



Massachusetts Governor Charles Baker has ordered that the United States flag and the Commonwealth flag be lowered to half-staff from sunrise until sunset on **Friday, May 25, 2018**, the date of interment, in honor of USMC PFC Francis E. Drake, Jr., (KIA, Guadalcanal, 1942) originally of Springfield, Massachusetts.

missingmarines.com:

Except for scholars of the battle, October 9, 1942 is not a particularly noteworthy day in the history of Guadalcanal. American presence on the island, while not exactly secure, was at least not as tenuous as it had been. The Cactus Air Force was developing a daily routine, and Japanese raids came in like clockwork. The battles of the Tenaru, Savo Island, and Edson's Ridge were in the past; Battleship Sunday, the attack on Henderson Field, the Matanikau Offensive and the Long Patrol had not yet occurred. The main activities on October 9 were the arrival of the First Battalion, Second Marines from garrison duty on Tulagi, and the successful conclusion of a flanking attack along the far bank of the Matanikau River that removed a thorn in the side of the Marine perimeter. Both of these actions resulted in men killed, wounded, and missing. The remains of at least twenty-five Marines lost on this date were declared non-recoverable after the war.* This, sadly, is not terribly unusual. What is interesting about October 9, 1942 is how many of the men who went "missing" that day have been recovered.

FOUND ON GUADALCANAL: Harry Morrissey, Albert Bernes, Francis Drake

OCTOBER 10, 2013 MISSING MARINES LEAVE A COMMENT

A reader named Melanie provided a link to [this Australian newscast](#), detailing the finding of PFC Harry Clark Morrissey, PFC Francis E. Drake Jr, and Private Albert Leroy Bernes.

A homeowner in Honiara, Guadalcanal, found the remains of the three men while digging a new foundation in his yard. One set of remains carried a dog tag, naming Francis Drake; the other two were known to be buried beside him.

The three Marines were members of Chesty Puller's First Battalion, 7th Marines (Morrissey in Company B, Drake in Company C, and Bernes in Company D) and lost their lives fighting along the Matanikau River on October 9, 1942.

News of this discovery comes on the seventy-first anniversary of their burial. If that's not fate, I don't know what is.

PFC Francis Drake, of Springfield, Massachusetts, was the first serviceman from his town to lose his life in the war; he was posthumously awarded the Silver Star.

The President of the United States of America takes pride in presenting the Silver Star (Posthumously) to Private First Class Francis E. Drake, Jr. (MCSN: 299871), United States Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity during action against enemy Japanese forces on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, on 9 October 1942. While serving with Company C of the First Battalion, Seventh Marines, FIRST Marine Division, south of Point Cruz and west of the Matanikau River, Private First Class Drake and a comrade, while exposed to vigorous hostile fire, attempted to carry a wounded Marine from the scene of his injury to a protective ridge about one hundred yards distant. When almost within reach of his objective, Private First Class Drake was struck by enemy fire and killed. His heroic spirit of self-sacrifice was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

