, an Australian amateur historian named Lambis Englezos visited Fromelles and noticed that the number of graves was far fewer than the number of soldiers reported missing from the battle. He suspected that the Germans had buried many in mass graves, and over the next few years he convinced reporters at *60 Minutes Australia* of his theory. Its eventual [broadcast](#), as well as reports from Red Cross records and aerial photos, led to an official investigation. In 2008 and 2009, archaeologists dug up five mass graves, containing 250 bodies.

Then came the question of identifying them. After more than 90 years, standard identification methods — fingerprints, medical and dental records — weren’t available. But there was DNA, deep inside the bone marrow. So the researchers extracted samples from the remains and then re-buried each body in its own grave.

Read full, original article: [Personhood Week: When Dead Bodies Become Dead People](#)