Tomb
in the
Heart

Nation

The Origins and Creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Allison S. Finkelstein



A Tomb in the Heart of the Nation: The Origins and Creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Allison S. Finkelstein Senior Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries 11 November 2025 Cover image by Johnny Chang Cover photo from the Library of Congress

Dedication

To America's Unknown Soldiers: may this book be a living memorial to your sacrifices.

and

In memory of: Dr. Richard X. Palmer, Dr. Jon Sumida, COL Lloyd Neale Cosby, and Senator Max Cleland

Acknowledgements

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Introduction: A Nation's Tomb



Figure 00.1. Tomb Guards from the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) perform the Changing of the Guard Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier every hour from 1 October to 31 March, and every half hour from 1 April to 30 September while the cemetery is open. The guard change pictured here took place on 20 March 2025, in front of a large crowd of onlookers. For the history of the Tomb Guards, see "Sidebar 00a. Silence and Respect: Guarding the Tomb." (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

On a lush hill in Arlington, Virginia, overlooking Washington, D.C., crowds of people gather every day to watch American soldiers guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Captivated, the visitors stand in respectful silence as soldiers from the 3d Infantry Regiment (the Old Guard) march back and forth in front of the massive marble tomb, never treading on the three flat crypts positioned on the plaza in front of it. The visitors come from all over the United States and around the world. Young and old, they trek to this hilltop to observe and participate in a ritual renowned for its solemnity and perfection at a place shrouded in memory and steeped in history.

What leads these people to make this pilgrimage? What inspires them to visit these graves of men they do not know from wars long past? How and why did this tomb become such a meaningful site for both the American people and foreign visitors? Despite its fame, the history

and significance of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier remain too little known and only partially understood by most Americans. On the occasion of the Tomb's centennial in 2021, it seemed appropriate for Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) to remedy this issue with an official published history of the origins and creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Begun as part of the Department of Defense commemoration of the 2021 centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, "A Tomb in the Heart of a Nation": The Creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier provides a comprehensive history of the Tomb's origins. Drawing on primary sources from the collections of the National Archives and other repositories, it has two main objectives: first, to provide a thorough and captivating narrative of the establishment of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, taking into account the historical context that motivated its creation and the reasons for its development; and second, to analyze and explore the significance of the Tomb as a site of memory central to American military commemoration and to reflect on the Tomb's meanings and legacy. With these two objectives, this publication aims to teach a wide audience about the Tomb and its importance. This will enable more people to understand why this site remains so consequential. Hopefully, readers who travel to visit the Tomb will better comprehend their visit. For those unable to visit the Tomb, this publication will allow them to learn about the Tomb from afar. In reading about the Tomb, readers will themselves engage in the centennial commemoration, becoming part of the "imagined community" that honored this centennial by learning about its meanings. 1

As an official government publication, this book has as its intended audience a wide range of prospective readers. While grounded in the methods of historical scholarship, it is written to be accessible and engaging to members of the general public, ANC visitors, military

members and veterans, students, and nonscholarly audiences alike. At the same time, it is intended to be utilized by scholars and thus has extensive citations.

With such diverse audiences in mind, choices had to be made about what to include in this book and what to omit. This required a discussion of its purpose and methodology up front. The history of the Tomb is not an obscure topic. Much has been written about the Tomb in academic books, works of theory, and popular histories. However, most of these works include the Tomb as part of a larger story, not as their primary topic. Many details about the Tomb's establishment have been overlooked in these works. Too frequently, especially on the internet, myths and incorrect information about the Tomb have proliferated. This book addresses these issues, positioning the origins and creation of the Tomb as the main focus in a thorough historical investigation based on primary sources and intensive archival research. In addition to setting the record straight about the Tomb's creation, it delves into the Tomb's establishment and constantly evolving meanings. Hopefully, readers will come away with a more thorough understanding of the Tomb while also finding leads for further study as desired. Thus, this book can serve as a foundational and trustworthy secondary source.



Figure 00.2. This photograph, taken from inside Memorial Amphitheater's Display Room on 4 November 1921, one week before the World War I Unknown Soldier's funeral, shows the marble base of the Tomb's crypt and the lowering mechanism for the casket already in place ahead of the burial.

(Library of Congress)

That being said, this book does not rehash much of the excellent scholarship already done on the Tomb. Doing so would weigh down the narrative and make it less accessible to general readers. While these earlier works were consulted during the research and are included in the citations, a conscious effort was made within the main text not to overdo references to specialized works on theory, history, and literary analysis, or to other secondary sources. Readers in search of further learning about the Tomb are encouraged to consult cited volumes in the notes.

Primary sources are quoted and referenced in the text considerably more often than secondary sources, something that readers of scholarly histories will be accustomed to. Archival sources form the foundation of this book and drive its arguments and analysis. As much as possible, quoted primary source materials retain the spelling and punctuation of the original source. The bulk of these sources came from the National Archives (NARA), both the National Archives, College Park (NACP), and the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. (NAB). NARA's holdings were key to understanding the timeline of events that led to the Tomb's creation and uncovering details about the process. Arlington National Cemetery's sources about the Tomb are less thorough than NARA's, as all official records went to NARA, the nation's official repository for federal records. The ANC Historical Research Collection (ANCHRC) did, however, provide valuable resources that have been collected by the cemetery staff over the years, including many photocopies from NARA, newspaper articles, some personal records, assorted keepsake items, and ephemera. Other archival repositories that provided sources include the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC), the AT&T Archives, and the Marine Corps History Division Historical Resources Branch, among others. Digitized primary sources, contemporary memoirs, legislation, and congressional records also informed

the analysis, as did extensive research into historical newspaper accounts. Archival photos and motion picture footage were also consulted; many of the events surrounding the Tomb's creation were captured in still and motion picture photography, providing fascinating windows into the process. Photographs and images are included in this book to help bring this history to life for readers and to provide visual evidence of events as they unfolded.

Importantly, this book seeks to meticulously uncover the history of the Tomb's creation through these primary sources, not to detail the entire history of the Tomb. It would simply be impossible to thoroughly chronicle the Tomb's more than one hundred years of history in the span of this single volume. Perhaps this book will be the first in a series, to be followed by subsequent volumes about later stages in the Tomb's history, written by future ANC historians.

This project began during the Tomb's centennial commemoration, and the Tomb's creation story is its focus. The book begins with the contextual origins of the Tomb and concludes just after the interment of the World War I Unknown Soldier on 11 November 1921. That said, it does include sidebars about the three Unknown Soldiers later buried at the Tomb Plaza—from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War—and discusses their stories briefly in the main narrative. The background that these sidebars provide about the later Unknown Soldiers may be especially important in the case of the Vietnam War Unknown Soldier, who was positively identified and disinterred from the Tomb. During the period of focus in this book, however, there was only one Unknown Soldier intended for burial at the Tomb. Unless otherwise specified, references to the Unknown Soldier or Unknown refer to the World War I Unknown Soldier buried in 1921.

In contrast with these capitalized terms, the lowercase terms *unknown* and *unidentifiable* are used interchangeably and generally to refer to any service member's remains that were

discovered but not positively identified. *Missing*, *missing* in action, unrecovered, and unaccounted for are all used to describe the remains of service members that could not be found or recovered, including those lost at sea. During the World War I era, these men were included among those remembered and memorialized as unknown soldiers, largely because their families had no individual, identified grave to visit. The term mass grave refers to a grave that contains multiple sets of unknown remains. The term group burial refers to a grave that contains multiple sets of remains in which the identity of some fraction may be of known individuals, but the remains were so comingled that one individual could not be separated from another.

It is worth noting that the American unknown dead of World War I (as well as World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War) were almost certainly not female. Women were not officially allowed to serve in combat in the U.S. military until 2015. In more recent conflicts women were often in combat despite this ban, but during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, restrictions to women's military service meant that they did not serve in combat in ways that would have rendered their remains unidentifiable. The unidentified service members buried in the Tomb had to be male.



Figure 00.3 Arlington National Cemetery is also home to the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns, where 2,111 Civil War service members are interred. Dedicated in 1866, this earlier tomb has likewise served as a site of remembrance, hosting many commemorative events such as the gathering of women in this photograph, who were likely part of the ladies auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic.

(Library of Congress)

The chapters are organized chronologically to tell the story of the Tomb's origins and creation in the order events happened, with sidebars in an appendix that introduce related topics of interest. The first four chapters are contextual, intended to provide important background information on how the Tomb came to be. Unlike most of the later chapters, they are based primarily on secondary source research, as they cover topics already well investigated by other scholars. They do utilize some primary sources, particularly newspaper accounts. Chapter 1, "From Obscurity to Honor: The American Way of Military Death," provides an introduction to American military burial practices from the American Revolution through the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars. The discussion of the Civil War and the creation of Arlington National Cemetery during that conflict forms a particularly important part of that chapter and informs the later discussion about the need for the Tomb and the choice to situate it at Arlington. Chapter 2, "The Unknown's Army," introduces the reader to the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), the American fighting force with which the Unknown Soldier served overseas during World War I. It provides a basic overview of American participation in that war and focuses on the composition of the AEF, especially its diversity. Since the Unknown Soldier could have been any male American service member who died overseas, it is critical to understand the different backgrounds of the men who made up the AEF.



Figure 00.4. African American soldiers were frequently assigned burial and disinterment duties in France during and after the First World War. In this photograph, members of the 321st Labor Battalion are shown reinterring fallen comrades at the Fère-en-Tardenois cemetery, which is now known as the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery. (Library of Congress)

Chapter 3, "Row on Row: The Tragedy of the World War I Dead," dives into the contours of combat in World War I that led to the substantial numbers of unidentifiable remains that inspired the creation of tombs for unknown soldiers. It outlines the weapons, combat experience, and tactics that rendered remains unidentifiable, as well as other aspects of the global death toll in the war, such as the influenza pandemic. Combined, these factors traumatized the world in the wake of the war and created a need for new memorialization rituals. Chapter 3 also explains how the AEF dealt with the war dead and outlines U.S. burial policies, repatriation, overseas cemeteries, and the creation of the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), the government agency that since 1923 has been the steward of the overseas World War I cemeteries and memorials. Chapter 4, "Allied Inspiration," begins by summarizing how military memorialization operated in response to the war, and then focuses on the creation of the French and British tombs for their unknowns, events that directly inspired the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The stories of these two tombs support an in-depth analysis of the American Tomb, which borrowed elements from the French and British while also creating a distinctly

American memorial site. Americans heard much about the British and French tombs, especially in the press, and they inspired many Americans to express their desire for a Tomb and to envision what such a site might be like.

Public discourse turned into official action, as explained in Chapter 5, "A National Tomb: Legislative Authority to Honor an American Unknown." This chapter marks the transition in the book from contextual synthesis and background to research and analysis based mostly on primary sources. Chapter 5 traces, in detail, the process of crafting and passing the congressional legislation that authorized the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. From the initial idea proposed by Representative Hamilton Fish (R-NY), a World War I veteran, to the debates in Congress and the eventual passage of the legislation, this chapter uses congressional records, newspaper accounts, and NARA sources to uncover, step by step, the story of the legislation. This permits a greater understanding of the initial meaning and intentions for the Tomb and touches on issues of significance, such as the importance of the Unknown Soldier's eternal anonymity, the debates over the Tomb's location, and the meanings ascribed to the Tomb from the outset.



Figure 00.5. After America's Unknown Soldier was chosen in Châlons-sur-Marne, France, a joint U.S. and French honor guard maintained a continuous vigil over the casket until it began its journey to the port of Le Havre and, ultimately, home to the United States. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

Chapter 6, "Out of Many, One: Selecting America's Unknown Soldier," takes the reader to France, where the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps led the process of selecting the Unknown Soldier to be buried in the Tomb. Using the voluminous paper trail left by the War Department, this chapter details the entire process of the selection—the initial planning, the disinterment of the four unknown candidates, and the selection ceremony itself. It explores the diplomatic aspects of these events, which the French military supported and which drew crowds of grateful French people eager to honor this unidentified American service member. Throughout these events, the highest of standards of organization and conduct were employed, setting precedents for perfection and dignity that remain paramount at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier today.

These high standards form a large part of the events in Chapter 7, "The Final Journey Home." This chapter picks up from the selection ceremony and follows the Unknown Soldier's journey to the point of departure at the port of Le Havre, France, through his arrival in the United States at the Washington Navy Yard on board the USS *Olympia*. Through correspondence, speeches, ship logs, and other sources, it recounts the ceremonies that took place ahead of the

departure at Le Havre, the story of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps' involvement in the transport of the Unknown's casket, the rough transatlantic crossing of the USS *Olympia*, and the arrival at the Washington Navy Yard, ahead of the Unknown's short trip to the Capitol Rotunda. Here again, involvement from the French stands out as a signature part of the ceremonies, filled with diplomacy, formality, and heartfelt gratitude for the United States' involvement in the war.

The final two chapters cover the climactic moment of the Tomb's creation—the ceremonies and events surrounding the funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. Chapter 8, "Commemorative Nationalism: Planning the Tomb and Burial Ceremonies," begins by unpacking the extensive planning that went into these events, from presidential proclamations, funding debates, and logistics, to the construction of the temporary Tomb to be used for the funeral. It concludes with the Unknown Soldier's time lying in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, a high honor intended to fete him like the nation's deceased presidents and highest ranking military heroes. The accounts of the emotional visitors who came to the Rotunda demonstrate the deep connections many everyday Americans felt to the Unknown Soldier, even before his burial.

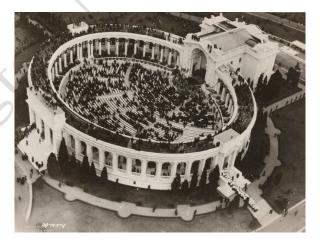


Figure 00.6. Large crowds gathered at Memorial Amphitheater on 11 November 1921 to honor the Unknown during the official funeral and interment ceremonies. In this aerial photograph, holders of one of the 5,000 issued tickets are seen taking their seats inside the amphitheater, while those without tickets gathered around the exterior to witness the ceremony and listen to it being amplified on loudspeakers.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

These sentiments continued with great intensity on the day of the funeral itself, as documented in Chapter 9, "A People's Funeral: Burying America's Unknown Soldier." Mostly covering just one day, 11 November 1921, this chapter provides a play-by-play account of events, revealing many of the themes and ideas that became central to the Tomb's meaning. It recounts the grand military procession that brought the Unknown Soldier from the Capitol Rotunda to Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater, the funeral service, and the actual committal ceremony, during which the Unknown was buried in the temporary Tomb. Along the way, the reader will encounter some of the technological marvels of 1921 used in these ceremonies, as well as many of the leading national and international figures of the day. Speeches are analyzed, military decorations explained, and participants introduced. The chapter draws the events of 11 November 1921 to a close with analysis of the media's reactions and the War Department's effort to be inclusive of diverse Americans. It then quickly outlines some of the tasks taken to complete this sacred mission.

Finally, the Conclusion, "A Century of Honor at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," briefly covers high points in the remainder of the Tomb's history. This is not intended to be comprehensive, but it does provide a short summary of what happened after the Tomb's creation. It gives a synopsis of the process of completing the final Tomb, the interwar years, the 1958 dual funeral for the Unknown Soldiers from World War II and the Korean War, and the dramatic saga of the burial and subsequent disinterment of the Vietnam War Unknown Soldier. The Conclusion then shifts to an analysis of the Tomb's meaning, continued importance, and evolution into the present day. Through the story of the 2021 centennial commemoration, the Conclusion captures the Tomb's continued significance to the modern United States and its enduring status as a pilgrimage site.



Figure 00.7. Before a guard was posted at the Tomb to maintain the decorum of the site, a fence was installed to prevent visitors from approaching or standing on the simple, flat-topped marble structure. This photograph was taken around 1923, before any guards watched over the Tomb. (*Library of Congress*)

No one book can fully detail the Tomb's history and many meanings, and we can only guess at what the future may hold for this sacred site. It is hoped, though, that this volume will do justice to the Tomb's origin story and educate readers about the extraordinary history of its creation. As a product of the 2021 centennial commemoration, this book stands as memorial to the Tomb itself and to the American service members it honors. Through these pages, their stories live on. The meanings attached to the Tomb are inscribed in American history. Hopefully this book will inform subsequent generations about what they see and experience when they make that trek up the hill at Arlington to the gleaming white Tomb to pay their respects to the unknown men buried at this century-old sanctuary.

Chapter 1: From Obscurity to Honor: The American Way of Military Death

The United States government's decision to create the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1921 reflected Americans' changing attitudes toward military death and burial. From the time of the Revolutionary War (1775–1783), Americans had to consider how best to honor those who gave their lives for the nation. Early American culture lacked a strong tradition of honoring its military dead in a uniform way, even as the nation came of age amidst a series of wars. The mass fatalities and public mobilization of the Civil War (1861–1865) eventually led the nation to develop a democratic method for commemorating its war dead, regardless of rank or status in society. In this historical context, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is understood as a step forward in the nation's approach to military memorialization, one that came about as a result of, and in reaction to, the traditions of the past. The Tomb emphatically demonstrated that all of the nation's military dead—known and unknown, officer and enlisted, with or without an identified grave—would be honored with the utmost respect. This had not always been the case.

American Military Burial Practices Before the Civil War

During the American Revolution, the fledgling United States, like most nations at the time, lacked systematic methods for the recovery and burial of its war dead. At the time, custom dictated that the victors of an engagement would bury the dead from both sides, because they remained in control of the battlefield. The defeated army might try to remove its wounded and some of its highest-ranking fatalities. It made little difference whether a combatant died of disease or in combat; military rank and social standing determined the treatment of an American service member who died during the War of Independence. This was true for both burial

practices and funerary rites. Officers' remains often received much better treatment and more elaborate ceremonies honoring their sacrifices. Most officers in colonial America came from backgrounds that classified them as gentlemen in the social hierarchy, and so they tended to be buried apart from common soldiers, reflecting both their higher social status and their higher military ranks. Ceremonies for American officers and, sometimes, for noncommissioned officers, followed British and European traditions. By contrast, little guidance existed for the treatment of the bodies of enlisted soldiers, who rarely received much in the way of funeral honors or public recognition of their sacrifices. Burial practices varied widely and depended on the circumstances of each death. Given the lack of technology and recording methods at the time, and the chaos of a long war against a global power, graves were unorganized and haphazard. Group burials and mass graves abounded, as did unidentified dead. The locations of many graves were simply lost. The poorly funded American military did not develop standard methods for military burials; nor did it establish military cemeteries for its war dead. These graves remain scattered, with many hidden or lost to history.



Figure 1.1. An example of a later commemoration of the Revolutionary War, this Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolution is located in the cemetery of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria, Virginia. The unknown remains were discovered during construction in 1826 and reinterred at their current location. Efforts to erect a memorial began in the early 1920s, and the permanent monument was dedicated in 1929. (*Allison S. Finkelstein*)

During the first half of the nineteenth century, military burial practices in the United States remained virtually unchanged. For the most part, those who died in service received burials at or near their place of death, often at post cemeteries or at cemeteries near the post if it did not have its own burial ground. ¹¹ The Army's Quartermaster Department cared for the post cemeteries because they fell within its responsibility for army garrisons, and it also took care of military burials that occurred outside of the posts. ¹² Congress provided limited funds for the funerals of low-ranking soldiers and noncommissioned officers, while burial expenses for commissioned officers were covered primarily by the deceased officer's estate and supplemented, if necessary, by a small amount from the Army or contributions from other officers. ¹³ Starting with the Seminoles Campaign of the Indian Wars (1835–1842), officers' families could apply to the Quartermaster Department for help recovering their loved ones' bodies. If the family purchased and delivered a coffin, the Army would help transport the remains as long as no Army funds were spent—the law did not allow such expenditures. ¹⁴

For families who could afford it, this option continued during the Mexican War (1846–1848) and various campaigns on the Western frontier, yet it remained an exception to general practice. Most officers and all enlisted service members received burials near where they died or fell in battle and were not repatriated. ¹⁵ Gravesites frequently remained unmarked, and recordkeeping was poor. ¹⁶ During the Mexican War, for example, some commanders tried to gather the dead and bury them together, but the locations of the graves were lost. ¹⁷ On 28 September 1850, Congress authorized the creation of a cemetery in Mexico City for American service members who died in the war with Mexico and had been buried in the surrounding area, as well as any American civilians who died in the vicinity. ¹⁸ The cemetery now known as Mexico City National Cemetery was established the next year, and the remains of 750 unknown service members were reinterred there in a mass grave now marked by a memorial. ¹⁹



Figure 1.2. Mexican City National Cemetery includes the graves of U.S. service members who died during the Mexican American War and a memorial honoring unknowns in a mass grave. At that time, the U.S. had no formal policy to repatriate fallen service members from overseas. The cemetery is now administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission.

(American Battle Monuments Commission)

Catalyst for Change: The American Civil War

The Civil War caused a seismic shift in how the U.S. military cared for its dead.²⁰ Its traditional, relatively unorganized methods proved insufficient for handling the war's mass carnage. Three important factors converged to force the military to transform its approach to managing the war dead.

First, the Civil War resulted in the most wartime deaths, by orders of magnitude, that the country had yet seen. It remains the nation's bloodiest conflict, with about 620,000 total deaths, either from combat or disease, from both sides. ²¹ New technologies of warfare, such as rifled muskets and artillery, dramatically increased fatalities as well as the likelihood that bodies would be too damaged to be identified. ²² Casualty rates were so high that, for the first time, Congress passed conscription legislation to meet the growing demand for troops. ²³ The sheer quantity of the dead and the health risks posed by these corpses necessitated the development of new methods and places of burial. ²⁴

Second, by the 1860s, Americans had become emotionally invested in the act of dying and were deeply fascinated by the culture of death itself.²⁵ Most Americans were acquainted with the concept of the "Good Death," which favored certain ways of dying that would be more comforting, both to those dying and to their relatives.²⁶ Customs meant to ease the passage from life to death included a preference for dying at home, surrounded by family members as witnesses.²⁷ Soldiers who died alone on a battlefield, with no one present to hear any final words, shed tears, or offer prayers for them, were denied these essential comforts.²⁸ Along with these specific desires for a peaceful deathbed, people also grew more concerned about the treatment of bodily remains. They feared the desecration of their bodies and often desired to be buried at home near their families, regardless of where they had died.²⁹ These social and cultural

norms were threatened by the war as men died far from home, their bodies often obliterated or rendered unrecognizable by its particularly destructive types of combat. Thanks to the new technology of photography, civilians could also confront the horrors of war like never before.

They could see the battlefield dead, lifeless in photographs, and were forced to consider the grim fates of those who died in the war. With both soldiers and civilians worried about the treatment of remains, the military knew it would have to adapt its methods for disposing of the dead.



Figure 1.3. This circa 1862 photo by Alexander Gardner shows a group of corpses gathered for burial after the Battle of Antietam. (*Library of Congress*)

Third, the war dead began to take on a new meaning beyond the individual lives that were mourned by families and communities. Collectively, they came to represent the war itself, symbolizing the trials of a nation torn apart internally. ³² Many people felt that the war dead had the right to decent burials and, further, had earned honors for their service to the nation. Soldiers and their families were upset by the military's ad hoc burial methods, its apparent lack of care for the remains of the dead, and the lost names and identities of the many unknown dead. ³³



Figure 1.4. During and after the Civil War, merchants conducted a brisk trade in memorial items such as this hand-tinted lithograph inscribed with the name of Pvt. Thomas Ashton of the 51st Pennsylvania Regiment. The weeping woman personifies the grief felt by those who lost loved ones in the war.

(Courtesy of Roderick Gainer)

The confluence of these three factors led the U.S. government to institute changes to the way the military cared for its dead. However, these efforts occurred slowly, were piecemeal, and too often could not prevent gruesome battlefield delays or the loss of many names of the dead. A series of military orders and laws instituted these changes—and started to slowly reshape

American military commemoration. On 11 September 1861, the War Department issued General Orders No. 75, which ordered the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps to place record books and forms at all "General and Post hospitals of the Army" for the purpose of "preserving accurate and permanent records of deceased soldiers, and their place of burial." General Orders No. 75 also gave the Quartermaster Corps the duty of providing "proper means for a registered headboard, to be secured at the head of each soldier's grave" and ordered that whenever a "soldier or officer of the United States Army dies, it shall be the duty of the commanding officer of the military corps or department in which such person dies" to execute the forms now required. All adjutants of military posts or companies would then be required to transfer these mortuary

records, once received, to the adjutant general in Washington. ³⁶ On 3 April 1862, General Orders No. 33 added to these directives a requirement that gave commanding generals the duty of securing ground "in some suitable spot near every battlefield, so soon as it may be in their power, and to cause the remains of those killed to be interred, with headboards to the graves bearing numbers, and, where practicable, the names of the persons buried in them" with a corresponding record of each burial ground. ³⁷ The Confederacy provided similar guidelines for handling its dead, but, like the U.S. government, it did not actually provide a systematic means for burials. Thus, despite some important advances, Civil War burials frequently remained a messy affair, even as the U.S. military tried to create a more organized system. ³⁸



Figure 1.5. This 1865 photograph, taken by John Reekie, depicts African American men collecting remains for reinterment after the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia. (*Library of Congress*)

Congress intervened on 17 July 1862, passing a law that enabled the president to "purchase cemetery grounds, and cause them to be used as a National Cemetery for the soldiers who shall die in the service of the country." This was an important step in systematizing military burials. The year 1862 saw the creation of the first cemeteries that represent the beginnings of the original national cemetery system. By 1871, this system had expanded to

include seventy-three national cemeteries that contained the remains of U.S. dead from the Civil War. 40

After the war, Congress passed legislation to further define the concept of these new national cemeteries. On 13 April 1866, Congress authorized and required the secretary of war to prevent the desecration of soldiers' graves and to "secure suitable burial-places in which they may be properly interred, and to have the grounds inclosed, so that the resting-places of the honored dead may be kept sacred forever." On 22 February 1867, Congress passed another law directing that these cemeteries be enclosed with "a good and substantial stone or iron fence," and that each grave be marked with "a small headstone or block." Each of these headstones would include a grave number that corresponded with a burial register kept at the cemetery, a copy of which was also maintained in the Army Quartermaster's office. Each of the cemeteries contained a lodge for the superintendent, usually a disabled veteran, tasked with "guarding and protecting the cemetery and giving information" to visitors. Although burials in these cemeteries initially were limited to wartime fatalities, congressional legislation expanded in 1872 and 1873 to allow all U.S. veterans of the Civil War to be buried at a national cemetery.

While the U.S. government defined and expanded the new national cemetery system, the Quartermaster Department embarked on what became known as the Federal Reburial Program. 46 Shortly after the war's end, the staff of the Quartermaster Department began an extended effort to search battlefields, hospitals, prisons, and any other sites that might contain the remains of U.S. soldiers. They identified and reburied these remains in national cemeteries, unless families or friends requested to bury them privately. 47 The Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington, D.C., created a Cemeterial Branch to centralize its work related to finding and burying the dead. 48 Meanwhile, much of the research into the remains and the upkeep of records

related to the process continued to be done by the chief quartermasters of the various departments and divisions. ⁴⁹ When the Federal Reburial Program concluded in 1871, more than 299,000 U.S. war dead had been reinterred in seventy-three national cemeteries throughout the country. ⁵⁰

Despite the success of the reburial program, only about 58 percent of the U.S. war dead could be identified, because of the chaos of Civil War combat, hasty burials, poor recording systems, mass casualties, and lack of government-issued identification tags. ⁵¹ Nevertheless, the recovered remains of those who had lost their identities still received burials in national cemeteries as "unknowns." ⁵² In this way, the unknown soldier became a heartbreaking symbol of the Civil War, one that haunted and disturbed many Americans (see Sidebar 01a: Unknown Burials in National Cemeteries). The double trauma from this war—the overwhelming number of deaths and so many unidentifiable bodies among them—remained in the national consciousness and would, years later, catalyze the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier after World War I.

As the government developed the national cemetery system, postwar burial efforts focused mostly on the graves of U.S. soldiers. The language of the 1862 law and General Orders No. 75 excluded Confederates from national cemeteries, although some Confederate graves could be found at national cemeteries, with varying types of markers. ⁵³ For the most part, however, private memorial groups in the south—often led by women and women's organizations, chiefly, at first, local Ladies' Memorial Associations—worked to bury and care for the Confederate war dead in Confederate cemeteries. Thus, attention to the Confederate dead remained mostly in private hands. ⁵⁴ The federal government did not take on the care of Confederate graves until the Spanish-American War of 1898. ⁵⁵

The establishment of the national cemetery system profoundly changed the way that Americans buried and remembered their military dead, setting new standards and expectations for how the United States would honor its war dead in the future. Specifically, the federal government now had an obligation to properly identify, bury, and care for the war dead—in perpetuity—in national cemeteries. No longer would the American public accept chaotic mass burials or the loss of so many service members' final resting places and identities. Instead, national cemeteries became sacred sites of memory, places of national importance and pilgrimage that commemorated the human toll of war in both personal and patriotic terms. As the national cemetery system matured, these sites were carefully landscaped and meticulously maintained in order to properly honor the service members buried within them. ⁵⁶ Once care for the military dead became the responsibility the federal government, it was a task the citizenry would come to expect not only in all subsequent conflicts but also in peacetime. These new military cemeteries marked America's landscape with the memory of the war, including the legions of unknowns, and gave the military dead a revered place in the national consciousness.

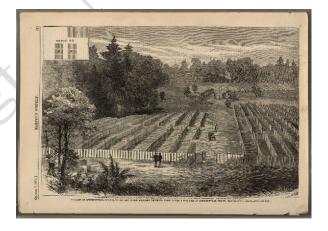


Figure 1.6. This 1865 illustration depicts the grounds at Andersonville, Georgia—the burial place of 13,000 U.S. prisoners of war who died in Andersonville Prison. Andersonville National Cemetery was established in July 1865, and today the Andersonville National Historic Site serves as a memorial to all American prisoners of war. (*Library of Congress*)

The Establishment of Arlington National Cemetery

Developed as part of the national cemetery system during the Civil War, Arlington

National Cemetery grew to occupy a special and significant place in the landscape of American
military memory. Its evolution, from one Civil War cemetery among many to a unique national
shrine, reflected the continued development of American military traditions and set the stage for
its eventual role as the location of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Before the Civil War, the land that is now known as Arlington National Cemetery was part of a plantation established by George Washington Parke Custis, the step-grandson of President George Washington. ⁵⁷ Using labor that included that of enslaved people, Custis built his mansion, Arlington House, on a high hilltop overlooking Washington, D.C. He intended it be his family home and a memorial to the nation's first president. ⁵⁸ In 1831, Custis's daughter, Mary Anna Randolph Custis, married an army officer named Robert E. Lee in the mansion's parlor. ⁵⁹ Upon the death of her father in 1857, Mary inherited the estate. ⁶⁰

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Robert E. Lee resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and joined the Confederacy to fight against the United States. ⁶¹ Knowing that Arlington House occupied a key strategic position on the heights overlooking the capital, Lee urged his family to leave the estate. After their departure, the U.S. Army seized the plantation and used it for defensive purposes to protect Washington, building several forts on the land. ⁶² In 1863, the War Department also established Freedman's Village on the Arlington property as a federally administered refugee camp for formerly enslaved people in the national capital region. ⁶³



Figure 1.7. In this photograph from June 1864, U.S. soldiers stand in front of Arlington House. (*National Archives*)

By 1864, because of the continued carnage of the Civil War, the new national cemeteries in Washington, D.C., and northern Virginia, such as Alexandria National Cemetery and the Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, had mostly filled up, resulting in a shortage of burial space in the area. ⁶⁴ The Arlington property offered a solution. The first military burial on the Arlington estate took place on 13 May 1864, and the national cemetery was formally established there in June 1864. 65 For several years, the cemetery at Arlington was not that different from any of the other newly established national cemeteries. Like the others, it contained numerous graves of unknown soldiers who had died during the Civil War. Then, in 1866, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns was erected on the property, and the remains of 2,111 unidentified Civil War soldiers were reinterred in its vault from the Bull Run battlefield in Manassas, Virginia, and other nearby battlefields. 66 This mass grave of unknowns, set apart and distinguished by its large and stately monument, was the first tomb at Arlington to honor unknowns as a distinct group. The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns formed an important precursor to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, as it identified Arlington as an appropriate place to honor unknowns (see Sidebar 01b: The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns: Arlington's First Tomb).



Figure 1.8. As deaths mounted during the Civil War, the U.S. Army repurposed parts of the Arlington estate as a military burial ground. This 1864 photograph of the cemetery shows the original wooden headboards and several African American workers.

(Chrysler Museum of Art, Andrew Joseph Russell Collection)

The rise of Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) brought nationwide attention to Arlington National Cemetery. Decoration Day commemorations were pivotal in transforming the cemetery into what many consider to be the nation's most hallowed ground. As Americans mourned in the Civil War's aftermath, people in both the North and the South decorated the graves of their loved ones with flowers. ⁶⁷ The practice of decorating the graves of the war dead flourished as an ad hoc ritual, eventually developing into an organized group commemoration known as Decoration Day. ⁶⁸ The first such event of this type may have occurred as early as 1 May 1865, when a group of African Americans in Charleston, South Carolina, along with local supporters and U.S. troops, took part in a procession to the graves of U.S. prisoners of war. The group decorated these soldiers' graves, located at a former racetrack that had been converted into a prison for U.S. soldiers by the Confederacy. ⁶⁹ Veterans' organizations, and especially their female supporters, soon played a key role in leading various Decoration Day efforts. Meanwhile, Southern states similarly developed and commemorated their own Confederate Memorial Days, which took place on various dates, depending on the locality. ⁷⁰

In May 1868, Decoration Day evolved from an informal, grassroots effort into an official observance, as advocated by former U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John A. Logan, a Civil War veteran. ⁷¹ While serving in Congress—and as commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, the nation's largest organization of U.S. (Union) veterans—Logan designated 30 May 1868 as a day of national remembrance for the memorialization of U.S. war dead. ⁷² That month, the first official national observance of Decoration Day took place at Arlington National Cemetery. ⁷³ The commemoration featured a procession from Arlington House to the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns and into the cemetery, where people decorated the graves of the war dead. ⁷⁴ This became an annual event and established Arlington as the site of the nation's official Decoration Day observance. Attendance at the yearly Decoration Day event steadily increased, and in 1873, the War Department built an amphitheater near Arlington House to accommodate the crowds . ⁷⁵



Figure 1.9. The observance of the fifth Decoration Day at Arlington National Cemetery on 30 May 1873 was the first such ceremony held at the cemetery's original amphitheater, now called Tanner Amphitheater. (*Library of Congress*)

By the beginning of the twentieth century, because of its annual Decoration Day observances, Arlington began to stand out from the other national cemeteries. As the cemetery gained cultural significance, memorials were added, and many veterans chose to be buried at

Arlington. Decoration Day grew in importance and evolved into Memorial Day, and soon the original amphitheater proved too small for the crowds that came to Arlington for the annual national event. ⁷⁶ In 1903, Judge Ivory Kimball, a prominent Civil War veteran, proposed a larger, more prominent venue to accommodate the Decoration Day crowds and to host other events. On 4 March 1913, Congress approved the construction of a larger and grander amphitheater, and dignitaries broke ground near the USS *Maine* Memorial in 1915. ⁷⁷ An elaborate ceremony marked the dedication and public opening of Memorial Amphitheater on 15 May 1920. ⁷⁸ Designed by Thomas Hastings of the architectural firm Carrèe & Hastings, and constructed primarily of marble, Memorial Amphitheater's formal, beaux arts design makes a striking contrast to the more vernacular original amphitheater near Arlington House. ⁷⁹ Although the War Department did not know it at the time, it had created the space where, just one year later, it would install the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The addition of the Tomb would forever change both Memorial Amphitheater and Arlington National Cemetery.



Figure 1.10. Constructed in the beaux arts style, Memorial Amphitheater's neoclassical elements—columns, arches, white marble—evoked the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, creating a visual analogy between the United States and the democracies of the classical era. At the same time, its resemblance to other beaux arts buildings in Washington, D.C., connected it stylistically to the monumental government structures so prominent at that time in the greater landscape of American civic architecture. (*Library of Congress*)

The Evolution of Military Burial Policy after the Civil War

Meanwhile, the U.S. military continued to develop policies and practices for the care of Americans who died in wars and military service. The Spanish-American War of 1898 marked an important milestone in the evolution of military burial policy. For the first time, the military took on the systematic recovery of the dead from overseas, which led to new developments and expectations regarding burials. With the memory of the Civil War and its orderly national cemeteries still fresh in their minds, the public expected the government to tend to the bodies of its war dead, even those who had died abroad. ⁸⁰ As a result, the government now faced the unprecedented task of planning for repatriation—the return of bodies to the United States—amidst a controversial war.

On 9 July 1898, Congress passed legislation that affirmed the need to repatriate the remains of American service members who died in the war, and authorized funds for this purpose. ⁸¹ The legislation specifically enabled the secretary of war, "in his discretion, to cause to be transported to their homes the remains of officers and soldiers who die at military camps or who are killed in action or who die in the field at places outside of the limits of the United States." ⁸² The inclusion of service members who died at camps or in the field—that is, not necessarily while in combat—proved particularly important during the Spanish-American War and the subsequent Philippine-American War. ⁸³ These were fought in the tropical climates of the Caribbean and the Philippines, where diseases such as malaria, typhoid, and yellow fever plagued the military. ⁸⁴ Although estimates vary, some research indicates that more than 2,000 American service members died from disease during the wars of 1898 to 1902, compared with the battle deaths of this period, which numbered at just above 380. ⁸⁵

The U.S. government's repatriation effort after the Spanish-American War began in February 1899, when a Quartermaster Burial Corps staffed by civilian morticians and their assistants (but under the control of the quartermaster general) started to disinter American remains in Cuba and Puerto Rico. ⁸⁶ The first shipment of U.S. military remains arrived in New York aboard the transport *Crook* in March 1899. ⁸⁷ As reported by the *New York Times*, "all the bodies not identified will be shipped to National Military Cemetery at Washington," meaning Arlington National Cemetery, where many of the identified bodies were also to be buried, while other identified bodies went to their families if requested by the next of kin. ⁸⁸ Eventually, the Army repatriated approximately 1,222 bodies from Cuba and Puerto Rico. ⁸⁹ Around 13 percent of them remained unknown, a figure proudly regarded as low by some in the Army, especially when compared to previous wars. ⁹⁰ David H. Rhodes, the chief of the Burial Corps and a longtime Arlington National Cemetery employee who served at various times as a landscaper and in leadership roles, attributed the low number of unknowns to the Army's successful marking of graves during the campaigns. ⁹¹



Figure 1.11. The Spanish-American War was the first time that the U.S. government repatriated the remains of American service members who died abroad. This photograph from around 1898 shows the flag-draped caskets of Spanish-American War dead awaiting reburial at Arlington National Cemetery. (Library of Congress)

As the conflict expanded into the Philippines, the Quartermaster Corps faced more logistical issues. They still could not fully maintain burial records effectively and, with the limited technology at their disposal, they struggled to preserve the remains of the dead for repatriation across long distances. ⁹² In the Philippines, Rhodes and his Burial Corps took charge of disinterring American remains and readying them for shipment home. ⁹³ Simultaneously, Army Chaplain Charles C. Pierce had been directed to establish and lead the U.S. Army Morgue and Office of Identification at Manila. With dual operations related to the remains of the dead, tensions between the two units soon emerged. ⁹⁴

Despite logistical and organizational challenges, both Rhodes and Pierce made significant advances in the methodology of identifying the dead and the process of repatriation. 95 Rhodes demonstrated that the number of unknowns could be reduced if the time between burials and burial registrations was decreased. He advocated for alternate methods to help identify the dead, such as burying the deceased with bottles containing slips of paper on which their names were written. 96 Pierce, meanwhile, insisted on making an identification disc—the precursor to the dog tag—a required part of a soldier's field kit. He also pushed for a central agency to take responsibility for the collection and preservation of all burial records. ⁹⁷ These advances, and the experience of repatriating American remains over long distances, formed the foundation of the military's approach to such issues during World War I. 98 Indeed, the Army called Charles Pierce out of retirement to lead that effort, and he built upon the methods he and Rhodes had pioneered during the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars. 99 Their work had a direct impact on the eventual selection of the unknown soldier from World War I, and Pierce personally participated in an early stage of preparing for that selection process, before his death in May $1921.^{100}$

Conclusion

During the Civil War, the U.S. military began to transform its policies, approaches, methods, and rituals for dealing with the nation's war dead. Many factors combined to force the military to find more systematic—and publicly acceptable—ways to care for the bodies of those who died in service: cultural norms concerning death had changed, the lethality of combat had increased, advanced weapons often mutilated bodily remains, and the nation reeled in shock as so many Civil War combatants lost their lives and their identities. Survivors believed that their fallen loved ones, many of whom had been conscripted into service, had earned the right to have a formal burial in a military cemetery. The new national cemetery system created the possibility of a respectable military burial for all who served and even honored the unknown dead while also providing new, purpose-built spaces for Americans to mourn and commemorate the war dead.

With the advent of these national cemeteries and the emergence of new rituals of remembrance, a culture of military commemoration arose in the United States that would affect the nation for decades to come. As the United States engaged in overseas conflicts at the turn of the twentieth century, the military navigated the ever-changing requirements of this commemorative culture, while also adapting to the unique challenge of caring for the remains of those who died far from home. New policies and practices of repatriation reflected the expectation that the government would bring home the war dead for burial on American shores. Yet even as burial practices and identification techniques improved, the identities of American service members continued to be lost in war. Unknowns remained an inevitable and heartbreaking outcome of modern warfare. World War I would create a new generation of unknown soldiers on a much greater scale. This new war would transform American military

burial traditions yet again, especially with respect to the unknown dead and their place in commemorative rituals. Into this historical landscape, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier would



Chapter 2: The Unknown's Army

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 set the stage for some of the most significant changes yet to occur in U.S. military burial policy since the Civil War. The United States' involvement in the war, while short compared to that of other combatants, profoundly affected the American people and stirred a deep need for solace. More than 116,000 American service members died in the war, including over 1,000 unknowns. These casualties included the Unknown Soldier eventually chosen to rest in the Tomb. 101 To understand the Tomb and what motivated its establishment—and, most importantly, to understand the World War I Unknown himself—the contours of the war and the demographics of the American military at the time must first be considered. While the identity of the Unknown Soldier can never be known, examining the army in which he fought reveals the diverse composition of the men with whom he served and provides clues as to who the Unknown could have been. 102 World War I and the Americans who served in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) shaped the Tomb's creation, its meaning, and its ever-evolving importance in American cultural memory, and forms an important precursor to its creation.

Conscription and the Socioeconomic Composition of the AEF



Figure 2.1. Men registering for the draft in New York City on June 5, 1917. (Library of Congress)

With only a small standing military on the eve of World War I, the United States was woefully unprepared for war and the massive mobilization of personnel it would require. 103 With the Selective Service Act of 1917, passed on 18 May 1917, Congress authorized the president to execute a conscription to increase the size of the armed forces while preserving essential home front operations such as industry and agriculture. 104 By the end of the war, 24 million men had been registered for the draft, and 2.8 million were inducted into service. Approximately 72 percent of U.S. Army troops were conscripts, a percentage unprecedented in the nation's history. By comparison, only 8 percent of soldiers in the U.S. Army during the Civil War were draftees. 105 Conscription created an Army of "citizen-soldiers" who came from all walks of life. 106 A microcosm of American society, they represented the nation's diversity with respect to geography, socioeconomic class, occupation, race, national origin, ethnicity, and religion. In 1917, most Americans supported conscription as both necessary and equitable. There was some opposition to the draft, but widespread draft riots, such as those that had broken out during the Civil War, did not occur. 107 "Slacker raids," led by either Justice Department agents or vigilante groups with the tacit approval of government authorities, attempted to round up and prosecute those who refused to register. 108

The Committee on Public Information—the government's propaganda division, created by President Wilson shortly after the United States entered the war and headed by the journalist George E. Creel—also played a critical role in mobilizing public support for the war and conscription itself. Films, posters, and other materials portrayed the draft as the catalyst and symbol of a truly democratic military. ¹⁰⁹ Writing for the popular *Everybody's Magazine* in May 1917, Creel called for universal military training, which would by law require all physically and mentally fit young American men to go through a year of military training and spend a short period on active duty, followed by several years of reserve status. Creel proclaimed that this form of national service would "jumble the boys of America all together, shoulder to shoulder, smashing all the petty class distinctions that now divide." ¹¹⁰ While the U.S. government never established universal military training along the lines that Creel suggested, and the draft did not smash class distinctions entirely, conscription did indeed "jumble the boys of America all together." As President Warren G. Harding would later state in his eulogy for the Unknown Soldier, "The service flag marked mansion and cottage alike. . . . From every station came the patriotic response of the five millions."111

Conscription also meant, however, that many citizen-soldiers came from socioeconomic backgrounds that did not necessarily prepare them well for military service. Initially, those who volunteered for military service tended to be well-educated, reflecting American elites' longstanding conception of service as a social obligation. As the draft increased the military's socioeconomic diversity, leaders had to grapple with the challenges of training soldiers who were illiterate or (as will be explained later in this chapter) non-native English speakers. According to some estimates, 21 percent of all White troops and 50 percent of Black troops were illiterate. At a minimum, service members would have to be able to read directional signs and maps, but in

an increasingly bureaucratized military, they also were required to read and fill out forms, passes, and other kinds of documents. While physical fitness remained a primary qualification for military service, the citizen-soldier of World War I now also needed to possess basic literacy, or obtain it while on duty. Though not exactly a melting pot that dissolved class or other social hierarchies, the draft-reliant military did, out of necessity, provide some educational and skills training to Americans from disadvantaged communities. 114

The AEF at War

At training camps across the country, the military worked feverishly to prepare inexperienced new service members for their duties as part of the AEF. They also prepared members of the organized militia called the National Guard for service in the AEF in redesignated units. This mammoth force was set to go overseas under the command of General John J. Pershing. 115 After almost three years of brutal war without an end in sight, the British, French, and their allies anxiously awaited the American "doughboys" to reinforce their beleaguered forces. The AEF arrived in Europe, slowly at first and then in a torrent. Upon arrival, they trained further and gained critical experience under the watchful eyes of veteran Allied soldiers. 116 (For an overview of what started World War I and why the United States eventually entered the conflict, see Sidebar 02a. The Great War: An Overview).



Figure 2.2. This 1932 illustrated map by Ezra C. Stiles vividly depicts the activities of the AEF. (*Library of Congress*)

The AEF engaged in its first major divisional offensive at Cantigny, France, in May 1918. 117 Subsequent significant combat actions followed that summer and fall, as the AEF plunged into battle in France, Belgium, and Italy. The AEF continued to increase in size as almost 10,000 service members arrived daily in June 1918. 118 With greater personnel strength, more logistical support, and an increasing contingent of troops with combat experience in Europe, the United States could contribute fully to the coordinated Allied goal of defeating Germany and its allies. The American-led Meuse-Argonne Offensive in the fall of 1918, one of a series of massive offensives that proved to be Germany's breaking point, was the culminating action of the war. For forty-seven days, more than 1.2 million American soldiers pressed forward against the enemy in an action so massive that it remains the largest single battlefield offensive in American history. 119 This monumental effort paid off when hostilities ceased with the signing of an armistice agreement on 11 November 1918. With the help of the Americans, the Allied Powers had defeated the Central Powers, and the war finally ground to a halt.

Newly Arrived Americans in the AEF

As the U.S. government relied heavily on the draft, the Army's personnel strength grew from about 200,000 before the war to nearly 3.7 million by November 1918. 120 The eventually victorious AEF represented a cross-section of the United States at the time of the war. The diversity of the force stemmed from the growing diversity of the American population in the years before the war. The men in its ranks represented the many types of people who called the United States home, including immigrants from around the world.



Figure 2.3 In this poster designed to appeal to immigrants, an allegorical female figure stands by an honor roll of last names representing different ethnic groups. By declaring these men to be Americans All!," the poster affirmed the notion that these immigrants had united in service to their new nation.

(Library of Congress)

Because the United States entered the war during a period of mass immigration into the country, immigrants—some citizens, some not—added to the ranks of the AEF. Between 1900 and 1920, more than 14.5 million immigrants entered the United States; as many as 9 million entered the country in the first decade of the twentieth century, just before the war. ¹²¹ Some immigrants joined the military voluntarily, eager to serve their new nation, while others entered

through the draft. ¹²² Both recent immigrants who had already become citizens and immigrants who had officially declared their intention to naturalize were subject to the draft. ¹²³ More than 18 percent of the soldiers in the U.S. Army during World War I were born abroad, and almost one in five draftees was born overseas. About 100,000 of the half million men born overseas could not speak English when they entered the military. ¹²⁴ Influenced by some aspects of the "Americanization" movement, the Army provided English language classes for many of these new soldiers. ¹²⁵ The inability to communicate with service members who did not speak English would have made it all but impossible to properly train troops and prepare them for war. This made English classes all the more important. ¹²⁶ While the military did integrate immigrants into the overall force, some units nevertheless contained considerably larger than average numbers of immigrants. The 77th Division, for example, composed largely of soldiers from New York City, was heavily immigrant. ¹²⁷

The Army also developed the Camp Gordon Plan, which placed non-English-speaking troops into companies composed of other people who spoke their language. These companies were led by officers who spoke that language, so these men could communicate and train together while simultaneously learning English. ¹²⁸ First implemented at Camp Gordon, Georgia, the system eventually was used at fifteen other training camps, with much success. ¹²⁹ It resulted in well-trained service members able to safely and effectively perform their duties, accorded them respect, taught them English and other skills, and helped integrate them into the American military and society. ¹³⁰ This system often increased the desire of immigrant service members to become citizens of the nation they now defended. ¹³¹ Beginning in 1918, Congress passed the first in a series of laws that expedited naturalization for service members as a way to encourage immigrants to serve in the military and become citizens. ¹³²



Figure 2.4 An instructor at Camp Gordon, Georgia, uses a chart to teach non-English-speaking soldiers common English words in the context of military activities, circa 1917-1918. (*National Archives*)

The Heterogeneity of the AEF

Although immigration created a multiethnic fighting force, the U.S. military continued to racially segregate African Americans, who composed a significant portion of the AEF. At the time of the war, racial prejudices and legalized segregation (often known as "Jim Crow" laws) deeply divided the United States. African Americans faced limited opportunities for education, jobs, and financial advancement, endured economic hardships, and experienced racial violence, among other challenges. ¹³³ Nonetheless, many African American men, continuing a longstanding legacy of service in the U.S. military, volunteered to enlist during the war. Some did so hoping to prove their loyalty to the nation and, perhaps, achieve gains with respect to civil rights. ¹³⁴ Many other African Americans entered the military through the draft. According to some statistics, a higher percentage of Black men were drafted into the Army than White men. ¹³⁵ While exact numbers remain difficult to verify, about 400,000 Black Americans seem to have served in the war, about 370,000 as draftees. About 200,000 deployed overseas. ¹³⁶ Around 5,000 African American men served in some capacities in the Navy during the war, but they were

racially barred from regular service in the Navy, Marine Corps, and some parts of the Army, such as the Army Air Service. 137



Figure 2.5 This photo shows African American soldiers in the 15th Regiment of the New York National Guard—later redesignated as the 369th Infantry and known as the "Harlem Hellfighters" or "Harlem's Rattlers"—in France in 1918. This segregated unit fought with the French army and became famous for their combat successes. (*National Archives*)

The racially segregated military mirrored the segregation of the American population at home. ¹³⁸ The military relegated most African American men to positions as noncombatants in support units such as the Services of Supply. ¹³⁹ In these units, they performed grueling hard labor: building roads, railroads, and piers; transporting supplies; digging graves; and working as dock stevedores, among other arduous and essential tasks. ¹⁴⁰ In addition to serving in many nondivisional units, African American soldiers served in two segregated infantry divisions: the 92d Division and the 93d Division (Provisional). ¹⁴¹ The 92d Division served under the AEF, while the 93d Division (a division in name only, consisting of just four infantry regiments) served under the French Army. Both divisions had a mixture of Black and White officers, although most of the senior officers were White. ¹⁴² The only training camp for African American officers operated in Des Moines, Iowa. ¹⁴³ Yet, despite the racism they encountered in the AEF,

the men of these divisions fought admirably, and many received honors from France. Some received recognition from the United States, although prejudice prevented many from getting the honors they deserved during their lifetimes. ¹⁴⁴ Overall, the African American experience in World War I was a critical moment in the long movement towards civil rights. Military service continued to be a point of pride for many in the African American community, which strove to obtain equal status in the nation they had served and for which they had sacrificed during the war. ¹⁴⁵

Unlike African Americans, American Indians generally were treated as White by the U.S. government for military purposes, and they were integrated into White units. ¹⁴⁶ Between 8,000 and 15,000 American Indians served during World War I. Not all had citizenship rights at the time, and attitudes toward the war varied by tribe, including some examples of resistance to the draft. 147 Additionally, only those American Indians who were already U.S. citizens were subject to the draft. Before September 1918, for example, more than 6,500 American Indians were drafted, and roughly 17,000 in total were registered for the draft. 148 Some American Indians volunteered for military service during the war: a modest estimate places that figure at 3,500, with a higher one at 6,000. 149 Although American Indian service members held varied feelings about the war and their role in it, many who served hoped that their military service might help bring their communities more rights; some felt a sense of patriotism to the United States; and others believed that their warrior heritage made them uniquely suited for service. ¹⁵⁰ Likewise, much of the civilian American Indian community supported the war effort. Around 10,000 American Indian women joined the Red Cross, and American Indians purchased around \$25 million in war bonds. 151



Figure 2.6. The record for this 1919 Signal Corps photograph identifies this soldier as Harrison B. Parton of the Caddo tribe (Louisiana). Parton served as a private in Company C, 2d Field Signal Battalion, and deployed to France in September 1918. (*National Archives*)

American Indian service members died at comparatively high rates during the war, because so many served in the infantry. ¹⁵² Some served as code talkers, speaking in Choctaw and other native languages over telephone lines to preserve the confidentiality of their messages. ¹⁵³ Overall, American Indian military service during World War I represented an important step in the long-term effort to improve the rights of American Indians. ¹⁵⁴ The men who served obtained new experiences and educational opportunities. By serving within the American military, they helped to broaden public perceptions of their people, although they still too often dealt with prejudice, discrimination, and racial stereotypes. ¹⁵⁵ Although many government officials hoped that military service would support efforts to assimilate American Indians into White society, the war had the opposite effect in numerous cases. For some communities, military service revived an interest in American Indian warrior identities, ceremonies, and rituals. ¹⁵⁶

American Indians served admirably during the war and received many awards for their service from both the United States and France. ¹⁵⁷ In November 1919, Congress passed a law that gave all noncitizen American Indians who served in the war and received an honorable

discharge the opportunity to apply for citizenship before a court. ¹⁵⁸ At the 1921 funeral of the Unknown Soldier, the federal government and the military recognized American Indians' significant contributions to the war, and acknowledged the possibility that the Unknown Soldier could have been an American Indian. Indeed, Chief Plenty Coups of the Crow Nation was an honored guest and a prominent participant in the ceremonies. While many American Indians had hoped that their wartime service would hasten the granting of citizenship rights to all American Indians, including those who had not served in the war, it would be several more years before Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, granting all American Indians birthright citizenship. ¹⁵⁹

Hispanic Americans and immigrants of Hispanic descent generally were classified as White and integrated into White military units, and some units included large proportions of Hispanic service members. ¹⁶⁰ In many cases, an individual's skin tone influenced the decision of military officials in charge of placement. Many light-skinned Hispanics served in White units, whereas darker-skinned Puerto Ricans, for example, often were placed in segregated African American units, including the celebrated 369th Infantry. ¹⁶¹ Because of this nebulous racial classification, exact statistics on the service of Hispanics during World War I remain difficult to obtain. Some scholars estimate that tens of thousands of Hispanic men from different ethnic and geographic backgrounds may have served. ¹⁶² Further complicating the matter, Hispanic Americans' legal status and citizenship was often hard to determine at this time, similar to the situation of American Indians. ¹⁶³

During the years leading up to World War I, Mexican immigration to the United States increased because of the Mexican Revolution and the rising demands for farm and railroad labor. ¹⁶⁴ One scholar estimates that 5,000 of the 197,000 residents of Texas who served in the

military during the war had Spanish surnames and thus may have been Tejanos (Texans of Mexican descent). 165 Some Mexicans and Mexican Americans living in the United States resisted the draft or returned to Mexico during the war. 166 Yet many people of Hispanic and Mexican descent, especially Tejanos, did support the war effort. Like American Indians, they often viewed military service as a way to combat rising anti-Mexican prejudice. They hoped that their service and their demonstration of patriotism and loyalty would aid in the larger fight against discrimination. 167 For example, World War I veterans José de la Luz Saenz and Manuel C. Gonzales helped to found the League of United Latin American Citizens in 1929. This organization would play a leading role in subsequent efforts to advocate for civil rights for Latinos. 168

Puerto Ricans faced a different situation than those of Mexican descent. In March 1917, the Jones Act gave all Puerto Ricans United States citizenship, thereby making Puerto Rican men eligible for the draft. ¹⁶⁹ While some Puerto Ricans criticized the timing of this act as a way to expand the American military for the war, others saw it as an opportunity to demonstrate their national loyalty or to advance their political goals. ¹⁷⁰ Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans registered for the draft, and about 18,000 eventually served during the war. ¹⁷¹ However, only Puerto Ricans who had moved to the U.S. mainland were sent overseas and served in combat. Many others were relegated to noncombat support roles, like most African Americans. The Porto Rican Regiment, meanwhile, was sent to guard the Panama Canal, a move which capitalized on members' facility with Spanish and their organization as a combat unit. ¹⁷²

Service members of Hispanic descent were an important population within the American fighting forces during World War I. ¹⁷³ For many Hispanic Americans, honorable service furthered larger efforts to obtain equal treatment and civil rights. Several individuals received

military commendations for distinguished service. Pvt. David B. Barkley became the only Hispanic service member to earn the Medal of Honor in World War I; Marcelino Serna became the first Hispanic American to be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross; and Nicholas Lucero received the French Croix de Guerre. 174

Asian Americans also served in World War I, although several factors complicate efforts to quantify the contributions of this diverse group. First, in the early twentieth century, "Asian American" did not yet exist as a distinct demographic category, so statistics on this group's military service during World War I were not directly recorded. Those statistics that do exist were clouded by cases of mixed ancestry, and they tended to refer to specific national or ethnic lineages such as "Chinese" or "Filipino." Furthermore, since the late nineteenth century, U.S. immigration and naturalization laws had sharply restricted Asian immigration and prevented Asians already in the United States from obtaining full citizenship rights. In practice, this meant that many Asian Americans were not eligible for military service. ¹⁷⁶ Nonetheless, people of Asian descent did serve in the U.S. military during World War I.

In the decades leading up to World War I, Asians and Asian Americans faced widespread prejudice and discrimination in the United States. ¹⁷⁷ In 1870, Congress amended the Nationality Act of 1790 so that formerly enslaved African Americans could become naturalized U.S. citizens. However, the 1870 legislation retained the original racial intent of the law, which excluded those of Asian descent from the "Black" (described as African nativity and descent) and "White" categories of persons now eligible for citizenship. ¹⁷⁸ Then, starting in 1882, the government began to restrict the legal immigration of Chinese people specifically, confirming their ineligibility for citizenship through a series of laws that became known as the Chinese Exclusion Acts. ¹⁷⁹ The 1870 and 1882 laws led to decades of confusion over the naturalization

eligibility of people from Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East who did not fit into the categories of Black or White. In effect, these restrictions enshrined anti-Asian sentiment, already on the rise, into law. ¹⁸⁰ The next major restriction of Asian immigration came just before the United States entered World War I. On 5 February 1917, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, which (among other things) required immigrants to be able to read and write in their own language, thus creating a literacy test for entrance into the country. It also completely excluded potential immigrants from a large part of Asia. ¹⁸¹ As a result of these laws, prospective Asian immigrants and Asian Americans faced even more challenges entering the United States and becoming American citizens.



Figure 2.7. Lau Sing Kee photographed with his parents at a postwar parade. A sergeant in the 77th Division, he received the Distinguished Service Cross and is buried in Section 76 of ANC. (Courtesy of History San José)

People with Asian ethnic backgrounds served in the military despite the racial restrictions placed on them. ¹⁸² The World War I service of Chinese men, while difficult to document collectively, emerges through several documented individual stories. ¹⁸³ The story of Lau Sing Kee (also known as Sing Lau Kee) offers one such example of Chinese Americans' contributions to the war effort. Born in the United States to Chinese immigrant parents, Sgt. Lau Sing Kee served in the 77th Division and received the Distinguished Service Cross, Purple Heart, and

French Croix de Guerre for his actions in combat near Mont-Notre-Dame in France on 12–15

August 1918. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. 184

Similarly, the total number of Japanese and Japanese Americans who served with the U.S. military during the war remains unknown. However, documentation on ethnic Japanese members of the Hawaiian National Guard indicates their interest in military service during World War I. In Hawaii, men of the "Nisei," or second generation of Japanese immigrants, were generally U.S. citizens who were eligible to join the Hawaii National Guard. About 11,000 registered for military service and approximately 838 were accepted for service, although members of the Hawaii National Guard did not go overseas. ¹⁸⁵ Many Filipinos in Hawaii also served in this National Guard unit. ¹⁸⁶ Other Japanese immigrants served in regular U.S. military units. Chief Petty Officer Hidemitsu Toyota, for example, joined the Coast Guard shortly after arriving in the United States in 1913, and he served for ten years. However, in *Hidemitsu v. United States* (1925), the Supreme Court rejected his petition for naturalization based on his military service, as it had previously done in the case of the Indian immigrant and veteran Bhagat Singh Thind. ¹⁸⁷

A small number of immigrants from South Asia lived in the United States at the time of World War I, and some served in the military during the conflict. Between 1900 and 1924, more than 8,000 immigrants from India, for example, came to the United States. ¹⁸⁸ Many who served in the military during the war were stationed in the United States, but some did go overseas. ¹⁸⁹ Sgt. Rajah William Bandy, for example, took part in actions at Ypres-Lys and during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. ¹⁹⁰ Like other non-White minority groups who did not fit neatly into the racial categories of Black or White, South Asians faced challenges to their citizenship eligibility despite their military service. During the World War I era, some court cases declared Asian

Indians to be non-White, while other cases categorized them as White. This legal ambiguity complicated South Asian veterans' efforts to apply for citizenship based on their military service. ¹⁹¹

The case of Bhagat Singh Thind, an Indian immigrant and U.S. Army veteran who honorably served in the United States during World War I, went all the way to the Supreme Court. Thind, a Sikh who immigrated to the United States from Punjab in 1913, was studying at the University of California, Berkeley, when he enlisted in the Army (Figure 2.8). ¹⁹² Like other immigrant service members, Thind was eager to gain citizenship based on his military service. The United States District Court in Oregon granted him citizenship in 1920, but the Bureau of Naturalization appealed that decision, arguing that Thind was not White and thereby not eligible. ¹⁹³ Thind continued appealing until 1923, when the Supreme Court issued a ruling that denied him citizenship. Despite his military service, the justices argued, Thind could not become a citizen because a person from India was not "White." ¹⁹⁴ In 1936, Thind finally succeeded in gaining his citizenship in the state of New York. Still, his case demonstrated that laws enabling immigrant service members to obtain expedited citizenship through military service did not apply equally to all. Interpretations of race continued to restrict who could legally become an American citizen. ¹⁹⁵



Figure 2.8. Bhagat Singh Thind, a Sikh immigrant from Punjab, India, petitioned for citizenship based on his military service. His case went all the way to the Supreme Court, which denied him citizenship and ruled that Indians were not White. (Courtesy South Asian American Digital Archive/David Thind)

Compared to others of Asian descent, the case of Filipino service in World War I was unique, because of the Philippines' status as an American territory. Filipino men who lived in the continental United States or in U.S. territories other than the Philippines, such as Hawaii, were subject to the Selective Service Act. During World War I, as many as 6,000 Filipino men enlisted in or were drafted into the U.S. Army. 196 About the same number served in the U.S. Navy during the war, continuing a longer legacy of Filipino naval service that began after the Spanish-American War. 197 Like most African Americans in the U.S. military, Filipinos in the Navy generally were assigned to menial labor rather than combat positions. 198 Most served as mess attendants, performing cooking and cleaning duties aboard ships. Nonetheless, their service offered them a path to citizenship. A provision in the 1918 Naturalization Act permitted the naturalization of any Filipino who had served for at least three years in the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, or Naval Auxiliary Service, and had received an honorable discharge. Unlike other Asian American ethnic groups, then, Filipinos could gain citizenship on the basis of their military service—a reflection of the Philippines' status as a United States territory. 199

Although some in the Philippines saw the war as an opportunity to naturalize, or simply to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States, others believed that military service could prove that the Philippines deserved independence. These viewpoints were articulated in the debate over the formation and purpose of the Philippine National Guard. ²⁰⁰ In March 1917, just before the U.S. entered the war, the Philippine legislature passed a law providing for the creation of a Philippine National Guard. Philippine leaders subsequently offered this unit for service in the war if the United States joined the conflict. ²⁰¹ In December 1917, Manuel L. Quezon, then president of the Philippine Senate, informed President Wilson that 25,000 Filipino men stood "ready and anxious to fight under the American flag." 202 Yet the U.S. government hesitated to establish the Guard, due primarily to racist concerns about Filipino officers outranking and commanding White men. 203 Wilson finally signed legislation authorizing the Philippine National Guard on 26 January 1918, about nine months after the Philippine legislature had initially authorized it. 204 Recruitment and training proceeded slowly; the commanding officer of the Army's Philippines Department, Brig. Gen. Robert Evans, continued to oppose and delay the Guard's mobilization; and the Army ultimately prevented it from fighting overseas. 205

Nevertheless, some Filipinos did fight in the war. They included Tomas Claudio, a student in the United States who joined the Army and died while fighting in France, and Julio "Jay" Ereñeta, who served in both world wars and rose in rank from mess attendant to chief warrant officer. ²⁰⁶ At least two Filipino Navy members who served during the World War I years, but not in the conflict itself, are buried at Arlington National Cemetery: Mess Attendant 2d Class (MAtt2c.) Mariano Eschave young and MAtt2c. Alfredo Galvez. ²⁰⁷ As soldiers from the continental United States were needed for service in Europe, the number of U.S. troops stationed in the Philippines declined from an estimated 14,000 in 1917 to only 5,200 by 1919. As

a result, Filipino soldiers increasingly took over domestic security responsibilities in the Philippines.²⁰⁸ Meanwhile, many Filipinos hoped that the Philippine National Guard could become the nucleus of a military for an independent Philippine nation.²⁰⁹ As with ethnic groups in the continental United States, the war—and military service—catalyzed Filipino demands for civil rights, as well as their specific desire for national independence.

Religion in the AEF

The diversity of the U.S. military during World War I also extended to religious backgrounds, which sometimes intersected with ethnicity and race. The War Department did its best to accommodate service members' different spiritual needs, both at home and overseas with the AEF. ²¹⁰ Chaplains of various religions and ethnicities were recruited to minister to the men—an essential service at U.S. bases and training camps and especially important for those who served overseas in combat and risked death on a daily basis. ²¹¹ Eventually, the AEF included numerous chaplains in its ranks, who represented dozens of Christian denominations as well as Judaism. ²¹² Because of the chaos of battle, chaplains often supported service members of faiths or denominations different from their own. Indeed, a key mission of military chaplains was to help all they encountered. ²¹³

Civilian welfare organizations also contributed to efforts to serve the spiritual needs of the military, as many of these organizations had religious affiliations. The YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) and the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) supported Protestants; the National Catholic War Council and the Knights of Columbus helped provide Catholic priests for U.S. training camps and generally assisted Catholic service members; the Jewish Welfare Board worked on behalf of Jewish service members; and the Salvation Army, a Christian organization famous for providing donuts and coffee to the troops, also provided

religious resources.²¹⁴ The War Department increasingly included non-Protestant denominations in military welfare efforts, as demonstrated by its inclusion of the Jewish Welfare Board and Knights of Columbus alongside the YMCA and the YWCA.²¹⁵ All of these organizations, while focused on the religious needs of service members of their faith, served and provided resources to all troops, regardless of their religion.²¹⁶



Figure 2.9. Women working for the Salvation Army fry doughnuts for members of the 26th Division in France in April of 1918. (*National Archives*)

Catholic organizations had a particularly large role to play, because an estimated 35 percent of American service members, including many immigrants, identified as Catholic. 217 The National Catholic War Council was formed during World War I to coordinate Catholic organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, as they worked on behalf of Catholic service members and war-related issues. 218 The Knights of Columbus opened their activities to all service members, while still utilizing their buildings for religious services. 219

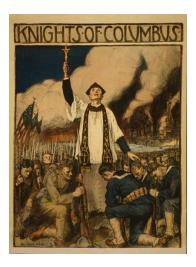


Figure 2.10. With an estimated 35 percent of American service members who identified as Catholic, the Knights of Columbus became a key organization in World War I. (*Library of Congress*)

Jewish organizations also had a new and robust role to play among the troops. About 250,000 Jews, roughly 40,000 of whom were volunteers, served in the U.S. military during World War I. ²²⁰ Jews participated in World War I in greater numbers than their proportion of the American population: 5 percent of those serving were Jews, compared to the 3 percent of Jews in the American population at the time. ²²¹ The Jewish Welfare Board advocated for these Jewish service members and succeeded in petitioning the War Department to grant them furloughs for the Jewish holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover. ²²² They also enabled Jewish service members to be provided with matzo (unleavened bread) on Passover and requested that Jewish graves be marked with a Star of David rather than a cross. ²²³ Other Jewish organizations also worked with Jewish service members and helped to provide prayer books and other resources. ²²⁴



Figure 2.11. At a Quartermaster Corps depot in St. Denis, France, soldiers pack a shipment of matzo for Jewish members of the 77th Division. The Jewish Welfare Board and similar organizations helped provide such resources so that Jewish men could practice their faith while serving. (*Library of Congress*)

Similarly, the war offered greater inclusion for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). ²²⁵ During the Spanish-American War, the Church had been able to appoint only one chaplain, but during World War I, three joined the ranks of the Army. ²²⁶ The United States was the only nation to allow Mormon chaplains to serve during the war. ²²⁷ About 22,000 Mormons served in the American military during the war, representing a large proportion of the approximately 500,000 Mormons in the United States. ²²⁸ These Mormon men, whether enlisted or drafted, served admirably alongside their comrades and helped to prove their religious community's loyalty to the United States—a notable position considering their faith's earlier armed conflicts with the U.S. government. ²²⁹ Pvt. Thomas C. Neibaur became the first recorded member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be awarded the Medal of Honor, in recognition of his actions near Landres-et-Saint-Georges, France, on 16 October 1918. ²³⁰

People of the Muslim faith also served in the American military during World War I, although information on them also remains difficult to quantify as many may not have disclosed their religious identities.²³¹ One scholar estimates that over 13,000 Syrian Americans served in the American military during World War I and notes that this group likely included both

Muslims and Syrians of other faiths, including Christian sects. ²³² These Syrian Muslims may have composed the largest group of Muslims in the military during the war, though others probably did originate from different geographic regions. ²³³ Even with limited information about Muslim American participation in the war, their participation further demonstrates the diversity of the military at the time. Indeed, the military likely included service members from other religious backgrounds, as demonstrated by the example of Bhagat Singh Thind, a Sikh. Others may have been of no faith at all. While the data on these groups may be minimal, it is important to recognize that the religious diversity of the AEF likely went far beyond the scarce information captured in contemporary records.

Conclusion

The United States' involvement in World War I and the diverse socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, and religious makeup of the AEF impacted the circumstances that eventually led to the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The World War I Unknown buried in the Tomb in 1921 lost his identity while serving in the AEF, and it was from among these men that he was selected. While some of these men served in positions of full equality, others served under conditions of segregation, prejudice, or without full citizenship rights. Some interpreted their military participation as a part of a broader struggle to make the ideals of American democracy a reality for all, and some used their service to demonstrate their commitment to the United States. While the Unknown Soldier's identity will likely never be known, understanding the demographics and experiences of the men who were his comrades provides crucial information about whom he may have been.

Indeed, President Warren G. Harding said as much during his speech at the Unknown Soldier's funeral ceremony. Harding reminded those present that they could not know the

Unknown Soldier's station in life or birth, because "from every station came the patriotic response of the five millions." Anonymous in death, the Unknown in the Tomb could have been from one of the many diverse groups of men who composed the AEF. He may even have lost life in service to a nation that did not yet accord him or his community equal rights or full citizenship. Rather than allowing the mysteries of the Unknown Soldier's identity to render him altogether unknowable and abstract, understanding the men he *could* have been humanizes him, connects him to all Americans, and honors both his sacrifice and those of his comrades.

Chapter 3: Row on Row: The Tragedy of the World War I Dead

In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

—John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields" (1915)²³⁵

When the United States entered the First World War in 1917, it encountered a type of warfare unimaginably more deadly and irrevocably changed from previous conflicts. Advances in technology, industry, and mass production during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries transformed the nature of combat and unleashed a new catalog of horrors on the battlefield. The subsequent destruction and massive loss of life stunned the world. Men died by the hundreds of thousands, and the numbers of missing service members and unidentifiable fatalities skyrocketed. Among them was the U.S. service member eventually buried in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Death and Dying in World War I



Figure 3.1. American artillerymen photographed with a French made 75mm field gun which revolutionized modern artillery during World War I. Its rapid-fire system allowed gunners to unleash up to 15 aimed rounds per minute without re-aiming, saturating the enemy with shrapnel and high-explosive shells. The weapon's unprecedented rate of fire made it a key driver of the war's horrific mass casualties. (National Archives)

During World War I, mass armies equipped with improved weaponry, such as machine guns and indirect-fire artillery, inflicted casualties on each other with such great accuracy, volume, and power that they often obliterated human remains. Deadly new weapons accounted for high numbers of unidentifiable war dead in World War I. ²³⁶ These weapons also resulted in a stalemate on the Western Front, as the battle lines in France and Belgium came to be called. Because it had become almost suicidal to advance and attack in the face of enemy firepower, troops dug into trench lines for protection, and a "no man's land" developed between entrenched armies. ²³⁷ To break the stalemate, the combatants turned to other new weapons, including the recently invented tank, first used by the British in 1916. ²³⁸ Airplanes patrolled the skies on reconnaissance missions, called in deadly artillery fire, engaged in aerial dogfights, and eventually attacked ground troops and strategic sites such as railroads directly. ²³⁹ The introduction of chemical warfare by Germany in 1915 unleashed even worse horrors. Poison

gases caused blindness, bleeding, skin injuries, respiratory distress, and death. Symptoms could plague wounded men for years, and often led to their deaths long after the war ended. 240 Although animal power remained in use, newly introduced automotive transportation, such as cars and trucks, allowed soldiers and supplies to be transported greater distances more quickly than ever before. Coupled with improvements in railroads and shipping, these innovations radically increased armies' abilities to sustain the war by rapidly moving masses of troops and supplies. 241 Telephones, wireless telegraphy, and other recent communications developments enabled large-scale battles to be coordinated with more precision across ever-expanding battlefields. 242 At sea, submarines posed an especially deadly menace to both combatants and civilians. 243

Compounding the deaths caused by battlefield combat, the 1918 onset of the global influenza pandemic gave rise to even more fatalities, of both military personnel and civilians. ²⁴⁴
As many as 50 million people worldwide died from the influenza pandemic, and an estimated 500 million contracted the disease. ²⁴⁵ Although there remains no definitive explanation of where, when, and how the influenza pandemic began, many scholars believe that the first major outbreak occurred at the U.S. Army's Camp Funston in Kansas. This accords with the findings of one historian who posited an origin in Haskell County, Kansas, whose residents came into contact with the camp. ²⁴⁶ The conditions of war exacerbated the spread of this disease as service members crammed into camps, ships, and trenches. ²⁴⁷ The mostly young service members were not protected by their youth and instead formed one of the most at-risk populations for this disease. ²⁴⁸ Thus, the pandemic made an already lethal global conflict even more deadly, attacking the mass armies at war without discriminating between those on or off the battlefield. ²⁴⁹



Figure 3.2. Around 50 million people worldwide died from the 1918–1919 influenza pandemic, including more than 55,000 U.S. servicemembers. The first major outbreak may have originated at the U.S. Army's Camp Funston in Kansas, pictured here. Heroic military nurses, including tens of thousands of American women, proved critical in the battle against influenza.

(Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine)

Although estimates of fatalities in World War I vary and remain hard to calculate definitively, the overall total of military and civilian deaths could be as high as 40 million, with between 9 and 15 million military deaths. ²⁵⁰ The Austro-Hungarian Empire lost an estimated 1 to 1.5 million men, and Germany lost between 1.7 and 2 million. ²⁵¹ Russia suffered 1.7 to 1.8 million military dead, as well as around 2 million civilian deaths; Italy counted 460,000 to 650,000 military dead; the Ottoman Empire around 650,000. ²⁵² France lost 1.3 to 1.7 million combatants and the British Empire almost 1 million. ²⁵³ U.S. wartime fatalities were much lower compared to those of other nations. Yet, estimated at only 116,516, U.S. deaths in World War I were higher than U.S. deaths in the Korean War and Vietnam War combined. ²⁵⁴ More than 55,000 of these U.S. service members are thought to have died as a result of influenza. ²⁵⁵

The unfathomably high death rates—endured by so many nations—traumatized the entire world. Families coped with the loss of their loved ones, who often died in brutal ways, at the same time that they witnessed civilians dying from influenza in their own communities. Civilian deaths from the war itself reached staggering heights, with perhaps 13 million civilians dead worldwide. ²⁵⁶ Although the American Civil War had seemed to presage the horrors of this global conflict, World War I surpassed the bloody results of that war with tragic intensity—catalyzed by modernized weaponry and a ruthless worldwide pandemic.

The Unknown Dead of World War I

The especially destructive nature of combat in World War I led to an increase in unknown, unidentifiable, and missing service members. Machine guns and artillery often obliterated human remains so badly that they became unrecognizable. ²⁵⁷ Furthermore, the chaos of battle across large swaths of land often prevented battlefield burials from being properly recorded, or resulted in lost records. ²⁵⁸ The nature of trench warfare exacerbated these difficulties. Trenches, shell holes, geysers of dirt and debris, and craters seemed to swallow many of the dead into the earth. Fighting often occurred on the same ground multiple times throughout the war, causing previously dug graves to be destroyed by shellfire and lost. ²⁵⁹ Sometimes, identifications on graves would be removed to maintain the secrecy of troop locations, often preventing armies from later finding and identifying fatalities. ²⁶⁰ Naval losses sent men to the bottom of the ocean, forever unrecoverable. Many families faced the tragedy of never knowing what happened to their loved ones, never learning of their burial places, and likely never feeling closure from the war. ²⁶¹



Figure 3.3. A battlefield cemetery in Argonne, France, entirely underwater in February 1919. Flooding and other features of the ruined postwar landscape increased the chances of remains being lost, and made it more difficult to locate, disinter, and identify the fallen. (*National Archives*)

This global grief, caused by the prevalence of missing and unidentifiable service members, led, in several nations, to the creation of voluntary organizations that tried to investigate these cases and find information for relatives. ²⁶² Often part of or modeled on the Red Cross, these civilian groups relied on staff and volunteers known as searchers—many of whom were women—to try to find the missing men. ²⁶³

American searchers worked as part of the Hospital and Home Communication Service, a branch of the American Red Cross created in March 1918. ²⁶⁴ These searchers were vitally important to the service's efforts to locate missing men. They investigated cases of the missing, traveled to battlefields, gathered evidence and testimonies, interviewed comrades to gain information about a man's last known moments or possible grave locations, corresponded extensively with the families of the missing, and generally did all they could to assist the military in finding and identifying service members. ²⁶⁵ They continued their work until June 1919, by which time they had issued around 6,200 search reports containing critical information about their cases. ²⁶⁶ Despite serving as volunteers outside the ranks of the military, this group of

women made valuable contributions to the military's attempts to identify the dead. In so doing, they became intimately familiar with the hardships and heartbreak faced by the families of unaccounted for service members.



Figure 3.4. A searcher in the Red Cross Home Communication Service asks a group of soldiers at a recreation hut in Orleans, France, for information about lost or missing comrades. (*Library of Congress*)

Hospital and Home Communication Service volunteers also served overseas at American hospitals, where they fulfilled several functions to help both service members and their families. ²⁶⁷ They connected service members to their families back home, so that families could more quickly receive news of their hospitalized loved ones. They helped men write to their families if their wounds prevented them from doing so, assisted them with various tasks, brought them treats, and generally tried to ease the anxieties of their hospital stay. When the worst happened, the searchers notified families of a man's death and burial location, if known. The service also took on the task of photographing soldiers' graves. They ultimately took more than 170,000 photographs, which they sent to families to help bring them solace. ²⁶⁸

Despite the best efforts of the combatant nations' governments and voluntary organizations, vast numbers of fallen World War I service members remained unfound. While

almost impossible to calculate precisely, the estimated figures for the war's unidentifiable dead and missing service members are staggering.²⁶⁹ As many as half of the war dead may have been missing or unidentifiable.²⁷⁰ More than 500,000 of the British Empire's war dead remained missing or unidentifiable, with similar figures for France.²⁷¹ For the Ottoman Empire, estimates state that as many as 61,487 men remained missing; Russia listed about 1.2 million as missing.²⁷²



Figure 3.5. The massive Theipval Memorial in France honors the 1916 joint British and French offensive in the Somme region. Its walls are engraved with the names of more than 72,000 missing British and South African soldiers who have no known grave. (New York Public Library)

As with the figures for other combatant nations, the figures for missing and unknown U.S. service members remain difficult to calculate definitively, but a review of various sources on the subject provides a range of roughly reliable estimates. At the lower end, William G. Eckert writes in his history of the Graves Registration Service, that "there were in all some 2,000 unknown dead and unallocated burials," but this figure might have been referring to the total before comprehensive efforts to try to identify these burials. ²⁷³ Edward Steere's *History of the Graves Registration Service in World War II* notes that 3.5 percent of 79,129 fatalities, or roughly 2,769 of U.S. fatalities in Europe during World War I remained unknown. ²⁷⁴

Even in the immediate postwar era, the numbers of unknown U.S. dead were hard to verify. The remaining number of American unknowns formed a key topic of the discussion on 1 February 1921, when the House of Representatives Committee on Military Affairs held a hearing on the proposed resolution for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Representative Hamilton Fish (R-NY), who introduced the resolution to create the Tomb, stated that "there are 1,717 absolutely unknown dead and 431 unidentified dead classed on what they call blue cards." Yet in this same hearing, Maj. Gen. P. C. Harris, Adjutant General of the Army, cited an Army report from the Cemeterial Branch of the Quartermaster General's Office that specified 2,148 unidentified remains. This figure likely included the remains of many of the 1,113 missing in action service members who were presumed to be dead. In the midst of such a destructive and chaotic war, the United States, like the other combatants, faced the likelihood that it would never be able to obtain definitive numbers nor identify all fallen service members.

Perhaps the best estimate puts the number of American unknown and unidentifiable burials between 1,651 and 1,656. ²⁷⁹ The exact figure for the final number of U.S. unknowns from World War I continues to remain elusive—reflecting the difficulty of accurately recording wartime deaths, known or unknown. Despite such challenges, the U.S. Army made significant strides in its identification efforts in World War I, compared to such efforts in previous conflicts. Much of that improvement came from changes in the U.S. Army's burial policies and the organization of the soldiers and officers tasked with this grim but sacred duty.

U.S. Burial Policy in World War I

When the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) set off for Europe in 1917, the United States military had already substantially improved its burial policies and methods. The

experiences of the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and the Philippine-American War taught the military hard-earned lessons about burying and identifying its dead. Because memories of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars remained fresh, and some World War I officers had served in those conflicts, many of the logistical challenges of repatriating remains from overseas were already known. As burial procedures were refined, the military enacted policies that shaped American commemorative culture, military mourning, and burial traditions. These policies would lead to the creation of new government agencies and leave indelible marks on the landscape of Europe.

The U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps took charge of the burial effort during World War I. In 1912, the Army reorganized and fully militarized the Quartermaster Department as the Quartermaster Corps. ²⁸⁰ In theory, soldiers with specialized skills would now conduct most burial tasks, instead of the civilian employees who used to provide support along with soldiers on detachments. In reality, burial details within units often ended up doing the work. ²⁸¹ These changes, along with new regulations regarding burial and record-keeping methods, enabled the newly reorganized Quartermaster Corps to lead burial operations more effectively—which became critical during World War I. ²⁸²

After the United States entered the war in April 1917, the War Department began preparing for burial work. Despite knowledge gained from past wars, and the realities of the current conflict now in its third year, War Department officials remained somewhat ignorant of the true scale and complexities of their mission. ²⁸³ They began by implementing procedural changes that helped improve record keeping. In 1913, the Army had directed that each grave should include a glass bottle containing a paper with the deceased service member's name and information. ²⁸⁴ In July 1917, this regulation was updated to require aluminum tags as part of the

standard Army field kit. ²⁸⁵ In the event of a service member's death, these round identification discs, the precursor to dog tags, were intended to be used in a pair: one would remain with the buried body and one would be attached to the grave marker. ²⁸⁶ In addition to sketched maps of burial locations, these identification discs were part of the Army's larger effort, begun before the war, to try to minimize unknown remains. ²⁸⁷



Figure 3.6. Identification Discs belonging to 1st Lieutenant Arthur N. Altringer, Medical Corps, U.S. Army. These discs were made of round aluminum and were attached to a cord. If the wearer fell in battle, one disc remained with the body to aid identification, while the second would be sent to the unit for record keeping and notification of the next of kin.

(National WWI Museum and Memorial, Kansas City, Missouri, USA)

Most importantly, on 7 August 1917, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker Jr., in War Department General Orders No. 104, directed the creation of the Graves Registration Service (GRS) within the Quartermaster Corps. ²⁸⁸ After it reached France in the fall of 1917, the GRS eventually merged with the temporary AEF Burial Department that had been established there under the chief quartermaster and had already begun to obtain information from the Allies about caring for the dead in this war. ²⁸⁹ The newly merged unit now controlled the tasks of burying, identifying, and repatriating U.S. remains; civilians would no longer do much of this work. ²⁹⁰ Charles C. Pierce, the Army chaplain who had advocated for the use of identification tags before

retiring from the service, was recalled to active duty service to lead the GRS as its Chief and to serve as the general superintendent of U.S. cemeteries in Europe. Pierce received a promotion to major and began to ready his unit for service.²⁹¹

The fledging GRS focused on several main tasks to execute its mission. ²⁹² As soon as U.S. combat actions began, the GRS was to deploy units to start the process of identifying bodies and marking graves. In practice, however, much of the initial work of quickly burying the dead remained, by regulation and situational need, with burial officers and details in the field. 293 For example, chaplains served as sub-inspectors responsible for understanding GRS regulations and processes, acquainting themselves with cemeteries in their areas, and other duties related to burials and cemeteries. ²⁹⁴ Even if the GRS did not do most of the initial burial work itself, all information needed to be reported to them. 295 GRS units often would arrive after the combat troops, and would do their best to find, record, and verify hastily dug graves; try to locate and inter other fallen soldiers; and attempt to concentrate burials in cemeteries, using reinterment as necessary. 296 They located and acquired land for temporary American cemeteries, and subsequently managed those that became permanent.²⁹⁷ As part of their critical task of identifying the dead, GRS units created burial registries and attempted identifications as they consolidated remains from the battlefields into various cemeteries. ²⁹⁸ Additionally, they corresponded with the relatives and friends of the dead, photographed and surveyed the cemeteries and graves, and served as the liaison between the U.S. and foreign governments regarding any issues related to mortuary affairs, among other duties. ²⁹⁹



Figure 3.7. An American soldier killed in action, photographed for identification at a 77th Division field hospital in Ardennes, France. His identification tags had been lost. (*National Archives*)

Much of this work continued after the armistice and involved the eventual consolidation of more than 2,300 cemeteries throughout Europe under the control of the GRS. 300 In France alone, the GRS dealt with more than 70,000 American graves. About 15,000 of these graves were isolated, and remains from them were gathered and eventually reinterred in fifteen American cemeteries created to concentrate the graves in fewer locations, something also requested by the French government. 301 The Army's official history of graves operations during and after the war later explained that, "the essential problem of the Service [GRS] at armistice was the double task of the preservation and ascertainment of identity and the making of respectable burials." 302



Figure 3.8. This Signal Corps photograph shows the remains of American war dead being reinterred in a burial trench at a cemetery in Fère-en-Tardenois, France, December 1918. This cemetery likely became the permanent cemetery called Oise-Aisne American Cemetery. (*Library of Congress*)

A series of reorganizations and other actions in the summer and fall of 1919 eventually shifted the postwar overseas burial work from the GRS's companies to the Cemeterial Division in the Office of the Quartermaster General, with which the GRS merged. 303 This division now supervised an organization in Europe called the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), Quartermaster Corps, and led the remaining identification, repatriation, and permanent reburial effort. 304 Pierce returned to Washington in 1919 and became chief of the Cemeterial Division. In this capacity, he led both the operations in Europe and the work in Washington that concerned funding, public relations, and policies regarding the care of American graves in Europe. 305

Both the GRS and its successor, the AGRS, made great strides in improving American efforts to bury and identify the war dead. ³⁰⁶ Adapting techniques from the British and French, the GRS and AGRS created a new standard for American overseas wartime burials that would continue during the Second World War. ³⁰⁷ The work of these units represented a major step forward in how the U.S. military dealt with its war dead—and added to the growing societal expectation that the U.S. government must honorably care for all those who die in uniform. ³⁰⁸ In

its own history written in the early 1920s, the AGRS recognized its success and reflected on the emotional meaning of its work. The AGRS described this work as:

a most extensive project in cemeterial upkeep on a large and lavish scale, and in the concentration and movement of the remains of deceased soldiers in numbers that would have been hitherto considered impracticable, and which now constitute a record-breaking achievement in keeping a Government pledge to the people of the country. For the activities of this Service have been, and always will be, in a peculiar sense, the carrying out of a sacred obligation, the fulfilling of a pledge made by the War Department to the people of the United States, that the graves of American dead should be perpetually honored and cared for, and that those men who fell should be returned to their homes, should their kin so desire. 309

Yet, the AGRS also knew that, despite their best efforts, some U.S. combatants would always remain unknown. In admitting this, the AGRS explained that often "battle conditions make it impossible to bury men either decently or with any surety that their identity will be preserved."³¹⁰

A Task "Far More Sacred than Tremendous": African American Soldiers in the GRS

The soldiers tasked with burial, identification, and cemeterial work, both during and after the war, had some of the most ghastly duties in the military, and African American soldiers in the AEF executed much of this initial work. ³¹¹ Though the government often claimed to be fighting to preserve democracy by participating in this war, the U.S. military segregated service members by race, an arrangement that reflected the decidedly undemocratic legalized segregation of Black people so prevalent in many parts of the United States at the time. ³¹² Most African American soldiers were assigned to hard labor in noncombat units, including details to the GRS units. ³¹³ They did much of the horrific work of locating, disinterring, transporting, and reburying the decaying corpses of their comrades and preparing them for their permanent interment in American cemeteries in Europe or repatriation. ³¹⁴ Thanks to African American

American dead were identified and reburied in honored graves overseas, or eventually returned to their grateful families in the United States. The African American soldiers of the GRS thus contributed to the early effort that eventually led to the disinterment and selection of the American Unknown. In this context, they played a substantial, though often underappreciated, role in the eventual creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Figure 3.9. African American soldiers with Company A of Labor Battalion 321 search for bodies along the Vesles River near Bazoches, France, in December 1918. They used the stretchers to transport the bodies they found. The original description of this photo noted that White men served as NCOs.

(National Archives)

Addie Waites Hunton and Kathryn M. Johnson, two African American women who served overseas with the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) during and after World War I, observed the work of African American men in the GRS. 315 Hunton and Johnson were among the very few African American women permitted to join the multitude of white women who served overseas. 316 In their joint memoir about their experiences, Hunton and Johnson reflected at length on the African American soldiers assigned to these duties. The men faced "a

gruesome, repulsive and unhealthful task," they wrote, "requiring weeks of incessant toil during the long heavy days of summer." Even as Hunton and Johnson exposed and criticized the racism faced by African American service members, they also viewed their work with the GRS units as honorable: a "tremendous task for the surviving American soldiers, but far more sacred than tremendous." This was "perhaps not so strange," they continued, for:

Providence hath its own way, and in those American cemeteries in France we have strong and indisputable evidence of the wonderful devotion and loyalty and the matchless patience and endurance of the colored soldier. The placing of this task—the most sacred of the whole world—in his hands may have been providentially planned. It may have been just another means, as against the force of arms, to hasten here at home the recognition and enforcement of those fundamental principles that for four long years had held the world in deadly struggle. 319

Although some may have seen African American soldiers' burial work as just another way that the military relegated these men to menial labor, Hunton and Johnson instead interpreted it as an honorable and sacred task. By reframing this work in a way that honored these men instead of denigrating them, Hunton and Johnson reclaimed the narrative. They positioned African Americans' wartime service so that it could be utilized to support the ongoing struggle for equal rights.



Figure 3.10. African American soldiers working near Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, France, in April of 1919 carry burlap-wrapped bodies to be placed in caskets. A permanent American cemetery would eventually be established at Romagne-sous-Montfaucon; today it is known as the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery. (*National Archives*)

The Debate over Repatriation

The initial burial work done during the war and in the months afterward enabled the United States to follow through with new policies regarding how and where the American war dead would be buried. These policies underwent a series of changes during and after the war. Initially, the U.S. military planned to bury all American dead in Europe; it would not consider repatriating any remains until after the war, largely because of concerns about practicality, shipping space, and equipment. ³²⁰ However, in September 1918, the secretary of war publicly pledged that the government would repatriate America's war dead. No substantial policy had yet been developed to execute this promise, a monumental task much larger than the Spanish-American War repatriations. ³²¹

During World War I and its aftermath, Americans engaged in an emotional and often controversial national debate over whether the war dead should all be brought home or all remain buried overseas. 322 The American public could not reach a consensus, and the War Department's earlier promise of total repatriation began to seem less certain. 323 Even the AGRS itself admitted, "while it was true that the Government had promised to return the bodies of our dead to the United States, the passing of two years of war, the unexpectedly large number of casualties, and possible changes in the opinions of the people made a reconsideration of the whole matter essential." 324 The AGRS emphasized that "any decision was contingent on the sentiment of the American people and on such arrangements as might be necessary to secure the consent of the foreign governments concerned in the plans." 325 Many factors influenced public opinion. The AGRS attributed some of the pressure to choose repatriation on the American funeral industry, which they believed was seeking financial gain from the possibility of so many American bodies being brought home. 326 The agency's official history recalled, with bitterness, that "there was a

real need to discriminate between manufactured propaganda and honest sentiment which deserved attention and satisfaction."³²⁷

Complicating the situation, a French decree of February 1919 forbade any removal and transportation of bodies from France for three years, owing to concerns over hygiene, national morale, transportation, and reconstruction efforts. This decree prevented the United States from finalizing plans and policies immediately. 328 As the AGRS recalled, it was not clear that the European governments would easily agree to the United States' intended plans. 329 Adding to these complications, the British did not intend to repatriate any of their dead; rather, they planned to bury them in permanent British cemeteries. 330 This created potential diplomatic tension: seeing the Americans repatriate their dead could cause the British people to lobby for such a policy from their own government. In Belgium and France, where so many of the dead would be disinterred, this proposal could also create logistical and emotional challenges as surviving civilians tried to rebuild their lives. 331

By March 1919, the War Department started to work on a compromise for the repatriation issue.³³² They sent letters to fallen soldiers' next of kin, inquiring whether they wanted their loved ones buried overseas or repatriated.³³³ According to the AGRS:

it was consequently necessary to secure some method of finding out the body of opinion as to the return of dead from the relatives themselves. This was finally done by means of questionnaires sent out to the emergency address left by the late soldier. Replies indicated that about 60 per cent of the relatives desired to have the remains returned to the United States. This result enabled the authorities to proceed to estimate the money and personnel that would be required to effect the accomplishment of the wishes of the people. 334

This process took place over years and did not unfold simply; corresponding with next of kin proved complex. Family members often disagreed with one another, changed their minds about their choice, or contested who was the rightful next of kin and had decision-making authority.

Decisions over what to do with remains weighed heavily on mourning families, especially

because such choices took place within a larger, heated national debate. ³³⁵ As the AGRS recounted, "public opinion was determined by the statements of public men, both in Congress and in the press, regarding their attitude toward the repatriation of the fallen." ³³⁶ Groups like the Bring Home the Soldier Dead League advocated for repatriation, whereas the other side got an influential boost from former President Theodore Roosevelt. ³³⁷ His youngest son, Lt. Quentin Roosevelt, a pilot in the Army Air Service, had died in an aircraft crash in July 1918, and the former president publicly shared his family's conviction that Quentin should remain buried in France. In a letter reproduced in the *New York Times*, Roosevelt professed his belief that the American war dead should rest in Europe, where they fell. "Where the tree falls," he wrote, "there let it lie." ³³⁸



Figure 3.11. Illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy, this 1919 American Red Cross poster, in which a Red Cross nurse represents "The Spirit of America," exemplifies the debate over repatriating the American war dead. (National WWI Museum and Memorial, Kansas City, Missouri, USA)

However, the families of the men still missing or unidentified did not have a choice about whether to bring home their loved one's body, for they had no known body to repatriate. For some Americans, this situation convinced them that all of the dead should remain in France. For

example, after she visited the grave of her Marine son at Belleau Wood and saw the unknown graves around him, Elizabeth H. J. B. Robinson urged American mothers to leave their sons in France. ³³⁹ She told them in a Memorial Day message that "to remove the known dead would be unjust discrimination against the many unknown dead, who made the supreme sacrifice and cannot be honored by name. . . If the unknown dead alone were left, they would be forgotten." ³⁴⁰

As families of the identified dead tried to make these heart-wrenching choices about their lost loved ones, the War Department worked to make repatriations possible. The personnel of the Quartermaster Corps engaged in often extensive and emotionally fraught correspondence with the families. ³⁴¹ In December 1919, the French government began to ease parts of its earlier ban on disinterments. ³⁴² Meanwhile, the Quartermaster Corps prepared to employ additional civilian personnel, many of whom were veterans, to support this massive undertaking, especially as embalmers and technical assistants. However, hiring and contracting difficulties ultimately limited civilian involvement. ³⁴³ By September 1920, the French government allowed disinterments from the "Zone of the Armies"—the former war zone area of France where many of the bodies remained—and work picked up speed. ³⁴⁴

Using a system of forms, research in American and foreign combatant records, and testimony from eyewitnesses, Quartermaster Corps personnel worked to find and identify as many American war dead as they could. 345 They tried to be exhaustive, using any evidence available to identify remains; they recorded their observations of the state of the remains, created dental charts, and maintained records of their work with each set of remains. 346 Members worked together to carefully check that remains were properly marked, and to ensure that the names of those identified were preserved and the remains sent to the correct location. 347

At the AGRS Headquarters office in Paris, the official Board of Review, composed of three officers, reviewed cases that needed extra scrutiny, involved questionable identities, or included irregularities in cemeteries. The review board further ensured accuracy and enabled the positive identification of as many men as possible. All "doubtful cases of identity" regarding individual burials, irregularities in the cemeteries, or other issues were to be sent to the Board of Review and marked "hold," pending the board's action, so that the cases could be examined. According to the AGRS, "the method by which the Board determined identification in the majority of cases was by a thorough investigation of all records on file in the Headquarters at Paris." Additionally, the board thoroughly checked the information on various GRS forms that described remains and exhumations. They created detailed graphic charts of grave locations in cemeteries to analyze any irregularities and verify identifications as much as possible.

As they reflected on their work, AGRS officials concluded that, "the work of the Board of Review was at its maximum during the fore part of the year 1922." The "irregularities of burial encountered," they further explained, "caused the Board to be confronted with a number of very difficult and perplexing problems." The chaos of the original burials led to many recurring issues. For example, when original graves were dug at uneven distances, the placement of aligned crosses at regular intervals above the graves could cause confusion about which body was buried where. In other situations, transposition errors occurred, and the board had to investigate and rectify mistakes regarding which body was buried in which row, or even in which cemetery.

Problems such as these were bound to occur in the aftermath of war, despite the many advances made by the Quartermaster Corps during World War I. Much of the in-depth work to identify the American dead took place in the years immediately after the war, as the AGRS

carried on the mission and as families continued to wait for information on their loved ones. The board helped to close many cases, as statistics through 31 August 1922 demonstrate. To that date, 1,746 cases had been referred to the Board of Review; 1,061, or 60.77 percent, of these remains were ultimately identified. The board referred 685 cases (39.23 percent) to Washington for further investigation, and it investigated irregularities in 81 cemeteries. Overall, the board's identification efforts made it possible for more families to know the location of their loved one's grave, and to make a decision about their final resting place.

When the final transport ship carrying the American war dead arrived in New York in March 1922, between 61 and 70 percent of the American war dead had been repatriated with the cooperation of the French government. ³⁶¹ Of course, American bodies continued to be discovered even after the official repatriation program ended. ³⁶² Though the Army could not take away the pain felt by families who lost a loved one in the war, the efforts of the Quartermaster Corps went a long way toward providing Americans with as much information and closure as possible. The Quartermaster Corps' commitment to locating and identifying missing and unknown service members so that their families could decide their final resting place represented the military's hope that all could eventually be accounted for, despite the odds.

In Perpetuity: The American Battle Monuments Commission

A critical part of the final disposition of the American war dead involved the establishment of permanent overseas American military cemeteries. The United States had precedents to follow for the creation of such cemeteries on or near the battlefields from the recent conflict. In 1917, Great Britain established the Imperial War Graves Commission, now named the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, to care for their war dead, honorably bury them in permanent cemeteries, and build war memorials. 363 Unlike the United States, Great

Britain did not permit any repatriations. As a result, the Imperial War Graves Commission necessarily faced a much larger task than the United States—and this task did not always sit well with the British public, because families had no choice about their loved ones' final resting places. 364



Figure 3.12. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery in Poperinge, Belgium, is one of the many cemeteries run by Great Britain's Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The design of these cemeteries is meant to evoke the garden-like atmosphere of cemeteries in Britain; each headstone includes some plantings. (*Allison S. Finkelstein*)

Other combatants also pursued their own efforts to honorably bury their war dead. France established cemeteries in the battle areas and delegated responsibility for this massive task to the secretary of state for frontline veterans and victims of the war. ³⁶⁵ Although the Treaty of Versailles dictated that nations must respect and maintain the war graves buried within their borders, the defeated powers were responsible for designing the cemeteries that would hold their own dead. ³⁶⁶ For Austria and Germany, economic distress meant that private associations took on much of this work. ³⁶⁷ The style of each nation's cemeteries differed, reflecting the different messages that the victors and the vanquished wanted to broadcast after the catastrophic war. ³⁶⁸ By creating permanent overseas cemeteries of its own, the United States could continue to shape the European memory of the war. Distinctive American cemeteries would help ensure that the

American story would be told and commemorated on the former battlefields, alongside stories of the other combatants.

The creation of permanent overseas cemeteries also solved a problem for the War Department: that of geographic expansiveness. American cemeteries, burial grounds, and isolated graves spanned the former fighting areas. ³⁶⁹ Larger, permanent cemeteries would create dedicated locations in which to consolidate the U.S. war dead who would remain in Europe, instead of leaving them scattered in smaller groups over so much territory and impeding wartime recovery efforts. ³⁷⁰ The GRS, and later the AGRS, moved and consolidated bodies from the temporary cemeteries, often multiple times, with most of the consolidation work coming to a close by 1924. ³⁷¹

Eventually, all of the located American war dead who remained buried overseas would rest in one of eight permanent cemeteries in Europe. ³⁷² Six of these American cemeteries were in France: Suresnes, Somme, Aisne-Marne, Oise-Aisne, Meuse-Argonne, and St. Mihiel American Cemeteries; one, Flanders Field American Cemetery, was in Belgium; and one, Brookwood American Cemetery, was in England. ³⁷³ According to policy, American cemeteries would not be created, nor graves left, in Germany, Luxembourg or northern Russia, nations not considered to be among the United States' primary diplomatic allies. ³⁷⁴

The locations selected for the permanent cemeteries received careful consideration. The U.S. government wanted American cemeteries to be on or near the battlefields where Americans had played a major role in campaigns. However, many of the selected cemetery sites, such as the Meuse-Argonne and St. Mihiel, were hard to access, situated deep within the former Western Front on symbolically powerful landscapes still marked with the scars of recent combat. The other sites were chosen for their ease of access to visitors—for instance, Suresnes on the outskirts of

Paris, and Brookwood, located within the larger, extant British cemetery of the same name southwest of London.³⁷⁷ Eventually, 30,973 U.S. war dead would rest in these cemeteries. The names of another 4,453 U.S. service members would be listed on memorials known as the Walls or Tablets of the Missing, which were placed at each cemetery site to honor those who remained missing in action or had been buried at sea.³⁷⁸

Although the War Department began the process of creating the permanent overseas cemeteries, they did not retain permanent control over them. In March 1923, Congress passed legislation that created the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) and authorized it to "erect suitable memorials to mark and commemorate the services of the American forces in Europe," including "works of architecture and art in the American cemeteries in Europe." The ABMC had evolved in part from the War Department's earlier Battle Monuments Board, a committee composed of five army officers created in 1921 to oversee the planning of American memorials in Europe. Spurred by General John J. Pershing's deep interest in creating a dignified and regulated system of American memorials, the Battle Monuments Board aimed to develop policies and guidelines for marking the battlefields and asserting government control over the American commemorative works erected on them. Second control over the American commemorative works erected on them.

After several years of debate over the memorialization effort, in 1923, the newly created ABMC took over the monument program work being done by the Battle Monuments Board. By 1934, the ABMC also gained responsibility for all aspects of the creation and oversight of the permanent overseas cemeteries, thus moving the cemetery effort out of the War Department's hands. ³⁸² General Pershing, ever committed to preserving and honoring the memory of those who served under him, served as the first ABMC chairman. Under Pershing's leadership, the new agency embarked on a long-term effort that resulted in the creation of thirteen monuments

and markers and eight permanent military cemeteries. ³⁸³ Dedicated to preserving and interpreting the history of American participation in World War I, the commission would publish two editions of a guidebook to the American war sites, a project that Maj. Dwight D. Eisenhower initially led in 1928 and 1929. ³⁸⁴ The ABMC also published divisional histories of the AEF and installed decorative, educational battlefield maps at the cemeteries. ³⁸⁵ The ABMC's immaculately designed and landscaped cemeteries and memorials are permanent tributes to the Americans who served in the Great War. ³⁸⁶ After the Second World War, the ABMC embarked on a similar project and created permanent overseas cemeteries and memorials for that conflict. ³⁸⁷ (See Sidebar 03a: "Time Will Not Dim the Glory of their Deeds": Honoring the Missing at American Battle Monuments Commission Cemeteries".)

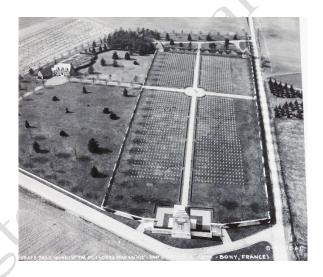


Figure 3.13. An aerial view of Somme American Cemetery in Bony, France, where 1,838 U.S. service members are buried. Note the symmetrical, highly ornamental design of the cemetery.

(National Archives)

The ABMC cemeteries and memorials also took on an additional function for the U.S. government by representing U.S. military and diplomatic power abroad. ³⁸⁸ The ABMC sites physically marked the European landscape with evidence of the United States' contributions to the war. Even as the nation retreated into partial isolationism during the next two decades, these

places remained as manifestations of America's rising global power. They also symbolically mirrored the military cemeteries and memorials that had become embedded in the fabric of American cultural memory since the Civil War era. 389

Located on or near the battlefields where American doughboys fought and died during World War I, the ABMC cemeteries are filled with the remains of U.S. service members, known and unknown. Some, like the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, are surrounded by a landscape scarred with trenches and shell holes. The regrown forests there are still rife with unexploded ordnance and barbed wire that seems to grow up from the soil like weeds, even over one hundred years after the armistice. To visit these cemeteries and battlefields is to connect with the Unknown. These sites give the modern-day visitor a faded glimpse of the world in which he spent his last days. They evoke the magnitude of the devastation that would spur first the British and the French, and then the United States, to create a new tradition in the canon of military commemoration and memory: the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The Unknown Soldier who rests in the Tomb at Arlington National Cemetery came from one of the cemeteries eventually administered by the ABMC. As part of the selection process, one unknown service member was disinterred from four of these cemeteries to be the four candidates for burial in the Tomb. After the selection of the Unknown Soldier, the three unselected sets of remains were permanently reburied at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in France, where they rest in honor among their comrades. Had he had not been selected for the Tomb, the Unknown Soldier would now be there, too, under the ABMC's care. Because of this connection, Arlington's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier functions as a deeply meaningful sister site to the ABMC cemeteries overseas. Indeed, the Tomb stands as a memorial

to all unidentified and missing American service members, wherever they rest around the world



Chapter 4: Allied Inspiration

The armistice of 11 November 1918 ended the fighting in World War I, and the subsequent Treaty of Versailles, signed on 28 June 1919, attempted to reestablish peace and rebuild world order. As the final human toll became increasingly and horribly clear, nations, militaries, and families had to navigate a grieving process on a scale unlike that of any previous conflict. ³⁹⁰ Commemorations, memorials, and cemeteries became essential resources in this process, and their creation and meanings would preoccupy the world for decades to come. ³⁹¹

Europeans and Americans alike participated in what historian Jay Winter has described as a "memory boom" after World War I, seeking to remember and commemorate the war through a variety of means. ³⁹² In the United States, many local war memorials sprang up. In addition to traditional monuments, statues, and ceremonies, communities experimented with newer, more modernist rites and symbols, such as "living memorial" buildings that provided utilitarian services while memorializing the war (Figure 4.1). ³⁹³ From bandstands to stadiums to memorial trees, these useful memorials—especially popular in the United States—tried to find beauty and purpose amid tragedy. ³⁹⁴ Meanwhile, the federal government eventually organized the formal commemorative program for overseas war sites through the American Battle Monuments Commission.



Figure 4.1. An example of a living memorial, this building in Kimball, West Virginia, honors African American veterans of World War I. Completed in 1928, it currently serves as a community center.

(Library of Congress)

The newly established American military cemeteries, often located near battlefields, quickly became sacred commemorative sites that drew people on pilgrimages to visit the war dead in Europe. ³⁹⁵ The other combatants also created military cemeteries for their war dead. Taken together, these new military cemeteries became central to what historian George Mosse has termed the "cult of the fallen soldier": a type of civic religion, deeply linked to nationalism, that glorified the soldier dead. It encompassed the creation of rituals for memorialization and grieving that were often manifested in the construction of memorials and monuments alongside the overseas cemeteries. ³⁹⁶ Yet for many families, especially those from the United States, it was difficult if not impossible to visit the war graves of their loved ones. These were often far away and expensive to reach. And for those whose loved one remained missing or were presumed dead, there was no known grave to visit at all. Thus, pilgrimages could not sufficiently fulfill the needs of all mourners. ³⁹⁷

Great Britain and France both recognized this shortcoming early on. In 1920, the two nations each created a tomb for a single unknown soldier from the war.³⁹⁸ The parallel creation of these British and French tombs inaugurated a new type of commemorative ritual, one that

would inspire the United States to build an American version just one year later. This national grave became a pilgrimage site, a place for collective grieving on home soil, and the locus of commemorative rituals for years to come—a place to remember not just the singular unknown soldier, but all those citizens who had died in the war.³⁹⁹

While the origins of the idea to entomb one unknown soldier in Great Britain and France remain murky, it seems to have arisen at about the same time in both nations. Their plans were also to some degree mutually influential. For example, the British and French governments both chose to hold their interment ceremonies on 11 November 1920, the second anniversary of the armistice, thereby imbuing the already-weighty Armistice Day with additional meaning. 400 Yet, despite their similarities, the British and French ceremonies were each also unique to their nations, emblematic of the national mood and the messages each government chose to present through the day's events. Watching from afar, Americans could not help but notice the pomp and circumstance at both events, as well as the public reverence and outpouring of emotion displayed for each Unknown. These two simultaneous ceremonies proved to be the spark that ignited Americans' desire to create a similar tomb.

The French Unknown Soldier

In France, the idea for a tomb of an unknown soldier seems to have originated during the war. ⁴⁰¹ According to historian Jean-François Jagielski, it was first proposed in a November 1916 speech at a cemetery by François Simon, the president of the Souvenir Français (an organization that commemorated the French soldiers who died during the 1870–1871 Franco-Prussian War). ⁴⁰² The proposal continued to be discussed for the next several years, until the Chamber of Deputies adopted it in September 1919, ten months after the war ended. ⁴⁰³ Earlier that year, for the World War I victory parade in July, a catafalque was planned under the Arc de Triomphe as a

symbol of the fallen. 404 As of fall 1919, the decision to inter one French unknown soldier had been made, and a new type of commemorative ritual had started to take shape.

As France set to work planning for the burial of its Unknown Soldier, the government made a choice that distinguished its commemorative events from those of other nations, even at the early stages of development. Instead of focusing the ceremonies solely on the Unknown, the French chose to hold a dual commemoration. On Armistice Day 1920, they would inter the Unknown Soldier in Paris and also commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the French Third Republic. 405

Deeply symbolic and nationalistic, this choice had its origins in the Franco-Prussian War, which in some respects paved the way for the later outbreak of World War I. This war between imperial France and an alliance of German states led by Prussia ended in a defeat for France, which included the siege of Paris and the German annexation of the French territory of Alsace-Lorraine. The war resulted in both German unification and the fall of the French Second Empire under Napoleon III. It led to the establishment of the French Third Republic, which remained the government of France in 1920. For France, this defeat stung in lasting ways and added to long-standing tensions and resentments between France and Germany, which ignited again in World War I. 406

By the time of the burial of the Unknown Soldier in 1920, the roles had been reversed: France now stood as victor over Germany. In planning their ceremonies for their Unknown Soldier, the French framed the event as recognition of a long-sought victory against Germany, a hard-won revenge more than forty years in the making. This thinking was embedded in the decision to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the French Third Republic on the same day as the Unknown's burial. Throughout the day's events, government officials inserted symbols

and references to the Third Republic, its founding, and the Franco-Prussian War. Most significantly, they intertwined the burial of the Unknown with a twin burial related to the Third Republic. This additional burial was not of a body, but rather of the heart of political leader Léon Gambetta—ensconced in an urn and placed within the Panthéon, a grand mausoleum in Paris. 407 While the Unknown Soldier represented all those lost in France's costly victory in the recent war, Gambetta's heart symbolized the republic as a whole, now stable and seemingly safe from the German enemy. As reported in the American press, "'The heart of Gambetta' will represent the anniversary of the third French republic, while the body of 'an unknown soldier' will personify the victory of the Armistice Day."

The decision to hold these dual burials in tandem met with some dissent within the French political establishment. A discussion of the plan in the French Chamber of Deputies on 8 November 1920 descended into chaotic, politically charged arguments over the appropriateness of commemorating the armistice, burying the Unknown, and celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the republic all on the same day. Some factions criticized royalists and antirepublicans for obscuring the republic's anniversary—the actual date was 4 September—by "hiding" it behind the body of a dead soldier. Nevertheless, the plan went forward, but with a last-minute modification made at a cabinet meeting. Instead of burying both the Unknown Soldier and Gambetta's heart in the Panthéon, the Unknown would instead be buried at the Arc de Triomphe. 409

This location change had already been discussed by the Finance Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, which believed, according to the *New York Times*, that "the Arc de Triomphe would be a more suitable resting place for the body than the Panthéon, which was intended to receive the bodies of great men to whom the country owed debts of gratitude. The

feeling expressed was that the 'poilu' [French soldier] was not in this sense a great man, but a symbol of the thousands who had sacrificed their lives for France and a symbol of the victory that had been achieved." ⁴¹⁰ By using the word *poilu*—an informal French word for their soldiers, similar to the American "doughboy"—this article emphasized that the French Unknown would be representative of the common soldier. This emphasis on regular service members, rather than officers, would come to characterize tombs for unknown soldiers worldwide. ⁴¹¹ The selection of the Arc de Triomphe as the burial place, too, held deep meaning for France. Begun by Napoleon I in 1806 and completed in 1836, it commemorated the victories of Napoleon's armies. ⁴¹² Thus, by burying the Unknown at the arch, France coupled its triumph in World War I with the glories of the Napoleonic era. The Arc de Triomphe also had the added benefit of being more centrally located and thus more accessible than the Panthéon.

Just as important as the question of where to place the Tomb was that of how to select the Unknown in the wake of a war that had cost the lives of more than one million French soldiers, with vast numbers of unidentified remains and hundreds of thousands of soldiers missing. 413

Beset with challenges, the very process of selection became emblematic of the need to honor those who had lost their identities in combat. Originally, the plan called for nine unknown candidates, chosen from the nine major military sectors where the French fought on the Western Front, including such famous wartime sites as Champagne, the Somme, Verdun, the Chemin des Dames, and Flanders. The nine candidates were to be taken to the citadel at Verdun on 9

November 1920, with selection scheduled for the next day. 414

However, this effort soon ran into logistical problems. According to the *New York Times*, in "one sector of the front—which, the military authorities refuse to divulge—German and French bodies were buried in common graves and are so closely intermingled that the officer in

charge of the work of exhumation decided it would be unsafe to disinter a body there as the honor of burial beneath the Arc de Triomphe might quite as likely be afforded to a former enemy soldier as to a gallant poilu."⁴¹⁵ As quoted in a subsequent *New York Times* article, the French writer and World War I veteran Roland Dorgelès commented on the gory process of finding suitable unknown candidates who could be definitely identified as French, even if their individual identities remained anonymous. Dorgelès explained that it

was a terrible task to choose one body amongst these myriads of skeletons in nine burial sectors appointed for the search. The bones were so mingled in their crowded bed that in one sector it was impossible to select a body and say with certainty "this is indeed a French soldier." They found naught save yellowed bones amid rags of discolored cloth, until, perforce, they must leave them to their rest, Frenchmen and Germans together. That is why only eight coffins lie tonight in the Citadel of Verdun instead of nine, as had been ordered. 416

Even at Verdun, that most sacred of French battle sites, ten bodies needed to be exhumed before one could be proven as French. 417 The struggle to obtain eight definitively French unknowns demonstrated how badly the war had mangled human remains. In the effort to find an unknown soldier to bury in the Tomb, the French wrestled with the very problem that had prompted the Tomb's creation.

On 9 November, crowds gathered at the Verdun citadel to greet the unknown candidates. They waited in anticipation for the ninth and final set of remains to arrive, until they were told that there were now only eight candidates. With those candidates now at the citadel, the more public and ceremonial aspects of the selection commenced. Each set of remains was covered with a French flag and laid in state within the citadel on the night of 9 November and into the next day. The public was invited to visit and pay their respects to the unknown candidates, which elicited an outpouring of grief. As Dorgelès described the scene, before their coffins, watched by former comrades, all Verdun has filed silently today. Soldiers, workmen, white with

plaster; women with streaming eyes, peasants in their Sunday best, nuns, their lips moving in prayer. And above them as they lie waves the banner of Verdun, with its seventeen war decorations, and beside it, graved deep on the wall of the simple soldiers' chapel, [Marshal Philippe] Petain's watchword, 'They shall not pass.'" The display also included trophies, previously presented by the city of Verdun, to be taken with the chosen body to the Arc de Triomphe, along with medals from France, sabers of honor from Japan and China, the Greek War Cross, the Italian military medal, and others. 420

The selection ceremony on 10 November took place in an underground gallery of the citadel that had been transformed into a chapel. 421 Newspaper cables brought an account of the selection ceremony to U.S. readers. The *Buffalo Evening News* described "the Poilu who selected the body," a soldier named Auguste Thin, as "a member of the last class called to the colors during the war, which served five months at the front."422 Thin had served in the 132d Infantry Regiment as a second-class soldier (roughly equivalent to a private), having volunteered at just nineteen years old in January 1918. Thin's father was among the war's missing service members, and his elder brother had been seriously injured on the Western Front. Thin was gassed in the Champagne counteroffensive at the end of August 1918, and, after convalescing, he returned to the front to fight in Alsace. At the time of the selection ceremony, he was stationed near Verdun, serving out his final few months in the army. 423 With such a background, Thin represented many aspects of the French experience during the war, which made him an ideal soldier to make such a momentous selection on behalf of his nation (Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.2. French soldier Auguste Thin (third from left), who selected the French Unknown Soldier, is pictured with French Minister of Pensions André Maginot (fourth from right) in November 1920. (Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Before Thin made the selection, a government representative handed him a bouquet of flowers and emphasized the importance of the task ahead. "Soldier," he said, "here is a bouquet gathered on the Verdun battlefield. You are going to place it on a coffin which will be that of 'the French soldier' for the flight of time. This is the greatest homage France ever accorded one of her children, but this homage is nothing in comparison with what is due him, who, by his superhuman heroism, saved law, justice and liberty." Thin accepted the red, white, and blue flowers, and, "amidst a deep silence," according to a U.S. reporter, "marched slowly about the coffins, watched breathlessly by the spectators. Then stopping before the sixth coffin in the row, he drew himself up rigidly and saluted and placed the bouquet on the coffin, while the band played 'The Marseillaise." France now had its Unknown Soldier.

The public immediately understood the significance of the selection process and subsequent ceremony. The day before the selection, the *New York Times* had declared the Unknown to be "a symbol of the thousands of 'poilus' who sacrificed their lives for France in the great war." After the selection ceremony, reporter Walter Duranty of the *New York Times* reiterated this interpretation, telling his readers that this was the "unknown Poilu whom his

country delights to honor tomorrow with a burial place that even Napoleon might envy, below the Triumphal Arch which symbolizes all the valor and glory that is France."⁴²⁷

With the selection complete, the seven other unknowns were buried in Faubourg Pavé National Military Cemetery in Verdun (Figure 4.3). The selected Unknown, meanwhile, began his journey, under military escort, through the city of Verdun to a special train that would take him to Paris, where he would be buried in the heart of the republic. 428 The entourage that accompanied the Unknown Soldier included French minister of pensions André Maginot, five war widows, five permanently maimed soldiers, five additional soldiers, and five veterans of the Franco-Prussian War—likely invited to enhance the burial's symbolic connection with the simultaneously celebrated anniversary of the republic. 429



Figure 4.3. The Faubourg Pavé National Military Cemetery in Verdun, France, holds the remains of more than 5,000 French soldiers who fell during the Battle of Verdun in 1916. The remains of the unselected candidates for the French Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are buried in this special spot around a large cross to distinguish them for their role in the ceremony. (*Photo by Allison S. Finkelstein*)

Dorgelès observed the Unknown's journey to Paris, which operated as a sort of symbolic reenactment of the war itself. For the Unknown Soldier, Dorgelès wrote:

all was not ended. Once more he has risen at his country's summons. Once again he passed through ruined village. Once again he has rumbled in a swaying camion through

the streets of Verdun. Now he lies in the old Citadel whose stone breast is scarred by so many wounds. Tomorrow, by a grim irony of fate, he will know at last that return for which he longed. Never could he have thought it would be like this—alone, borne slowly upon a gun carriage, with tears and sobs to greet him. Thus he will pass. Thus the soldier of war and tremendous symbol—it is beneath the Arch of Triumph that they will dig his tomb. 430

To Dorgelès, the act of disinterring this Unknown and designating him as the one representative soldier to rest in the Paris Tomb demonstrated that France's war wounds were far from healed.

Once again, the Unknown Soldier was called to serve his country and travel through France—but this time, his destination was one of honor, and his duty was to help his people process the lasting trauma of the war years.

In the days ahead of the 11 November ceremony, Paris had prepared for citywide events that would overflow with citizens eager to witness these national acts of memorialization.

Duranty reported that the city, "in spite of the dense fog, is in a kind of holiday mood in preparation for tomorrow's ceremonies. The day is not to be one of mourning, but of rejoicing for the fifty years of the Republic and for the glorious termination of the war." Indeed, various accounts recorded the mix of emotions that swept through Paris on the day of the ceremony—from mourning to celebration, from silent awe to nationalistic triumph. 432

Before dawn on 11 November, people filled the streets of Paris to secure places to view the ceremonial procession, which was slated to form around 9:00 a.m. at the Place Denfert-Rochereau. The *New York Times* reported that "streets from there to Panthéon" and "the whole length of the Champs Elysées to the Arc de Triomphe, were lined ten deep and trees were bowed beneath the weight of youngsters who had clambered up to see." The procession march began with wounded veterans of World War I: "mutilated soldiers painfully drawing their wounded bodies, but with faces radiant with pride." It included the flags of all the French regiments of World War I, as well as the flags captured by the Germans as trophies in 1870 and since returned

Prussian War, reinterpreting the earlier war in light of the recent victory. 435 Yet, the flag-draped casket of the Unknown Soldier still appears to have been the central focus of the procession. The passage of the casket—carried on a gun carriage drawn by six black horses and filled with wreaths from state officials and veterans' groups—elicited emotional responses from the crowd. Accounts noted that as the casket passed, people instantly uncovered their heads and "women in mourning garb knelt and sobbed, crossed themselves and sent up prayers." 436

Before the Unknown could be placed at the Arc de Triomphe, however, the procession stopped at the Panthéon for a ceremony to honor the heart of Léon Gambetta. Ensconced in a glass urn supported by republican fasces (a symbol of authority from ancient Rome), the heart was carried during the procession by a highly ornamented, horse-drawn vehicle (Figure 4.4). 437 When the heart arrived at the Panthéon, France's president, premier, and other government officials stood ready to receive it. Inside the Panthéon, they conducted a simple ceremony to honor both Gambetta and the Unknown Soldier. In his speech, President Alexandre Millerand glorified the Third Republic and its founder, Gambetta, in conjunction with the upcoming burial of the French Unknown. 438 Millerand turned to the bier on which the Unknown Soldier rested and spoke directly to him. "Unknown soldier, nameless and triumphal representative of your heroic comrades," he began. 439 As he continued, Millerand addressed all of France's fallen soldiers:

You dead who sleep your cold sleep beneath the soil of Flanders, Champagne, Verdun and so many battlefields, both famous and unknown; young heroes from beyond the Atlantic, from the British Isles, from far dominions, from Italy, from Belgium and from Serbia, from all points of the world, who came to offer your lives for the ideal which France represented, sleep in peace. You have fulfilled your destiny. France and civilization are saved. 440

In Millerand's interpretation, the French Unknown Soldier represented all the Allied war dead and had saved France and civilization not just from the recent war, but from a German menace going back to 1870, at least. He invoked the French Unknown for a political, nationalistic purpose that divided the focus of the day's ceremonies between mourning and patriotism.



Figure 4.4. As part of the procession for the French Unknown Soldier, an elaborate vehicle carried the preserved heart of Léon Gambetta, founder of the Third Republic. Gambetta, who had led France through the crisis of 1870, symbolized the nation's republican ideals. His heart's presence that day united the legacy of the Republic with the sacrifices of those who fell in the Great War.

(Bibliothèque nationale de France)

With the first of the dual ceremonies complete, the heart of Gambetta and the Unknown Soldier were taken out of the Panthéon and the procession re-formed, this time with the Arc de Triomphe as the destination. Two women, veteran nurses who had served on the front, joined the head of the procession alongside the male veterans. ⁴⁴¹ As the procession moved through Paris, the crowd's shifting mood indicated the stark differences between the celebration of the Third Republic's anniversary and the burial of the Unknown. When the spectators saw the thirteen reclaimed flags from the Franco-Prussian War, they erupted in cheers; as soon as the two funeral vehicles passed, they hushed into silence, only to cheer again when the wartime leaders Marshal Ferdinand Foch, Marshal Joseph Joffre, and Marshal Philippe Pétain passed by. Ambassadors

from various nations walked behind the Unknown Soldier to pay him tribute. As the procession approached the Arc de Triomphe, veterans of the Franco-Prussian War and additional wounded veterans joined its ranks. 442 At the arch, a silence again swept the crowd, and as the cortege passed underneath, ships on the Seine River fired a fifty-one-gun salute to represent each month of World War I. Even the bugles and trumpets within the procession ceased when the Unknown's casket and the heart of Gambetta were placed under the arch. At sunset, a cavalry escort took the heart back to its permanent resting place in the Panthéon, while the Unknown Soldier, his casket engraved with the words "Le Soldat Français," was brought into a room inside the arch. 443

The procession and ceremonies that honored the French Unknown struck a deep chord with the French people, who had lost so many loved ones during the war and watched their homeland become a vast killing field. Edwin L. James of the *New York Times* observed the depth of that emotional connection as he watched the events on that special Armistice Day. 444 This nameless poilu being honored by the republic could have been the loved one of a great many in the crowd that day. To James, it seemed that the words "perhaps it is he" were "in the minds of thousands and thousands of fathers, mothers, wives and children" as they watched the French Unknown carried to his burial place. "Tears stood in the eyes of many," James reported, "but they did not fall. Paris wept only in the days before victory."

The French Unknown represented more than one million Frenchmen who had been lost in the war, and his burial served, in a symbolic sense, as a national funeral to honor them all.

This idea of a collective funeral, forged in the twin burials of the Unknown Soldiers in France and Great Britain on 11 November 1920, would become an essential element of tombs of the unknown soldier in many countries, including in the United States the following year. Yet James

also observed something about the French event that distinguished it from such ceremonies more broadly, including that taking place at the same time across the English Channel. Because France had chosen to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Third Republic, the latter part of the day felt less solemn. James described a combination of patriotism, nationalism, and mourning as that "variety of sentiment [of] which only your Frenchman is capable": a celebration of victory over the old German enemy, a long-hoped-for resolution of the losses of 1870, and an attempt to console a people who had suffered incalculable losses and destruction. 446 Although James reported that the public interest was most profoundly focused on the Unknown, he described the crowd as nonetheless "alight and aglow . . . the people are joyous with well-earned joy." 447 While "the shadow of France's dead, not one unknown, but 300,000," had hung over the morning's ceremony, he observed that "after lunch there came a complete change" as people started to celebrate. 448 "There was nothing of the wild abandon of Armistice Day itself, but it was clear, none the less if the morning was consecrated to the memory of those who had made the great sacrifice, the afternoon and evening were given up to rejoicing the victory. There is nothing in the world like France tonight," he professed. 449 And yet even as the crowds celebrated, an undercurrent of solemnity remained, for the evening included a torchlight procession near Notre Dame with wartime tanks and taxis (to honor the ones used to transport troops during the desperate Battle of the Marne) that again drew the crowd into silence. 450

The United States played a small part in the ceremonies that day. A delegation led by U.S. ambassador Hugh C. Wallace included members of the American Legion as well as diplomatic officials. At the Suresnes American Cemetery just outside of Paris, the French government arranged a special tribute for Americans living in Paris. Ambassador Wallace, members of the American Legion, and French officials watched as a group of little girls laid

flowers at U.S. graves and also honored the French. 451 As participants in these events, Americans honored the French Unknown Soldier and France's wartime sacrifices while also recognizing their own nation's role in the war. For Americans living in the United States, coverage of these events in national and local newspapers brought word of this new type of commemorative ritual and inspired some people to contemplate how to honor American unknown service members.



Figure 4.5. French soldiers lower the coffin of the French Unknown Soldier into the tomb that would become France's most sacred memorial. Chosen to represent all those lost in the Great War, this Unknown Soldier gave France a focus for collective mourning and became an enduring symbol of sacrifice and unity after the devastation of 1914–1918. (*Bibliothèque nationale de France*)

The story of the French Unknown Soldier did not end in 1920. Initial plans called for the Unknown to remain inside a room in the Arc de Triomphe, which would serve as a crypt, guarded by four sentries. However, the public protested, not wanting the Unknown to remain secluded for perpetuity. French citizens wrote to newspapers and otherwise expressed their belief that the Unknown deserved to be buried directly under the arch itself and publicly honored in full view of all who approached the structure. On 23 November 1920, the Cabinet agreed, and on 28 January 1921, the Unknown came to his final resting place: a vault underneath the arch, near where his casket had previously lain (Figure 4.5). 452 At a ceremony held that day, attended by

Ambassador Wallace, the grave was covered by a slab of granite, inscribed with the words *Ici* repose un soldat Français mort pour la patrie 1914–1918 (Here lies a French soldier who died for the nation 1914–1918). ⁴⁵³ The new Tomb under the Arc de Triomphe immediately drew crowds of visitors, and it became a site of pilgrimage for all those, French and foreign, who wished to honor the memory of France's war dead. It also became the site of future Armistice Day ceremonies and a gathering place for veterans. During a special ceremony on Armistice Day in 1923, a "flame of remembrance" was added to the Tomb site, lit for the first time by André Maginot, then minister of pensions. The flame has remained lit ever since (Figure 4.6). A union of associations serves as its steward; every day at 6:30 p.m., representatives of veterans' organizations and other civic groups ceremonially reignite the flame. ⁴⁵⁴ The French Tomb with its eternal flame continues to operate as a central site of French memory, a reminder of the war's global human cost that is linked to other wartime memorials around the world. Dedicated on the same day, the British Tomb of the Unknown Warrior is one of these closely linked sites.



Figure 4.6. A "flame of remembrance" was added to the French Tomb of the Unknown Solider in 1923. This flame inspired Jacqueline Kennedy to request that an eternal flame be placed at John F. Kennedy's gravesite at Arlington National Cemetery. (*ANCHRC*)

Great Britain's Unknown Warrior

In Great Britain, the idea to repatriate and bury an unknown British soldier in a special tomb seems to have come from the Reverend David Railton, a war veteran and British Army chaplain. According to Railton's own account, the idea to bury an unknown soldier in a special tomb came to him in 1916, while he was serving in Armentières, France. 455 He had participated in the burial of a soldier and when he returned to his billet, he came across a grave in the house's garden. It was marked with a white wooden cross and labeled "An Unknown British Soldier," with "of the Black Watch" written in pencil in brackets underneath. 456 Railton later recalled how, after seeing that grave, he

thought and thought and wrestled in thought. What can I do to ease the pain of father, mother, brother, sister, sweetheart, wife and friend? Quietly and gradually there came out of the mist of thought this answer clear and strong, "Let this body—this symbol of him—be carried reverently over the sea to his native land." ⁴⁵⁷

Although Railton knew that his idea could not be pursued during the war, he kept it in mind until he returned home, and he tried to determine the right time to share it with someone of authority. That time would come in August 1920. That month, at the urging of his wife, Ruby, he wrote to Herbert Ryle, the dean of Westminster, to suggest his idea for a tomb and his strong conviction that it must be placed in Westminster Abbey—"the Parish Church of the Empire." He also offered for use in the service the flag he had carried with him during the war and used as an altar cloth. Ryle took Railton's idea to heart, and eventually succeeded in gaining support for it to go forward. King George V at first opposed the idea, afraid that the belated gesture could reopen the pain of the war, but on 19 October 1920, just a few weeks before Armistice Day, Railton learned that his vision of honoring the unknown dead would be realized. The date of interment was set for 11 November 1920. But just like in France, that day would not be solely devoted to the interment of the Unknown.

In Great Britain's case, the Unknown's interment was joined not by the interment of remains from an earlier war as in France, but by the dedication of a separate monument to all those British soldiers who had died abroad in the Great War. This London monument, the Cenotaph, had first been unveiled in a temporary form on 18 July 1919, the day before the victory parade that celebrated the formal end of the war. The British found inspiration for this idea from the French plan to erect a temporary catafalque along the route of the Paris parade. 460 Designed by the prominent architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, the rapidly built monument was placed in the middle of a street in Whitehall, the ceremonial and political heart of the city, near 10 Downing Street, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, and the Mall, which leads to Buckingham Palace. Although the monument looked like stone, it was built out of wood, plaster, and canvas and was meant to be temporary. 461 However, Lutyens's creation struck a chord with the public, and he subsequently designed a similar, permanent monument.

Lutyens found inspiration in the ancient tombs that rested over empty graves—called cenotaphs, from the Greek word *kenotaphion* (*kenos* [empty] and *taphos* [tomb])—and he purposely created this modern British cenotaph to be simple, dignified, and devoid of specificity. ⁴⁶² Containing no names of the dead, it could represent anyone, and individuals could find their own meanings in it. The British Cenotaph did not contain any graves, yet its tall, stately design, with sleek lines and a faux sarcophagus at the top, imbued it with a sense of the sacred. As an empty tomb, it stood in for the graves of those British service members, known and unknown, whose bodies remained overseas. ⁴⁶³ Only service members who actually died in Great Britain, often the sick or wounded evacuated from Europe, were buried on British soil. ⁴⁶⁴ Because generally prohibited the Britain repatriation of remains, relatively few people in the British Empire had a grave to visit in the nation where they lived. The Cenotaph would give

them all a place to mourn. 465 Indeed, the public responded to the temporary memorial with an outpouring of grief; they visited en masse and left flowers and tributes at the site, making it even more meaningful. 466

A chorus of voices supported making the Cenotaph permanent. Soon, plans for a stone version of the Cenotaph moved forward, even as people continued to make pilgrimages to the temporary structure, leaving flowers there, especially around the Armistice Day commemorations in November 1919. 467 Lutyens's design for the permanent Cenotaph, to be made of Portland stone, almost duplicated the temporary one, with only some small changes. He pushed back against proposals to add bronze sentries at each corner, as he felt it essential to retain the abstract neutrality, geometry, and simple symbolism that made the monument so universal. Because many people felt that the very ground beneath the temporary memorial had become sacred, the permanent Cenotaph was placed at the same site as its predecessor. 468

On 11 November 1920, in what would be a stunning, multifaceted commemorative event, the permanent Cenotaph in Whitehall and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey were both dedicated. But unlike the path from temporary to permanent Cenotaph, the development of the Tomb was more winding, and its history remains more opaque. Immediately upon the Tomb's October 1920 approval, a committee was appointed to make plans for the burial of the British Unknown. After some discussion, the committee decided to refer to their Unknown as a "warrior," because "soldier" would exclude men of the navy and air force. 469 Railton's original suggestion called the Unknown a "comrade," a title he preferred because he "thought that most people might consider 'Warrior' to mean 'soldier'; whereas it means 'sailor' just as much; also, it seemed more homely and friendly." Despite these concerns, Railton's

suggestion did not prevail, likely because of the connotations of the word "comrade" just after the 1917 Russian Revolution. 471

As news spread about plans for the Tomb, the British public reacted largely positively to the idea. Many were pleased that a common service member would receive an honorific burial, and that those who had died without a known grave could be mourned on British soil at a place of national significance. Criticism of the plan did emerge, however, especially in the context of broader social problems in postwar Britain, as veterans returned home with war wounds and psychological trauma, and often struggled to find employment. 472

The process for selecting the Unknown Warrior took place between 8 and 9 November 1920, although the exact sequence of events remains unclear. 473 Indeed, the secrecy surrounding the selection process has left many holes in the story. Four unknown bodies were exhumed from cemeteries in the four major battle areas where the British had fought on the Western Front: the Aisne, the Somme, and Arras in France; and Ypres in Belgium (Figure 4.7). 474 Evidence indicates that in order to avoid having to cremate the body, the British may have opted to select remains from 1914, early in the war, as they would be decomposed and unidentifiable. Some accounts have pointed out that if the Unknown died in 1914, he most likely would have been a soldier of the regular British Army and not a soldier from elsewhere in the British Empire—and therefore not necessarily representative of all who served with the British forces. 475 However, recent research by Britain's National Army Museum indicates that although the individual selected likely did serve in the earlier regular army, his dates of service cannot be definitively proven. The earlier story that the Unknown Warrior could have been from any part of the empire thus prevails today. 476



Figure 4.7. In France, British personnel disinter one of the four sets of unknown remains that were included in the selection ceremony for the British Unknown Warrior. The processes that the United Kingdom and France developed in 1920 shaped the American effort in 1921. (*Imperial War Museum*)

After being examined to ensure they were British and could not be identified, the four bodies were taken to Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, France, where they were reexamined, covered with flags, and prepared for a midnight selection ceremony in a makeshift chapel. Brig. Gen. L. J. Wyatt, who had commanded British troops in France and Flanders, selected the body to be buried in the Tomb, although details of this process remain a mystery. The selected body was placed in a coffin and prepared for the next steps of his journey as the British Unknown Warrior. The three unselected sets of remains were initially said to have been reburied in the military cemetery at Saint-Pol, although other accounts indicate that they may actually have been reburied beside a road that had seen heavy combat (in order to be less obvious). 477

Chaplains representing various Christian denominations held a service before a wartime ambulance transported the Unknown Warrior to Boulogne under escort. With all due ceremony, the casket was taken to the Boulogne Castle, whose library was transformed into a temporary chapel. Surrounded by flags and greenery, the casket rested there overnight, guarded by French soldiers, whose participation honored the British Unknown on behalf of all of France. Then, two

British undertakers transferred the Unknown Warrior from the simple casket to one made of English oak, taken from a tree grown on the grounds of Hampton Court Palace. This casket had rested in Westminster Abbey overnight after being fitted for the grave and before being borne to Boulogne (Figure 4.8). Its design included, on the lid cover, an iron shield with the inscription: "A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914–18 for King and Country." Attached to the shield was a crusader's sword from the collection of the Tower of London. ⁴⁷⁸



Figure 4.8. The Unknown Warrior's casket, with an inscribed shield and crusader's sword on its lid, rested in Westminster Abbey on 7 November 1920, before it was transported to Boulogne, France. There, at Boulogne Castle, British morticians transferred the Unknown Warrior's remains to this casket.

(Imperial War Museum)

After the overnight vigil at Boulogne Castle, the Unknown Warrior, ensconced in this deeply symbolic casket, began the next leg of its journey back to England. It was placed on a French military wagon, and a funeral procession with French troops, cavalry, and schoolchildren escorted it into Boulogne and toward the dock. According to the New York Times, the whole population of the little seaside town which played so great a part in the history of the war lined the streets to see the procession bearing the body from the citadel. . . . All the church bells were

rung, and the ships in the harbor flew flags at full mast, as the ceremony was not one of mourning, but of glorification."⁴⁸⁰ A dockside ceremony marked the Unknown Warrior's departure, with speeches honoring the wartime Anglo-French alliance; old enemies were now bound together by blood spilled for the same cause. France's Marshal Ferdinand Foch, who had decided to attend of his own accord, gave a speech in which he exclaimed, "It is before him [the Unknown] that I can best express my profound feelings of thanks and admiration."⁴⁸¹ French women and children laid wreaths and flowers on the Unknown Warrior's bier as the troops saluted him. The pallbearers then carried the casket onto the HMS *Verdun*, a British destroyer chosen as a special tribute to France and named in honor of the battle (Figure 4.9). As French batteries on the shore saluted the ship, it set off across the English Channel, escorted by six destroyers, and made its way to Dover, England. ⁴⁸²

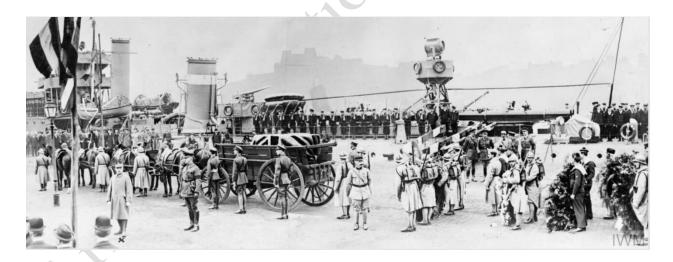


Figure 4.9. French and British honor guards escorted the Unknown Warrior from the Boulogne Castle to the awaiting HMS *Verdun*. This ship carried the British Unknown Warrior across the English Channel to the port city of Dover. (*Imperial War Museum*)

Upon arrival at Dover, the *Verdun* left its escort and, alone, entered the harbor, where it was met with a nineteen-gun salute. Crowds assembled to see the ship arrive, forming the first

ranks of what became the British people's extended pilgrimage to pay tribute to this unknown "Tommy" (a slang term for British soldiers, akin to poilu and doughboy). 483 A procession headed by Lt. Gen. Sir George Macdonogh led the Unknown Warrior to the railway station, where a carriage decorated with purple drapery and flowers waited. This rail carriage itself had special symbolism. It had previously transported the body of the national hero Edith L. Cavell, a British nurse executed by the Germans in 1915 for aiding the escape of Allied soldiers, and the body of Capt. Charles A. Fryatt, a naval hero executed by the Germans upon his capture in 1916. 484 Filled with wreaths and guarded by men from the Connaught Rangers, the carriage set off for London, attached to an evening train. Along the route, the train paused at stations so that onlookers could briefly see the casket. At London's Victoria Station, crowds waited for the train's arrival. After a simple, solemn ceremony, the casket remained in the carriage at the station overnight, guarded by sentries from the Grenadier Guards. 485

On the morning of 11 November, Armistice Day, Victoria Station was the starting point for the day's events. The waiting casket had been draped with what later became known as the "Padre's Flag"—Railton's wartime Union Flag. 486 In the days leading up to the burial, the London *Times* had reported on the flag in depth, enabling the public to understand its meaning and heartbreaking connections to the British war dead. 487 Years later, Railton wrote of this flag that it had served during the war at "Holy Communion, as a covering for the rough box, or table, altars. It was used at Church Parades and Ceremonial Parades. It was the covering—often the only covering—of the slain, as their bodies were laid to rest. For all I know it may have been used in Belgium or France when the actual 'Unknown Warrior' was slain." 488 On top of this deeply meaningful flag, a steel helmet, belt, and weapon were added to the casket to further demarcate the Warrior as a service member of the Great War. 489

An elaborate funeral cortege began to assemble for the procession. Military units representing all branches of the armed forces, along with bands, pipes, drummers, veterans, and dignitaries, followed the six black horses towing the casket on a gun carriage. The twelve pallbearers walking with the gun carriage included distinguished British military leaders such as Lord Douglas Haig. As the procession wound its way through London from Victoria Station to the Cenotaph, emotional crowds lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the casket. ⁴⁹⁰ The *Chicago Daily Tribune* called the scene "the greatest assemblage of notables and the largest number of troops ever brought together for funeral honors," noting that "the procession, on foot and bareheaded, included the highest dignitaries of the land."

Public and participatory, the procession was one of the day's most meaningful events, enabling average citizens to take part in a new national mourning ritual. In the *New York Times*, British war correspondent Sir Philip Gibbs wrote a long and emotional description of the day's events. His assessment of the crowd's mood along the procession route painted a clear picture of the British people's deep connection to the Unknown Warrior: "To some women, weeping a little in the crowd after an all-night vigil, he was their boy who went missing one day and was never found till now." Similarly, "to many men among those packed densely on each side of the empty street, wearing ribbons and badges on civil clothes," the Unknown "was a familiar figure—one of their comrades, the one they liked best, perhaps, in the old crowd, who went into the fields of death and stayed there with the great companionship." Gibbs pointed out how the symbols attached to the Unknown's casket signified to the crowds that he was one of them:

It was the steel helmet, the old "tin hat," lying there on the crimson of the flag which revealed him instantly, not as a mythical warrior aloof from common humanity, but as one of those fellows, dressed in the drab of khaki, stained by mud and grease, who went into the dirty ditches with this steel hat on his head and in his heart the unspoken things, which made him one of us in courage and in fear, with some kind of faith not clear, full of perplexities, often dim in the watchwords of those years of war. 494

When the procession reached the Whitehall area of London, the next ceremony began with the unveiling of the much-awaited permanent Cenotaph. 495 The spectators were there by invitation, having been selected by a ballot system from among the countless eligible relatives of the war dead. 496 King George V, as the chief mourner, placed a wreath on the Unknown Warrior's casket, surrounded by many British wartime military and civilian leaders, religious leaders, the prime minister, the prince of Wales and other members of the royal family, as well as princes from India, whose presence emphasized the imperial nature of the ceremony. 497

At 11:00 a.m., the hour of the armistice, the king unveiled the Cenotaph (Figure 4.10). Two minutes of silence followed, observed across Britain as trains and factory looms came to a standstill. 498 The king then placed a wreath at the Cenotaph, and the prime minister and the other leaders followed suit with additional wreaths. The procession resumed and traveled the short distance to Westminster Abbey for the burial of the Unknown Warrior. 499



Figure 4.10. A funeral procession through London escorted the British Unknown Warrior to Westminster Abbey. Along the route, a special ceremony was held to unveil the permanent Cenotaph memorial on the Whitehall road. King George V led the ceremony with various dignitaries and invited guests present. In this image, the Cenotaph is still draped with a Union Jack. (*Imperial War Museum*)

Inside the Abbey, bearers from the Coldstream Guards walked the Unknown's casket past the invited guests, which included scores of decorated veterans, recipients of the Victoria Cross, wounded nurses, war widows, mothers of the fallen, and other relatives of the dead. 500 Bereaved family members, mostly women, formed the bulk of the congregants. Initially, planning for the event had excluded widows and mothers of the dead, causing a public outcry that led to their inclusion as key participants. 501 The funeral was, by design, strictly for the British Empire; no foreign dignitaries were invited to the funeral inside the Abbey. The king and the royal family took their places near the grave for the short service led by Dean Ryle, who had been so instrumental in making Railton's idea a reality. 502 The body bearers removed the flag, helmet, and weapon from the coffin, after which, accompanied by prayers and hymns, it descended into a grave carved into the ancient floor. The king then sprinkled the casket with dirt taken from France, forever connecting the Unknown's final resting place to the land where he had perished. 503 As the service concluded, buglers played the traditional calls of "Last Post" and "Long Reveille," with their implications of death and resurrection. Four sentries, one from each branch of the military, stationed themselves at the corners of the grave. 504

With the sentries in place and the service concluded, the gravesite—with Railton's flag, among other items, placed over it—was prepared for public viewing. Mourners now streamed into the Abbey to visit the grave of the Unknown Warrior (Figure 4.11). They came in droves, forcing the visiting days to extend beyond the planned three-day period; the grave was not sealed until 18 November. Afterward, visitors continued to make pilgrimages to honor the war dead at both Westminster Abbey and the Cenotaph, which remained covered in floral tributes for around a year. ⁵⁰⁵ On 19 November, the *New York Times* reported that every weekday since the burial, "an endless stream of mourners has been entering the Abbey in fours and passing the grave.

They began to come early in the morning, and on some days they continued until past 11 o'clock at night. They come from all grades of society and from all parts of the British Empire. An even greater number of people made the pilgrimage to the Cenotaph in Whitehall." Overall, this article stated, an estimated 1.5 million people visited the Unknown Warrior's grave in its first week. Among them was U.S. ambassador John W. Davis, who, after the burial ceremony, placed a wreath on the grave that bore the words, "America will not forget." Such pilgrimages further consecrated these sites as eternal sacred places, whose resonance extended beyond the anniversaries of the immediate postwar years.

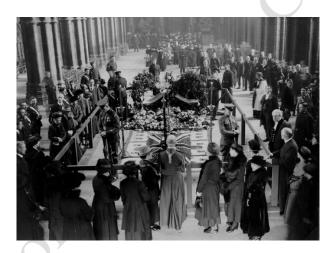


Figure 4.11. The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior immediately became a pilgrimage site for the British, bringing visitors to Westmintser Abbey to pay homage to this unidentified warrior buried among royalty. (© *The Dean and Chapter of Westminster*)

Indeed, in addition to becoming key places of pilgrimage for the British people, these two locations quickly formed central sites of memory more broadly. The Tomb and the Cenotaph embodied the British Empire's commemoration of World War I, especially in the first decades after the war. For those who could not travel to the battlefields and cemeteries in continental Europe, visiting the Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior served the same purpose, enabling them to connect viscerally with the war and its dead. ⁵⁰⁹ The lack of local graves in so

many cases made these two memorials even more significant and personal for those whose loved ones never returned from the war.

That these two monuments focused on the common, rank-and-file soldier also contributed to their resonance with the British people. 510 Because the Cenotaph and Tomb included no individual names and had no specific religious or geographic symbolism, citizens could discern their own meanings in these memorial sites. Their very ambiguity endeared them to visitors, who could easily imagine that they honored a relative, unknown or known, who lay buried overseas. As an article in the London *Times* said on the day after the funeral, "here was one of ourselves, one of the people, one of the hundreds of thousands of all sorts and of all conditions, who had laid down his life for us." The added significance of the Cenotaph's location in the heart of official London, and the Tomb's placement among the graves of royalty in the revered Westminster Abbey, gave people the feeling that one of their own was being honored and respected for his wartime sacrifice in a manner befitting the noblest Britons.

Railton deeply understood the power of anonymity in endearing the Unknown Warrior to so many grieving families. In a 1931 article, he observed that

those whose loved ones were amongst the "unknown" know that in this Tomb there may be—there is—resting the body of their beloved. They know also that he is not there himself, though he may often be near. They have, moreover, learnt the unity of all types of men at that grave. . . . No one knows the "Unknown Warrior's" rank, his wealth, his education or his history. "Class" values become vanity there. He may have been wealthy, or one whose home was in a slum. He may have been a Public School boy or a gypsy. Many people have not yet grasped the fact that he may have come from any part of the British Isles, or from the Dominions or Colonies. And there are still a good few who do not realise that he may have been a sailor. . . . He may have been one of the clergy of the Church, who served as a combatant officer, or in the ranks. No one knows what his "profession" was. He may have been—till his country called—one of the "idle rich." It is quite likely that he was a communicant of the Church, or a Roman Catholic, a Jew, a Salvationist, a Wesleyan, a Presbyterian, or a member of any other, or of no religious denomination. Our children should be taught most carefully that this one Warrior is just a representative of all Britons who fell in the Great War, known or unknown. 512

The Unknown Warrior had become at once both a national figure and a very personal one to the British people, and he was mourned and commemorated on both official and individual levels. The *New York Times* reported that "the burial of an unknown British soldier in Westminster Abbey was the expression of a national sentiment that his sacrifice had ennobled him and made him worthy to lie in the same earth with the most distinguished dead whom the empire had honored in that hallowed spot." ⁵¹³

In the historical context of imperialism, the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior also had to represent the war dead from the many diverse places that made up, and fought for, the British Empire during World War I. The ceremonies to dedicate the Cenotaph and to bury the Unknown Warrior attempted to unite a widespread and disparate empire. ⁵¹⁴ The *New York Times* noted this effort:

The unknown, who might have worn the uniform of a county regiment or followed the colors of Australia and New Zealand, will in future symbolize the patriotism of the empire, and his tomb will be the shrine of men and women of British blood for succeeding generations. . . . The significance of the sepulture of the brave unknown in that place is distinctly national. . . . All the soldier dead who lie in France belong to the whole people whose flag flies in every part of the world. ⁵¹⁵

Of course, the burial of the Unknown Warrior could hardly resolve long-standing tensions within the British Empire. Yet the effort to include the colonies and dominions in British commemorative practices implicitly recognized their wartime contributions.

Canada, Australia, and New Zealand accepted the London Tomb as theirs, although each of these nations would later bury an unknown soldier on their own soil. ⁵¹⁶ Australia buried an unknown soldier from a Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial in Campbell in 1993, and New Zealand buried a World War I unknown in a tomb at the National War Memorial in Wellington in 2004. ⁵¹⁷ Canada also created a tomb for an unknown soldier long after World War I. In 2000, a Canadian unknown

disinterred from a cemetery in France was reburied in a sarcophagus at the Canadian War Memorial in Ottawa. ⁵¹⁸

Today, the Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior continue to serve as significant sites of military memory for Great Britain. The Armistice Day commemoration on 11 November eventually moved to the Sunday nearest that date and became known as Remembrance Day. Now, on Remembrance Day, a national ceremony takes place at the Cenotaph, and a service is held at Westminster Abbey. The Padre's Flag hangs in Saint George's Chapel—a testament to Railton's role in the Tomb's creation and a tangible connection to the world of the Great War. Likewise, the ship's bell from the HMS *Verdun* hangs near the grave of the Unknown Warrior. Britain also observes a two-minute silence each Remembrance Day, re-creating the inaugural moment of silence from 1920. 521

A little more than a century after its dedication, the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior remains a sacred place. It is the only grave in Westminster Abbey on which no one walks, and the only one regularly decorated with wreaths by visiting monarchs and heads of state during official visits to the monarch or prime minister. The rituals associated with the Tomb remain nationally and internationally visible through the Remembrance Day ceremonies and services. Similarly, an enduring connection was forged between the Tomb and royal weddings when Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon married the duke of York (the future King George VI) in Westminster Abbey in 1923. As she passed the Tomb, she placed her bridal bouquet on it in memory of her brother Capt. Fergus Bowes-Lyon, who had died at the Battle of Loos and had no known grave. Since then, many royal brides have continued this tradition by sending their bouquets to the Tomb after their weddings. This act of remembrance so many years after World War I keeps alive the public memory of that conflict and connects different audiences, often previously

unaware of the Tomb, to its story and meaning. It demonstrates the immutable power of the Tomb, the continued emotional impact of World War I on the British psyche, and the cultural trajectory of remembrance and commemorative rituals within Great Britain and the world (see sidebar 4a, "An Exchange of Honors: Bestowing the Medal of Honor on Foreign Unknowns" for the story of how the United States' honored the British Unknown Warrior.)

American Desires for a Tomb

As the French and the British buried their Unknown Soldiers and created new commemorative traditions at their Tombs, Americans followed along in the press. Major national and local newspapers reported widely on the events leading up to the funeral services, the burials, and the aftermath, making Americans highly aware of these ceremonies, their meaning, and the powerful emotional reactions they elicited from the British and French people. Reading about these ceremonies caused some to wonder why the United States had not created such a tomb for an American unknown soldier. Inspired by the example of the British and the French, some Americans began to argue that such a tomb was needed in the United States. 524

In the days around Armistice Day in 1920, U.S. newspapers carried expressions of disappointment that the United States was neither conducting a large-scale ceremony to honor the armistice nor creating a tomb for an unknown soldier. ⁵²⁵ The day of the French and British burials, the *New York Tribune* published a scathing piece that chastised the United States for these shortcomings:

America is without a ceremony befitting Armistice Day. This is perhaps natural; we are not a nation that turns readily to formalities. Yet it will be hoped that another year may witness a growing sense of the solemnity of this day when the guns ceased firing after four long years, and that the right services will gradually be developed to be shared by all. Meantime, all eyes turn this morning to those moving ceremonies in Paris and in London. . . . There is high fitness in these burials. There is eternal justice in the tribute paid. The acts express well what

every thoughtful American feels. There never was a greater hero than the fighting man of the Allies. However far short the leadership of this country and that may have fallen, the soldier, the unknown soldier, whose name is cherished in few hearts or none, never failed. 526

The lack of major ceremonies on Armistice Day and the absence of an American tomb were perceived as dishonoring U.S. service members, especially those who remained unknown. "This is an occasion for fresh resolves, for setting our faces toward a new day," the editorial in the *Tribune* argued. "In the spirit of the unknown soldiers we must put behind every petty or partisan or selfish end and seek, with all the will and wisdom we possess, to build upon their sacrifice the utmost of enduring service to the cause of justice and right." Linking unknown soldiers to the postwar effort to preserve peace, the editorial envisioned long-term benefits to properly honoring an unknown American in the manner of the British and the French.

The *Tribune*'s editorial drew the attention of World War I veteran William H. Pangburn Jr., whose response appeared in the paper a few days later. As "only one of the many millions who were privileged to serve their country during the late war," Pangburn wrote that he found it

deplorable that a great nation such as the United States should remain silent and unobservant of the anniversary of the day when her soldiers and sailors brought to a successful conclusion their glorious defense of her honor and tradition. The thoughts of those of us who remember their heroic death turn to France and England upon this day, because it is to the ceremonies there observed that we must look for the public recognition of the sacrifice made by the men who gave their lives that we might live in peace and security. In thought we stand bareheaded at the Arch of Victory, in Paris, and in Westminster Abbey, in London, with tears in our eyes, gratitude in our hearts and a firm resolution that those brave Americans who willingly and cheerfully served their country unto death may not go another year forgotten and unmourned save by those they left behind. . . . I sincerely hope, as you do, that next year shall see fitting ceremonies observed in this country, such as our allies are now observing. ⁵²⁸

Angry at what he perceived as a lack of American respect for the nation's unknown dead,

Pangburn voiced the sentiments of a growing number of Americans who, after reading about the

French and British Tombs, believed that the United States must have a tomb of its own.

Soon, ideas started to spring up about how best to create such a tomb, and the War Department found itself in the news as the proposals began to gain public attention. One that received repeated press coverage came from the Victory Hall Association of New York, an organization that planned to construct a living memorial building near Grand Central Terminal in New York City to honor New York's World War I service members. ⁵²⁹ On 19 November 1920, this group sent a proposal to secretary of war Newton D. Baker Jr. asking him to permit them to bury one unknown U.S. soldier in a memorial crypt called the Shrine of Liberty within their planned building on the day they laid its cornerstone. Although Baker agreed to consider the request, he pointed to a number of factors that would most likely preclude its possibility. 530 These included, according to the New York Times, "the War Department's announced policy to place the bodies of all unidentified dead in especially prepared fields of honor. He also told the committee that the granting of its request might establish a precedent which would lead to other memorial associations making a similar request and to resultant confusion."531 Not surprisingly, Baker soon refused this request and stated that he would refuse similar requests from other organizations. 532

Nevertheless, Baker received additional pressure to approve the Victory Hall plan, and his official correspondence on the matter reveals further details about his refusal, as well as his vision for how a tomb for an unknown American should be created. For example, senator William M. Calder (R-NY) telegraphed Baker on behalf of the Victory Hall proposal, urging him to wait for the group to submit an additional statement, but by the time Baker telegraphed in reply, he did so to report his decision against the proposal. Sale Paker explained his position in a letter to Gen. George W. Wingate, an influential Civil War veteran and president of the Victory Hall Association. In this letter, Baker noted that the War Department had already received many

similar requests, all of which he had refused for the same reasons given to the Victory Hall committee. Sale Referencing the group's inspiration in Great Britain and France, Baker argued that "a strict pursuit of the analogy of these instances" would favor the creation of a tomb "in the great Amphitheater erected by the Government at Arlington Cemetery at Washington or in some one of the public buildings erected and maintained by the federal government"—thus requiring an act of Congress. The Victory Hall project, however, he interpreted as "but one of a large number of monuments which will be erected," each with local significance, and he could not set a precedent of privileging it over others.

Baker went on to explain his concern of setting the wrong precedent. He feared that if he approved the Victory Hall request, he would have to approve others like it. Soon, he wrote, the "unknown and unidentified of the American Expeditionary Forces would finally be scattered here and there, separated from the companionship of others who fell in the same cause." Conscious of the feelings of the families of the dead, as well as the respect he felt should be accorded to the bodies of the dead, Baker put his decision in the context of the War Department's pledge that bodies would be returned to families if they so desired, or else buried in overseas U.S. cemeteries that he described as "great and beautiful" places that would "forever mark the sacrifices our Army and our people made over there." He thus did not feel the need to disinter an unidentified body for the Victory Hall proposal. With his refusal, Baker reasserted the War Department's control over the bodies of all unknown Americans. In the end, his refusal proved prudent, as the Victory Hall project did not reach completion.

With emotions about the lack of an American tomb still high, some members of the public disagreed with Baker's decision. One writer even attacked the secretary of war personally. In an editorial from the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* reprinted in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, this

author wrote that "it is evident that Secretary Baker does not read the newspapers, and while he may be the greatest secretary of war that this government has ever known, it is also equally apparent that he is a poor psychologist." Had Baker "read the dispatches giving the moving accounts of what happened in Westminster abbey and at the Arch of Triumph in Paris on Armistice day, when the great and humble acclaimed the unknown dead buried with all the honors that the two great nations and peoples could give," he would not have turned down the proposal to "show similar tribute to our unknown dead through dignified interment at a national shrine in New York." The editorial described the idea to create an American tomb as a "noble suggestion," proposing that if

those who desire to erect a permanent altar to Victory in New York, or to link Arlington with such ceremonies as have stirred the French and the British peoples to the depths, feel like trying to convince not a one-track but a closed mind, they might begin by putting before Mr. Baker the full accounts now available of the ceremonies in London and in Paris. No one, save he who is not moved by the nobler impulses, can read what happened over there on Armistice day without immediate response. . . . In the face of all this, what piece of unutterable stupidity for Secretary Baker to oppose similar honors on this side to our unknown dead no less worthy than those of Great Britain or of France. ⁵⁴²

Using the examples of Great Britain and France as the standard to which the United States should aspire, the editorial expressed aggravation that Baker would not acquiesce to proposals to construct an American tomb like those of the Allies.

Other commentators took a more nuanced view of the matter. A *New York Times* editorial titled "A Request Wisely Refused" acknowledged that "the intentions of those proposing the plan were admirable" and were meant to "pay honor where honor is due, in the same way that it has been paid in England and France," but argued that "New York does not bear the same relation to the United States as does London to England and Paris to France, and we have neither a Westminster Abbey nor a monument as truly national in its association as the Arch of Triumph." Like Baker, the editorial expressed concern that other groups would want their own

repatriated unknown, thus dispersing the American unknowns far from the battlefields where they had perished. "One can imagine our unidentified dead," the piece continued, "preferring to remain where they are, because only there can they remain together; it is not so easy to imagine them consenting to a separation that would scatter them in loneliness all over this great land, each almost inevitably hundreds or thousands of miles from what was once his home town." 544

Others agreed with this sentiment, and during the weeks after Armistice Day, more

Americans took to the newspapers to discuss the issue. They expressed interest in the symbolic power of Great Britain and France's new Tombs, and wondered why their nation had no tomb of its own. On 9 December 1920, a *New York Times* editorial emphasized the symbolic importance of these national tombs: "The significance of the sepulture of the brave unknown . . . is distinctly national. No one in England, using the word as a synonym for the empire, thinks of asking to have a nameless soldier buried in Kent or Ayrshire or Galway. All the soldier dead lying in France belong to the whole people whose flag flies in every part of the world." The editorial writer seemed convinced that if the United States were to have a tomb, it should only be located in a place of national significance to the American people:

The proposal that has been made in this country to bring back from France the body of an unknown American soldier and give it burial with military ceremony in the home soil should not be associated with any State nor with any particular army association. As in England and France, it is the nation that should do honor to the unidentified soldier, and his tomb should be a shrine for Americans of all the States and all the lands under the flag. And that shrine should be in the National Cemetery at Arlington, where the bravest lie, men of the South as well as men of the North, who fought for the Stars and Stripes. ⁵⁴⁶

With this vision of sectional reconciliation in mind, Arlington National Cemetery was construed as a truly national site, ideally suited to housing an American tomb. Such proposals to place a tomb at Arlington thereby reflected, and strengthened, nationalist narratives that tried to affirm unity between North and South and sought to shape the collective memory of the Civil War.

Secretary Baker was not the only War Department leader to receive pressure to inter an American unknown in a tomb. As early as October 1919, even before the French and British Tombs had been created, Brig. Gen. William D. Connor wrote to Army chief of staff Gen.

Peyton C. March to suggest that the United States consider pursuing a tomb project similar to the one being planned in France. ⁵⁴⁷ General March continued to receive pressure about the issue well into 1920, after the French and British burials had taken place.

One such inquiry came from Marie M. Meloney, the editor of the popular women's magazine the *Delineator* (Figure 4.12). ⁵⁴⁸ Just two days after the burials of the French and British Unknown Soldiers, Meloney wrote to General March and asked him to read an enclosed news clipping about these burial ceremonies. Even though she acknowledged that the United States was in a different situation than France and Britain, she still thought it prudent to create an American tomb. ⁵⁴⁹ After criticizing the American effort to repatriate the war dead, she argued that there was "a tremendous pull in the mystery of the unknown. There is in this thing, the way England has done it, the essence of democracy, and the soul of a people." ⁵⁵⁰ Meloney believed that the Tomb was "the kind of thing which should have found birth in America." Although she admitted that "at this late date or under existing circumstances" it might be hard to "do the fine thing that England has done," she still felt compelled to urge March to consider it anyway. ⁵⁵¹ She laid out her full argument to the chief of staff:

I want you to do the fine, big, human thing that noone else in America has initiated. It is not sob-sister stuff. It is not weak, sentimental hog wash. It is a big, strong influence in the future. The monument which is to be erected in Washington to the American heroes of this war, would have an intimate, and personal, and an arresting influence, if beneath it lay the unidentified body of one of our doughboys. There are many unidentified. Long aisles of them I saw at Romagne. The very top of the hill in that beautiful, quiet spot of consecrated United States property is crowned with crosses marked "Unknown." One of these lying under the new monument would challenge the actual passerby. It brings patriotism home to men in a personal way. Nothing lures the mind so much as mystery. Nothing else elates it as much as justice. ⁵⁵²

By emphasizing her firsthand experience of visiting the American cemetery (which later became the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery) at Romagne, Meloney wanted March to see the rationality of her proposal. She told him that her "readers are asking that we put forward such a movement," and she agreed not to pursue it if he "knew of some good reason why it should not be done."553 She hoped he would "take the initiative" to ask "for the authority to bring home one of the unknown dead," for, she concluded, "I know the tragedy of the unclaimed dead. I have been very heart-sick of the whole thing from the beginning, and have done all that lay in my power to fight the work of the Undertakers' Trust."554 Aware of the influence she held among her female readers regarding this issue, Meloney gave March the opportunity to either support the effort to create a tomb or explain why it could not be pursued, so that she could proceed in cooperation with the War Department. By referencing her work in fighting the "Undertakers' Trust," Meloney also indicated that she, like others, opposed efforts by American undertakers that were interpreted by some as profiting through the repatriation of the war dead. 555



Figure 4.12. Journalist Marie M. Meloney advocated for an unidentified American service member to be honored in a tomb in a similar manner to the British and the French. Meloney edited popular news magazines such as the *Delineator* and *This Week*. (*Library of Congress*)

Shortly after receiving Meloney's letter, General March wrote her an informative reply in which he explained the difficulties of selecting an American unknown and, especially, providing an unidentified body to an organization for burial. 556 The main challenge in creating an American tomb of the unknown, he explained, lay in the small number of remaining unidentified U.S. soldiers, compared to the numbers for Great Britain and France. "The problem of Great Britain and France in this matter," March explained, "is entirely different from ours." 557 He had recently learned on a trip abroad that Great Britain still had more than one hundred thousand unidentified and missing soldiers, and France had even more. By contrast, the American "list of unidentified is very small and *constantly growing smaller*." 558 To March, this was the key reason the United States could not yet create a tomb for an unknown soldier:

We entered the war with the advantage of having all the previous work of the Allied nations in the matter of caring for the dead at our disposal, and our system has been so complete that even now from day to day identifications of the few remaining dead are being made, and it is entirely within the bounds of probability, not possibility but probability, that any body picked out for the purpose desired by these sects, orders, etc., might be identified after the body had been turned over to them from the records, and it would be impossible, for example, for us to guarantee that an unidentified body turned over to the Jewish Associations would be a Jew in fact; this simply to illustrate the impossibility of such a proceeding. ⁵⁵⁹

This explanation took into account not just the lessons the U.S. military had learned from the Allies, but also the hard work of the Graves Registration Service—and the military's preceding years of effort during the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War—to improve American recovery, burial, and identification techniques. Additionally, having been in the war a much shorter time than its allies, the United States had lost fewer men, another factor diminishing the number of unidentified dead. Given the nation's success at making identifications, March and others in the Army feared that they could not risk burying a man as an unknown who could one day be identified. March explained that because the soldiers who had

been identified "are heroes to their former acquaintances and relatives," the military could not deny any opportunity of providing relief to those families still waiting to learn the fate of their missing loved ones. ⁵⁶⁰

Despite these concerns, March seemed receptive to the concept of creating a national tomb dedicated to an unknown soldier. However, he pointed out that in his view, the United States had "no national arch like the Arc de Triomphe, or national building like Westminster Abbey in which has been interred countless bodies for centuries." ⁵⁶¹ He did not mention Arlington National Cemetery, but he conceded that "if Congress should, for the Government, determine to erect a mausoleum, or a memorial for the dead in this war and should specify that those dead should be represented by some unknown man, then, of course, the burial would be national in character and would be appropriate." ⁵⁶² As March explained to Meloney, a national memorial tomb could come into existence only by going through the official channels of the government. ⁵⁶³

Indeed, March may have recognized that the calls for an American tomb would eventually be too strong to ignore. If the United States truly intended to properly honor Americans' service in the Great War, such a tomb might someday be necessary. Without one, the United States might seem disconnected from the larger international commemorative culture being pursued by the Allied nations. A tomb built on home soil would also be linked symbolically to the overseas military cemeteries that the U.S. government intended to maintain. Americans who might not otherwise be able to visit those cemeteries could visit the Tomb instead.

By November 1921, Americans' desire for a tomb on their own soil would be satisfied. In December 1920, the month after France and Great Britain laid their Unknown Soldiers to rest in



Chapter 5: A National Tomb: Legislative Authority to Honor an American Unknown

As readers in the United States devoured news of the dedication ceremonies of the French and British Tombs and debated the merits of creating such a tomb in the United States, a newly elected World War I veteran serving in the House of Representatives took official action to pursue such an endeavor. Passionate about commemorating the war and honoring his fellow veterans, Rep. Hamilton Fish Jr. (R-NY) introduced legislation into Congress in December 1920 that formally proposed the repatriation of one unknown American service member from the war for burial in the United States. 564 With this resolution, Fish set into motion legislative actions that would result in a bill to authorize the creation of a tomb for an unknown soldier at Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery. This legislative process and the intense debates surrounding it—in Congress, in the War Department, and among the general public—shaped the original vision for the Tomb and provided a blueprint for it to become an enduring national shrine. At the same time, these conversations demonstrate the many competing visions for the Tomb. Certain issues, such as the Tomb's exact location and overarching concept, would be points of contention in the months to come. The trajectory of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier's emergence from the halls of Congress thus provides context for its development over the next century.

Representative Hamilton Fish Jr.: Champion of the Tomb



Figure 5.1. During World War I, Hamilton Fish (pictured here on his AEF identity card) served as a captain in the 15th New York National Guard, a segregated African American unit that became the 369th Infantry. (*New York State Library Manuscripts and Special Collections*)

Fish's desire to support the creation of an American tomb similar to those of Great
Britain and France stemmed from his own military service during World War I (Figure 5.1).

Born into a politically powerful family in New York, Fish began his political career in the New York State Assembly in 1914. 565 During that time, he participated in the Plattsburg Movement, a summer training camp for officers in Plattsburg, New York, intended to ensure the nation's military preparedness should it enter the world war. When the United States did join the war in 1917, Fish immediately tried to obtain an officer's commission in the Regular Army. 566 Unable to do so, he instead took an opportunity to serve as a captain in the New York National Guard with Company K of the 15th New York Infantry. This was a segregated African American unit that later became the 369th Infantry, known as the Harlem Hellfighters or Harlem's Rattlers.

This unit became one of the most celebrated African American units of the war, and included the regiment's famous band, which proved extraordinarily popular with the public. 567

Fish and his company arrived in France in December 1917 and served with distinction through the end of the war. ⁵⁶⁸ Much to Fish's frustration, the Army initially assigned his unit as

labor troops based out of the Port of Saint-Nazaire, rather than permitting them to join white units in fighting roles. Eventually, they were assigned to the French 4th Army, received their designation as the 369th Infantry, and went into combat with the French. Their first assignment took them to frontline trenches near the town of Châlons, where the ceremony for the selection of the American Unknown Soldier would take place just three years later. While Fish also spent time in officer training schools and sometimes yearned to leave the unit, he served with his company in both the Champagne-Marne Offensive and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. France awarded the 369th the Croix de Guerre, and Fish also received the Silver Star from the United States (Figure 5.2). ⁵⁶⁹



Figure 5.2. In this photograph, Hamilton Fish and members of the 369th Infantry received the French Legion of Honor. France also awarded the Croix de Guerre to the unit. (U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center)

For a white man of his time, Fish held fairly liberal views on race and the status of African Americans in society. ⁵⁷⁰ He began his 1991 memoir by professing that he had devoted his life to "serving the American people by doing what I could to secure for them their civil rights, regardless of the color of their skin, and by protecting our country against her enemies, both foreign and domestic." ⁵⁷¹ Throughout the war, he bridled at the prejudice and unequal

Association for the Advancement of Colored People that wartime service could help advance the civil rights efforts of African Americans. Unlike other white officers, Fish socialized with the few Black officers in the 369th and recounted that he ate with their famed bandleader, Lt. James Reese Europe, each evening, proud of the band's success and pleased with the attention it brought to the unit. 572

After the war, Fish returned to his plans for a political career while also becoming a leader in the veteran community. He helped establish the American Legion, a new veterans' organization for those who had served in the recent war. Building off his reputation as a decorated veteran, Fish ran for a New York seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, won the election, and took office on 2 November 1920. 573 Throughout his life, Fish remained a steadfast advocate for the 369th and its veterans and did his best to commemorate the unit for their wartime service. He also remained committed to supporting civil rights for African Americans during his time in political office. 574

Once in Congress, Fish focused on two resolutions related to commemorating the recent war and his fellow veterans. The first one formally introduced the legislation needed to bring home an unknown American service member for burial, and the second, later resolution called for Armistice Day to become a national holiday. ⁵⁷⁵ The American Legion encouraged both resolutions, and Fish's own veteran status at the time made him the ideal person to introduce them, even though he had only just entered office. Fish later acknowledged that his membership in the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) influenced his decision to lead the effort to secure congressional action on the Tomb idea. ⁵⁷⁶ Even without pressure from his comrades in the American Legion and VFW, Fish himself likely would have supported the effort

to create an American tomb just as passionately, as he remained proud of his role in the Tomb's creation throughout his life.



Figure 5.3. Hamilton Fish photographed in March 1921, the month that his bill to create the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier finally became law. Fish served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1920 to 1944. (*Library of Congress*)

Decades later, Fish recalled how, over the years, the Tomb had "become an immortal shrine, representing American ideals of valor, service, duty, and patriotism. It is symbolic of the spirit of freedom, democracy, and unity that are the cornerstones of our Republic in peace and in war." The universality of the Unknown was a central part of Fish's vision for the Tomb, which was likely influenced by his service with the 369th and his views on race. He reflected that "no one knows whether the Unknown Soldier was white, black, or brown; whether he was Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or an adherent of some other faith; whether he was a Republican, Democrat, or Independent. What is known is that he unselfishly gave his life for his country, fighting 'to make the world safe for democracy." This perspective, also professed by President Warren G. Harding in his speech at the 1921 burial, became an oft-repeated mantra associated with the Tomb.

Fish explained in his memoir that the French and British Tombs, as well as his own wartime experiences, directly inspired his legislation. Citing his "first-hand knowledge of the brave sacrifices made by American forces during the First World War," he described how he "wanted America, as a beacon of freedom and democracy, to have her own memorial to honor the Unknown Soldier." Fish added that his close relationships with veterans in his congressional districts, and his gratitude toward veterans and their families for supporting his election, also influenced him. Though he genuinely believed that the Tomb would uplift the morale of American veterans, their families, and the nation as a whole, Fish surely realized the political benefits of being the congressman who introduced this legislation; it would lend him stature as a new member of the House. 580 This legislation provided him with an opportunity both to follow his heart and to promote his own political standing.

Crafting the Tomb Resolution

On 6 December 1920, less than a month after the British and French burials and just one month into his time in Congress, Fish took his first concrete step toward enabling the creation of an American tomb for an unknown service member killed in the recent war. He introduced House Joint Resolution 386 into the House of Representatives. This resolution provided for "the transportation to this country of the body of an unknown American soldier who fell on the battle fields of France and for the burial of the remains with appropriate ceremonies." The resolution went to the House Committee on Military Affairs, which was tasked with studying it and debating whether to send it to the full House for a vote. 582

However, on 21 December, Fish introduced a different, revised version of this resolution. 583 Fish, who still had little experience in legislative writing, had been advised by the

experienced congressional page William Tyler Page and other members of the House that the resolution needed to be rewritten. 584 Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs as House Joint Resolution 426, this new version of the resolution would, according to its summary, provide for "the bringing to the United States of a body of an unknown American killed on the battle fields of France, and for the burial of the remains with appropriate ceremonies."585 The text of the resolution spelled out the specifics of Fish's proposal, which would authorize and direct the secretary of war, "under regulations to be prescribed by him," to "cause to be brought to the United States a body of an American, a member of the overseas forces of the United States, who was killed on the battle fields of France, and whose identity has not been established, for burial in the Amphitheater of the National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia."586 While both versions of the resolution limited the possible unknowns to soldiers killed in France (as opposed to Italy, Belgium, England, or any other country where U.S. forces were stationed), this version also indicated that the Unknown was to be an American who had officially fought with the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), and not someone who had served with another nation's army or an organization separate from the U.S. military.

Significantly, House Joint Resolution 426 also named Arlington National Cemetery's new Memorial Amphitheater, which had opened in May 1920, as the site for the Tomb. This choice indicates that even in its first few months of existence, Memorial Amphitheater was already seen as a site of national importance, significant enough to hold a tomb for an American unknown. The language of the resolution called for the Tomb to be located within the Amphitheater itself, a course of action later altered. House Joint Resolution 426 also specified that the body of the unknown "so selected and brought to the United States shall be the only unidentified body authorized to be brought to the United States." ⁵⁸⁷ By adding this provision,

Fish tried to preclude individual groups, states, or civic organizations from making further requests for unknown soldiers to be buried in tombs of their own, thus preventing the proliferation of tombs and the dispersal of unidentified bodies. This section of the resolution seems to have been addressed at concerns expressed in recent newspaper opinion pieces. 588

The next section of House Joint Resolution 426 described the process by which the body of the Unknown would be chosen and honored:

In the regulations to be promulgated by the Secretary of War pursuant to this joint resolution, it shall be provided that a noncommissioned officer under the immediate personal supervision of a general officer, shall select the body, observing strict impartiality, and that the body so selected shall typify the spirit and sacrifice of the people of the Republic of the United States of America in the Great World War, and shall be entitled to and shall receive the highest official honors en route and at the reinterment. ⁵⁸⁹

By designating an enlisted service member to choose the Unknown, this resolution followed the example of how the French had selected their Unknown Soldier. The resolution also emphasized the importance of ensuring that the selecting noncommissioned officer truly had no information about the candidates. Though omitted from the final legislation, these instructions likely later influenced how the Army conducted the selection.

According to the resolution, the selected body would take on a symbolic meaning. It would represent the "spirit and sacrifice of the Republic," a designation that helped establish the Unknown's status as a collective symbol of American military sacrifice. Such a designation meant that the nation needed to honor the Unknown appropriately, "with the highest official honors"—a point so important that Fish included it within the text of the resolution. ⁵⁹⁰ Of course, funds were also required to support this effort, and the resolution authorized to be expended "such sum as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this joint resolution" to be spent by the secretary of war. ⁵⁹¹ House Joint Resolution 426 thus laid the foundation for the creation of

the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, setting into motion the legislative processes that moved it forward.

Considering the Resolution

As Fish's resolution progressed through the legislative process, Senator Boies Penrose (R-PA) introduced a similar resolution into the Senate on 3 January 1921. ⁵⁹² The summary of Senate Resolution 4754 almost exactly matched the summary of the revised resolution Fish had introduced in the House. 593 The next day, the House Committee on Military Affairs sent a copy of House Joint Resolution 426 to secretary of war Newton D. Baker Jr. and requested a report on it as soon as possible. The committee wanted to learn about the secretary of war's perspective ahead of its deliberations on the resolution. 594 Baker replied just a few days later, telling committee chair Representative Julius Kahn (R-CA) that it would first "be necessary to make a study of this question in order to make an estimate of the sum necessary to carry out the purpose of the Joint Resolution."595 He explained that the War Department did not "favorably consider the Joint Resolution as now worded, as it is thought a specific sum of money should be appropriated to carry out the purpose of the Joint Resolution and I therefore request that no action be taken on H.J. Res. 426 pending preparation of the estimates referred to herein." 596 Baker's criticism of the resolution focused on the funding, not the concept itself. He wanted to ensure that Congress would allocate proper funds for expenses related to this proposal, and he needed to investigate further before definitively stating the War Department's stance.

As part of the War Department's deliberations, Baker's office asked secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels what it would cost the Navy to "give such participation as would be suitable." ⁵⁹⁷ Baker recognized that the participation of the Navy would be essential in ensuring that the Unknown would represent all branches of the American military. In his reply, Daniels

discussed the financial cost to the Navy, but also expressed his support for the proposal and shared his ideas on how he thought it should be executed. He told Baker that if Congress decided to pursue this proposal, "it would be entirely convenient for me to order the *Olympia*, now in the Adriatic, to bring the body to America from Brest. I think if it should be undertaken that it would be most fitting and appropriate that the body of this unidentified soldier or marine should be brought to America in this ship which holds a unique place in American history and was the flagship of Admiral [George] Dewey at the time he won the battle of Manila."598 According to Daniels, because the ship—which had launched in 1892 and played a decisive role in the Spanish-American War—was currently in the Mediterranean and would be coming home in the spring or summer, the cost would "be considered negligible. If a committee of soldiers and sailors is to be sent across to bring back the body of course they can go on a transport or some other ship and could return on the *Olympia* with the body. Of course, when the ship arrived off New York the Navy could send some ships out to meet it without any material expense." ⁵⁹⁹ By offering the use of the historic Olympia, Daniels, the Navy's wartime leader, infused the proposed events with greater symbolism, honoring the Unknown by connecting him to the American victory in the Spanish-American War.

Daniels then offered his opinion on where the Tomb should be located. "If my advice were asked about where this unidentified American patriot in arms should be buried, I would say not under the Capitol but in Arlington where most of the other American soldiers who were killed in France are being interred," he wrote. "I think that is the most suitable and that upon the recurring memorial days when the graves of other soldiers are decorated, he would be buried near his comrades." ⁶⁰⁰ Baker took Daniels's advice under consideration, as indicated by his reply on 3 February, just after the House Committee on Military Affairs hearing on the resolution.

Baker told Daniels that the War Department agreed with his suggestion to use the *Olympia*, because "the use of this ship would constitute a peculiarly fitting tribute to the American patriots who died on the battle fields of Europe." Baker also shared that the War Department concurred "in the suggestion that Arlington would be a more fitting place for the body to rest than the Capitol, and I have taken steps to advise Congress accordingly." With Baker and Daniels in agreement, the War Department's plans for the execution of this proposal started to take shape. The War and Navy Departments were unified in their support for the resolution and their assertion that Arlington National Cemetery was the most appropriate location for the grave of the Unknown Soldier.

As the War Department studied the proposal and Congress prepared to debate it, public discussion reflected a desire to create an American tomb. A *New York Times* editorial of 21 January 1921 discussed both the Fish and Penrose resolutions. The *Times* agreed with Fish on one key point of his resolution: that only one unknown should be so buried. The editorial opined that "it does not seem to be the desire of the American people to multiply shrines of the unknown who made the supreme sacrifice in France. A proposal to bring back a New York soldier for burial in Central Park has not met with general favor." However, in contrast to Fish's plan, the *Times* made the case for locating the Tomb in the Capitol Rotunda—an argument that would be repeated in the coming months. The *New York Times* highlighted how most visitors to Washington went to the Capitol to "inspect the gallery of historical paintings in the rotunda" and to "pass into the National Hall of Statuary and stand before the effigies of celebrated representatives of the States." The Capitol was, the editorial contended, "always a serious and reverential gathering place in which pride of country is visibly strong. There is no doubt that the Capitol is already, and has always been, in the nature of a shrine to the American people."

Arlington National Cemetery, the *Times* editorial argued, did not meet such standards, for "many visitors to Washington never cross the river to pay their respects to the illustrious dead there, most of whom in life fought to preserve the Union in the war between the States." 606

Indeed, this connection to the Civil War seems to have been one of the chief reasons that the *Times* did not recommend placing the Tomb at Arlington. The editorial contended that "in considering whether the unknown soldier, who might himself have been a Virginian, shall be laid to rest under the Capitol rotunda or in the National Cemetery, Congress should consult the wishes of the people in all parts of the country. . . . The District of Columbia is a common meeting place of the American people and is Federal as distinguished from State ground." 607

Even fifty-six years after the end of the Civil War, the *New York Times*, at least, regarded Arlington National Cemetery as symbolic of the "Union" and thus a less than ideal place for a national tomb. The *New York Times* would not be alone in calling for the Capitol to be the site of burial. Debate would continue for months, both within Congress and among the American public.

Debating the Resolution in the House of Representatives: The Committee on Military Affairs Hearing

The next major step in the legislative process came on 1 February 1921, when the House of Representatives Committee on Military Affairs held a hearing to consider House Joint Resolution 426. During this hearing, the committee heard statements from various influential figures in the military and veterans' communities and debated the merits, wording, and intentions of Fish's resolution. The committee chair, Representative Kahn, began the hearing by giving Representative Fish, as the creator of the resolution, the opportunity to speak first. Fish,

however, introduced Maj. Gen. John Lejeune (Figure 5.4), commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, to speak to the committee first and to share his reasons for supporting the resolution. ⁶⁰⁸



Figure 5.4. Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune—a decorated World War I veteran and commandant of the United States Marine Corps from 1920 to 1929—testified before Congress in support of an American tomb. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. (*Library of Congress*)

A distinguished wartime leader, General Lejeune had extensive firsthand knowledge of the brutal nature of combat in World War I. He began his testimony by sharing some of the graphic details about why there remained unidentifiable service members. He described "the rending apart of the men's bodies by high explosive shells, so that in many instances only small bits or pieces or fragments of a body could be found." ⁶⁰⁹ He recalled one particularly vivid memory of a man who "was wounded and left in a shell hole and when they went to find him there was nothing there, but some small pieces of flesh. A shell had made a direct hit and had torn the body into a thousand pieces." ⁶¹⁰ The general further explained, "There were other men who could not be identified also because they had lost their identification tags and had nothing about their persons which enabled the Graves Registration Service or burial parties to identify them." ⁶¹¹ Lejeune's testimony spurred members of the committee to question him about how the military dealt with those deemed to be missing, how they treated the unidentified bodies, and

how the recordkeeping process worked. Lejeune soon returned to his statement in favor of the resolution, and expressed his belief that it "would be a most excellent thing" to bring home the body of an unknown American and "bury him with proper ceremony." He also asserted that the burial "should be in Arlington . . . where a proportion of our war dead are now lying."

If General Lejeune was fully in support of Fish's plan, the committee was still less convinced, and members seemed eager to discuss alternative approaches to repatriating an unknown soldier for burial in the United States. They began to pepper the general with questions. Rep. Thomas S. Crago (R-PA), who had served in the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars, asked the general whether it would be possible to bring back the body of one unidentified man from each branch of service in the armed forces; this would mean that the tomb would include a marine, an infantryman, an artillery man, and so forth, with a total of over ten bodies. ⁶¹⁴ He felt that this plan would create "a little bit closer connecting tie between the folks who mourn the loss of these unidentified dead and such a ceremony as is proposed, so that when this ceremony takes place the mother might say, 'My boy served in that branch: perhaps that is my boy.' It seems to me it would add to the impressiveness and the effect of the ceremony at Arlington if there was one unidentified dead from each branch of service."615 His statement indicates that it was not a foregone conclusion that the United States would exactly copy the British and French models. General Lejeune initially described Crago's proposal as "an excellent idea," but he ultimately made clear his belief that only one unidentified American should be brought home for burial in a tomb. 616 "I feel this way about bringing home the unidentified dead," he stated. "There were a large number of men who died on the battle fields who were left there for burial. We can select any one of those for such a great ceremony without an invidious distinction. This unidentified dead soldier would be to the people of the country a symbol of all

those killed in battle."⁶¹⁷ As the debate over Crago's proposal continued, Lejeune and then Fish emphasized that selecting unknowns from each branch of service would be difficult, and Fish reiterated that his proposal called for just one body to be brought back.

General Lejeune tried to refocus the committee on the purpose of Fish's resolution. "The object of having this ceremony in connection with one unidentified body," he told them, "was to enable the country to show its appreciation of the services of these men, their heroism, and the fact that they gave their lives for the country and the country's cause during the war." He firmly believed that it could "be done in the case of an unidentified man without showing any invidious distinction as to locality or individuals, or even as to the arm of the service, if it is determined to bring home the body of only one man." The chair then asked Lejeune to confirm that this was what Great Britain and France had done, and after, he shared the newspaper accounts of these events that Fish had provided to the committee. But the committee continued to question Lejeune about other possible commemorative methods, such as repatriating the first three American servicemen to die "over there" or repatriating an unknown man from each state (the latter of which Lejeune felt would be difficult to achieve). 620

Eventually, Fish refocused the committee by introducing his next speaker, Gen. John J. Pershing himself (see "Sidebar 05a, John J. Pershing: Leader in Combat and Commemoration.")

Pershing began his remarks by admitting that while he had "not given this matter attention except in a general way," he favored the idea of creating a tomb for an unknown American soldier. "It seems to me," he stated, "that it would be a very fitting tribute for the Nation to pay not only to the unknown dead but to all who gave their lives and those who risked their lives for their country." Pershing then made some broader observations about America's commemoration of the war: "We have had no national expression of any sort since the war ended

that would give the people an opportunity to show their appreciation of the services over there of the young manhood of the Nation, and it seems to me it would be a very fine thing for Congress to make some provision for a ceremony that would give the people of the country an opportunity to do that."⁶²³ When asked about where such a tomb should be located, Pershing stated, "Arlington would be the best site. I should prefer that instead of the rotunda of the Capitol. It seems to me that the memorial amphitheater at Arlington would be a very appropriate place for such a burial."⁶²⁴



Figure 5.5. As AEF commander, General John J. Pershing not only helped lead the Allies to victory in World War I, but also shaped how Americans commemorated the war—including the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. (*Library of Congress*)

At the committee's request, Pershing then shared his thoughts on the burial ceremony. He believed that it "should be made as impressive as possible, and that every honor should be paid the remains of this unknown soldier, beginning with the disinterment of the body in France and including its transportation from France across the Atlantic Ocean." As the revered commander of the AEF, Pershing knew that his words on this subject carried great weight, and he seized this opportunity to influence the committee's thoughts and help the effort succeed. For example, he advised that a battleship under charge of a general officer should be sent to France

to retrieve the unknown. He also emphasized that the whole effort "should be made a national event from the time the remains arrive in New York until the final interment at Arlington. The immediate ceremonies should include the presence and the assistance of the highest officials of the Government. Arrangements ought to be made by which the people of the country could participate, by having an hour or half hour set apart for that purpose during the exercises so that they might feel for themselves a part of this great national occasion." Many of Pershing's ideas appear to have influenced the ceremonies surrounding the Unknown; a call for two minutes of silence across the country, for example, was intended to overtly include the American public in the solemn proceedings. When asked, Pershing asserted that the president and other high government officials should attend the ceremony. He reiterated that "we can not do too much to honor the memory of those who lie in France, including those who participated in the war"—meaning that honoring the Unknown would honor all the war dead as well as the war's living veterans. 627

Throughout his appearance before the committee, Pershing argued for the symbolic importance of repatriating and burying just one unknown in a tomb. When pressed about the earlier idea to repatriate unknowns from the different service branches, Pershing supported General Lejeune's perspective. He thought that "the very word 'unknown' would be sufficient to include all branches of the service, both on land and on sea," noting that "the Navy and the Marine Corps and the Army in all its branches should participate in this ceremony in which we shall pay tribute to this one representative of all." When questioned further, Pershing argued that having just one man interred in the tomb would make the site "much more impressive" than if multiple unknowns were included. "The one man," Pershing believed, "would represent the American participation in the war, both on land and sea." In these statements, Pershing laid

out an enduring component of the Tomb's meaning. Despite its having the word "soldier" in its name, the service member interred in the Tomb was intended, from the start, to represent all Americans who served in the war, no matter their branch of service.

General Pershing's testimony seemed to make an impact on some committee members.

Rep. John C. McKenzie (R-IL) agreed with Pershing, stating that the effort to create a tomb must be done "in such a way that the entire Nation shall participate in it. . . . I hope if we decide to do this at all, it will be made a national holiday with exercises held all over the country in order that the lesson, if there is any lesson, to be learned from it in patriotism or in an expression of the sentiment of the people, may be completely learned." Pershing then turned the discussion to when such a burial ceremony should occur, suggesting that "next Memorial Day would be an appropriate day." The committee chair noted that while Memorial Day was "not a national holiday," it was nonetheless "a holiday observed in most states." At the time, Memorial Day remained mostly connected to the Civil War, and those who commemorated the Confederacy often observed it on a different date than those who commemorated the United States. Burying the Unknown on Memorial Day would later become a point of contention as plans for the Tomb were finalized.

Before General Pershing concluded his testimony, several members of the committee resumed questioning him about whether it would not be better to repatriate more unknowns. Rep. John F. Miller (R-WA) asked Pershing whether the unknown should be chosen from one of the major American combat engagements, but Pershing felt it would be challenging to identify a truly unknown soldier from a specific battle. Rep. Frank L. Greene (R-VT) defended Pershing's perspective. He explained that the initial idea for the Tomb was to use "the body of the unknown dead merely as a poetic expression, perhaps, of the Nation's appreciation. You

want to select the body of a person who can not be identified and therefore will in that sense present his memory to any mind in any form that their idealism may create. . . . The Nation's ideal of what constitutes the last great sacrifice for country may clothe itself more securely in the idea because it is an unknown and no one can tell who he really was."⁶³⁵ Greene aptly summarized the intentions of Fish, Pershing, Lejeune, and other supporters by describing the effort as "poetic." As part of the public record of this congressional hearing, he helped define the Tomb's eventual meaning, even as Congress continued to debate other ideas.

Rep. William J. Fields (D-KY) proposed the eventual repatriation of all the unknown dead, and suggested the burial of the selected unknown in the center of a circle of other unknown graves. ⁶³⁶ Pershing disagreed, asserting that there should not be "a complication of that sort"; rather, he explained, "the tribute you paid to one would be accepted by all the families as a tribute to their unidentified dead." ⁶³⁷ After answering additional questions from the committee, Pershing concluded his testimony by reiterating his strong support for Fish's resolution and the idea that the Tomb should include a single unknown.

As the hearing continued, attention focused briefly on the wording of the resolution itself. For this portion of the hearing, Fish called William Tyler Page, who had helped him draft and improve the resolution. As the committee questioned him, Page explained that the use of the term "an American" in the resolution implied that the "unknown body would be in a distinctive capacity, representative of the entire overseas force." ⁶³⁸ Page also clarified that the language of the resolution intended for only one unidentified body to be brought home to be buried in the Tomb. He emphasized that "the bodies of unknown soldiers hereafter brought over would not receive this distinction and would be brought over perhaps under some other auspices, so that the national honor provided for in this joint resolution would go alone to this one unknown body." ⁶³⁹

In this sense, Fish's resolution took inspiration from the British and French, who had each entombed just one unknown soldier. Representative Crago reiterated that Army divisions or states might want to repatriate and bury an unknown of their own and he would not want to prohibit that. As he debated these technicalities with Crago, Page emphasized that the resolution was not about whether other unidentified bodies could be repatriated; it was intended "merely to make this [Unknown Soldier] distinctive, so far as the Government of the United States was concerned, in bringing over a particular unknown body for the purpose of doing it honor."⁶⁴⁰

The hearing then refocused on what the proposed tomb would mean to the nation, and especially to veterans. Testimony came next from John Thomas Taylor, the chair of the American Legion's national legislative committee. Taylor provided heartfelt remarks in favor of fellow legionnaire Fish's resolution, which the American Legion had already supported. 641 To the legion, he said, these unknowns "were our buddies; we feel that they are our particular trust, and we know of no more fitting way in which a perpetual lesson could be furnished for the future manhood of the country in case of another serious war in which we might be engaged. We know of no more fitting way in which to do honor to the young men who went into this war and who made the supreme sacrifice."642 Moreover, he exclaimed, "England has done it. France has done it. We look upon it as a most glorious thing; we believe that the entire people of America will welcome such action by this Congress."643 Taylor then explained what the resolution would mean to veterans, stating, "the ex-soldiers feel to date as though to some extent the people have forgotten all about the war: that they have forgotten what the ex-soldiers did in the war: and here is a fine chance to revive the spirit which these men displayed in 1917 and 1918." Thus, he concluded, "we are heartily in favor of the passage of the resolution." 644

With such a ringing endorsement from the American Legion on behalf of the war's veterans, Fish took the opportunity to remind the committee again why he intended for the proposed tomb to contain but one unknown soldier. "It seems to me," he said, "that that one unknown should be the only unknown, and should be absolutely unknown and unidentified. He should not be taken from any particular battlefield, but should be so chosen that nobody would know his identification or the battlefield he comes from. He should represent in himself the North, the South, the East, and the West." To Fish, the eternal anonymity of the Unknown was of the utmost importance. Not only would anonymity prevent any one group or family or community from claiming the Unknown, it would also help unite the nation, still somewhat divided along regional lines, even so many years after the Civil War. Representative Crago concurred that the unknown must be entirely unknown and suggested adding language to that effect in the resolution. 646

Fish then expanded on why the resolution should ensure that the selected unknown would remain truly unknown. It was crucial, he argued, for the unknown to be universal, representing all Americans who served in the war—regardless of their background, military rank, or final battle. "There could be no suspicion," he stated, "that the body of the unknown soldier would be brought from the battlefield of the Argonne, or from any particular field. There should be no distinction whatever either in the matter of rank, color or wealth. This man is the unknown American soldier killed on the battlefields of France." Significantly, Fish emphasized here that the Unknown could have come from any racial or socioeconomic group in the United States, an idea that would eventually encompass all markers of identity, including religion and ethnicity. As an officer who had led African American troops, he called this issue out in the hearing to ensure that Black Americans, especially, would not be excluded from the meaning of the Tomb.

The matter of ensuring the unknown's anonymity greatly interested the committee, and to this end several members discussed the work of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS). With the French selection process as a model, Fish explained that his resolution intended to give "the full power to the Secretary of War to promulgate rules and regulations in order that there shall be strict impartiality observed and that there shall be no suspicion that this body" could be identified in any way. 648 "The whole purpose of this resolution," he reiterated, "is to bring home the body of an unknown American warrior who in himself represents no section, creed, or race in the late war and who typifies, moreover, the soul of America and the supreme sacrifice of her heroic dead. I agree thoroughly with Gen. Pershing that if this ceremony is to be carried out at all it must be done in the most impressive manner possible and done in a way so that no one person can have the slightest suspicion" about the Unknown's identity. 649

To reinforce his stance on these matters, Fish offered additional evidence of the support he had in the veterans' and military communities. He had consulted New York's American Legion units—because New York City had been so vocal about burying an unknown there—and had specifically asked their thoughts about allowing the repatriation of only one unknown. The legion's New York executive committee sent Fish and the other New York members of Congress official notice of their support for Fish's resolution. 650 Such support would presumably help Fish's effort to prevent multiple tombs from being created.

Fish also presented to the committee an unsolicited letter of endorsement from secretary of war Newton Baker, who could not appear as planned due to a last-minute schedule change.

Baker had been considering the proposal since early January and now came out in full support of it. Recommending that Congress pass Fish's resolution, Baker focused on the location of the

proposed tomb. "In my judgment," he wrote, "no place would be more suitable than the Arlington amphitheater for this significant and symbolic interment." He explained that

Congress has reserved to itself the right to determine what burials shall take place and what monuments and memorials shall be established in the great amphitheater building. Ultimately, it will be the Westminster Abbey of America's heroic dead. As yet, no interments have been made in it, and I can conceive no more fitting inauguration of its use than to place there the body of a soldier whose name and identity are lost, but who will typify and represent the imperishable part of the sacrifice which he and his comrades made for their country and their country's cause. 652

Baker's strong support of Arlington's Memorial Amphitheater as the location for the proposed tomb likely stemmed from his involvement in the creation of this building; as secretary of war, he served on the commission in charge of the amphitheater's creation and had spoken at its recent dedication in May 1920. 653 Baker's belief that Memorial Amphitheater would soon become an American Westminster Abbey presumably derived from the original intention for the amphitheater's lower-level crypts to serve as the graves of distinguished Americans. Although no burials would ever take place in the amphitheater's crypts, it seemed, at that time, like an obvious place for the Unknown's tomb. 654

After hearing Secretary Baker's support for the resolution, the chair introduced a letter sent to the committee by Truxtun Beale, an American diplomat and the father of a serviceman killed in Europe during the war. Included in the official record of the hearing, Beale's letter expressed his strong support for Fish's resolution. He believed that such a tomb would "create and keep vivid our sense of the sufferings of others, it will subserve a great public use and a thousand, perhaps, indirect, but nevertheless beneficial effects." The tomb would be an especially important memorial because it would serve as "an expression of national sympathy for the families of the unidentified soldiers, . . . those who were obliged to endure the long period of agony before learning the fate of their relatives in the Army in France suffered more than any of

the others who were grief stricken with losses in the war."⁶⁵⁶ Keenly aware of the pain suffered by those whose loved ones remained unidentified, Beale believed that the tomb would hold special meaning for this constituency. "Unlike many vainglorious memorials seen both in Europe and in this country," he wrote, "which only tend to revise in us the dormant instincts of the savage and act as a stimulus to our fighting propensities, this monument will arouse sentiments of an entirely different kind. I believe it would be well worth the public money expended upon it."⁶⁵⁷ With his criticism of other World War I memorials, Beale referenced the ongoing and often contentious debate about how best to commemorate the war dead. ⁶⁵⁸ To him, creating a memorial that would honor the unknown dead and comfort their families would be a much better use of government funds than memorials that glorified the war and did not substantially bring comfort to those who grieved.



Figure 5.6. The statue of a Doughboy framed by a cross at St. Mihiel American Cemetery in France was commissioned by Harriet Beale, whose son, 1st Lt. Walker Blaine Beale, is buried there. Beale's husband, diplomat Truxton Beale, wrote in support of Fish's resolution to create an American tomb. (*American Battle Monuments Commission*)

After this strong testimonial from a member of the public, Fish again urged the committee to move the resolution into the House without delay, so that both houses of Congress

could approve it and the burial could be conducted as soon as possible. Following Beale's perspective, he told the committee that "there are 2,000 families who will claim this one unknown as their own and it will bring great comfort and happiness to them, and, moreover, in honoring our unknown dead we honor all of the soldiers who gave their lives to their country." Such statements indicate how this hearing, and Fish in particular, defined the meaning of the future tomb as a national grave representing all Americans who died in this war and other American conflicts. Fish then suggested that the burial of the Unknown Soldier take place on 6 April, the anniversary of the United States' declaration of war, or on Memorial Day, although he noted that the secretary of war would make this decision. 660

The committee's hearing concluded with testimony from Maj. Gen. P. C. Harris, adjutant general of the Army. Harris expressed support for the resolution and a desire to hold the burial ceremony no later than Memorial Day. ⁶⁶¹ The committee questioned Harris about the Army's methods for identifying the remaining unknown soldiers from the war. To supplement his responses to these questions, Harris submitted a statement with relevant statistics about men reported to be missing in action. ⁶⁶² The committee appeared eager to ascertain the Army's confidence that an unknown buried in the proposed tomb could truly never be identified.

Getting to the crux of the issue, Representative Greene asked General Harris whether the War Department would "seek by their own methods to solve the difficulties and make some selection, so that they would be satisfied that this body could not be identified?" General Harris responded that "it would be very unfortunate if the body should be identified later," indicating that he understood the gravity of the Army's assignment to select the remains, should the resolution pass. 664 Harris concluded his remarks, and the committee hearing, by assuring the members that the Army was "exhausting every possible means to locate" those unknowns who

might still be identifiable. 665 This thoroughness would help ensure that any unknown buried in the proposed tomb would forever remain unidentifiable. Harris's statements, and the committee's repeated questions on this topic, created great pressure for the Army's Quartermaster Corps to ensure the anonymity of an unknown chosen for the tomb. This pressure likely influenced the planning and course of events that took place that fall, when the selection of the Unknown finally occurred.

The House Committee on Military Affairs hearing thus laid the groundwork for the meaning of the Tomb and began to define what it would represent throughout its future. The record of the hearing remains an important document for understanding the original intentions for the Tomb and for interpreting its future development. The committee members' statements and questions demonstrate that they could have taken a different approach to the Tomb; the French and British models were not the only concepts under consideration.

Fish's own words during the hearing attest to his dedication to his proposal, the direct inspiration he took from the French and the British, and his insistence on the importance of honoring a single unknown to represent them all. His many prominent supporters lent weight to his proposal and indicated the support of the War Department and veterans from the start. Fish admitted as much in his 1991 memoir, in which he explained that the American Legion, VFW, Disabled American Veterans, and Gold Star Mothers had all supported his resolution, as had John Thomas Taylor in his capacity as national legislative representative for the American Legion. Fish proudly recalled how Generals Pershing, Lejeune, and Harris had testified in favor of his resolution, emphasizing that "all these fine people and organizations enabled me to win congressional approval for the resolution." Fish remained the steadfast champion of the resolution as it moved toward congressional approval and, later, was signed into law.

Debating the Resolution in the Media and within the War Department

In the days and weeks after the House Committee on Military Affairs hearing, the *New York Times, Washington Post*, and various local newspapers reported on the support Fish had received from prominent military leaders. This media coverage bolstered public awareness of the resolution and Fish's campaign for it to be passed. ⁶⁶⁷ The story was even picked up by the *Amaroc News*, the newspaper of the American forces in Germany, the very troops who would later be involved in the ceremonies surrounding the selection of the Unknown. ⁶⁶⁸ Aside from recounting the words of support from Pershing, Lejeune, and the others who testified, these articles also discussed the ongoing debate about the proper location for the Tomb. Newspaper coverage about the hearing thus allowed the public to consider the same questions that the committee had debated.

In an article from 2 February 1921, the day after the hearing concluded, the *New York Times* reported that "most of the committee are opposed to the suggestion that the crypt prepared for George Washington's body in the rotunda of the Capitol be used as the burial place. There is no support for the proposal advanced by Rodman Wanamaker that the burial should be made in Central Park, New York." Wanamaker, heir to the Wanamaker's department store fortune, had argued in favor of New York City because of its role as the main port at which the AEF had embarked for and returned from Europe. New York, according to Wanamaker, was where the "nation's welcome was given to the returning victorious troops, . . . the place above all others hallowed as the shrine for the spirit that never returned." The *Times* article indicated that Wanamaker's proposal had little support in Congress, despite his assertions that he had been the first person to suggest the idea of creating an American tomb.

A *New York Times* editorial published the next day again brought up the question of the Tomb's location. Reiterating its 21 January editorial, the *Times* argued once again that the Capitol Rotunda would be the best place for the Tomb. The Rotunda, "with its historical paintings and its traditions has been a shrine of the American people," the editorial stated. "All who visit Washington turn their steps toward the Capitol from an irresistible impulse of interest and patriotism. If the unknown soldier were laid there under an inscription that told the story of his sacrifice, the appeal would have a more solemnizing and reverential effect than if the sepulture were in the cemetery at Arlington across the Potomac." The *Times* contended that Arlington would not be the proper location for the tomb because, while "all America finds its way to the Capitol, many Americans never go to Arlington, which, being a military cemetery by dedication, can hardly be the 'Westminster Abbey of America's heroic dead,' to use an expression of Secretary Baker." ⁶⁷²

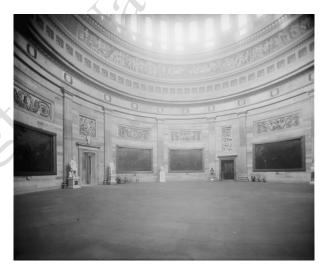


Figure 5.7. Many Americans wanted the Unknown Soldier to be buried in the Capitol Rotunda, shown here ca. 1920–1921. (*Library of Congress*)

Echoing the editorial stance it had taken in January, the *Times* further argued that the cemetery's origins in the Civil War as "a cemetery for those who fought in the army and navy of the Union," made it a distinctly "Union" cemetery and not a national site, even though, the editorial conceded, it now contained a Confederate section. ⁶⁷³ The editorial warned that when burying the Unknown Soldier, "the revival of memories that affect national unity and concord should be guarded against," thus insinuating that placing the tomb in Arlington would stir up divisive memories of the Civil War. ⁶⁷⁴ For that reason, the *Times* also opposed the burial's being held on Memorial Day, owing to the holiday's roots in the Civil War. It instead endorsed the April anniversary of the declaration of the United States' entrance into the world war as the ceremony date, which had the added benefit of being quite soon: "lest the memory of those sacrifices grow dim and the noble rapture of the patriotism that inspired them be too soon forgotten." ⁶⁷⁵

Local newspapers also covered the hearing, as well as the debate about the future tomb's location. The *Burlington (IA) Gazette*, for example, told readers that "there is much to be said in favor of either place [Arlington or the Capitol], but the thing to do is to do it, to pay this tribute to all of the unidentified dead over there." Such press coverage demonstrates that even though the House Committee on Military Affairs mostly supported the resolution's intent to locate the tomb at Arlington, the public was less fully convinced. Some seemed to regard Arlington as a reminder of the scars of the Civil War and an insufficiently "national" site; others viewed Arlington as a sacred, and indeed national, site that now encompassed the memory of subsequent wars.

Likewise, although much of the public supported the idea of the Tomb, news of the hearing also brought some dissenting opinions to the attention of the War Department. One such

voice of opposition came from Anna Chailes, whose brother did not have a known grave. In a letter to Secretary Baker on 3 February 1921, Chailes asked Baker to oppose the bill "unless all the unknown soldiers are brought back." She did not think that the government should go forward with a tomb unless it consulted the families of the unidentified dead and missing service members. She clung to the government's earlier pledge to repatriate all the war dead and preferred for them all to be buried in Arlington instead of burying just one unknown body in a tomb. Although her voice was in the minority, her letter evidences the strong emotions that talk of the Tomb stirred up among the families of the war dead.

Regardless of such voices of dissent, the War Department had, by early February, grown resolute in its support for the idea of the Tomb and Arlington as its ideal location. Several days after the 1 February hearing before the House Committee on Military Affairs, Secretary Baker submitted a letter to its chair, Representative Kahn, to officially lay out the War Department's perspective. This letter served as Baker's reply to Kahn's inquiry from early January; it included the information Baker had gathered about the expenses associated with the proposal as well as the War Department's overall position on the resolution. Baker began by explaining that, after asking the secretary of the navy for his perspective on the issue, he believed that "the tribute proposed by the resolution is of importance, not only to the land forces, but to the Navy and to the great body of citizens." He also noted that the hearing, and preliminary plan for the repatriation and burial of an unknown soldier, had included the representation of "interested organizations and the public." Baker proceeded to describe the War Department's vision for the ceremonies to honor the American unknown.

First, Baker shared Secretary Daniels's opinion that the *Olympia* should be used to transport the Unknown Soldier from France to the United States. He summarized Daniels's

explanation of the *Olympia*'s symbolism, explained that the expense would be minimal, and confirmed that the Navy could easily provide an escort when the ship reached American waters. Baker also reported Daniels's belief that "Arlington would be a proper place for final interment of the body, as then this soldier would be surrounded by his comrades, and on each Memorial Day his service would be fittingly commemorated"—an opinion with which Baker concurred. ⁶⁸²



Figure 5.8. As secretary of the navy during both terms of the Wilson administration, Josephus Daniels (pictured in 1916) suggested that the USS *Olympia* would be a fitting choice to transport the Unknown Soldier from France to the United States. (*Library of Congress*)

Next, Baker explained the War Department's preliminary plan for executing the resolution. It called for elaborate ceremonial elements, some of which were not enacted, including a proposal for the *Olympia* to arrive in New York harbor and for the Unknown then to be transported to Washington by train, similar to how the British and French had employed railroads in their transportation plans. Baker noted that this plan would entail the participation of about 7,500 soldiers, sailors, and marines; about 500 official mourners who would be representatives from the states and the divisions that had served in France; and, in Washington, a

military escort led by a general that would proceed through streets lined with soldiers on both sides. ⁶⁸³

The financial requirements for this plan, as Baker described them, were significant. He broke down the expenses by category and estimated that the total cost would be around \$187,165. With this figure in mind, he recommended that if Congress decided to pass the resolution, it should change the wording of the last paragraph to specify that the funds appropriated not "exceed the sum of \$187,165.00." 684 In this way, Baker wanted to ensure that Congress would allocate the War Department the necessary funds. Kahn replied the next day and thanked Baker for this information, which would be "very helpful in the consideration of this bill." 685

The Resolution Moves Forward

With the support of the War Department and other influential stakeholders, Fish's efforts finally paid off: he had secured the full support of the Committee on Military Affairs. On 4

February 1921, the committee reported House Joint Resolution 426, with amendments, to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered it to be printed. 686 This action sent the resolution to the House of Representatives at large for consideration. The revised resolution differed from the original in its language, length, and content. First, instead of calling for the repatriation of "an American, a member of the overseas forces of the United States, who was killed on the battle fields of France, and whose identity has not been established," the revised resolution called for the repatriation of "the body of an American, who was a member of the American Expeditionary Forces who served in Europe, who lost his life during the World War and whose identity has not been established." Because the unknown service member could be any unknown AEF member who had died anywhere in continental Europe, not just in

France, the adjusted resolution thus allowed for the difficulty of determining the country in which a truly unknown service member had died and explicitly broadened the universal symbolism intended for the Unknown.

The revised resolution retained much of the language that authorized the secretary of war to carry out this effort and to expend the needed funds. Notably, given the public debate on this issue, it also specified Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater as the burial location. However, the revised resolution omitted a few key items from the earlier version and was greatly shortened in comparison. Excised was the language that designated this unknown as the only one "so selected and brought to the United States," perhaps to assuage the worries of Representative Crago and other committee members at the recent hearing. Also cut was an entire paragraph about the selection process, the high honors that the unknown would be entitled to, and the instruction that a noncommissioned officer must make the selection. Finally, the revision did not stipulate the exact amount of funding to be authorized (as Baker had requested), stating instead that "such sum as may be necessary" would be authorized. 688 Nonetheless, this strippeddown version of the resolution retained the essential elements of Fish's concept. Furthermore, combined with the records of the committee hearing and other documentation, the revision still provided the Army with guidance on how to manage the repatriation and burial effort, should the resolution become law.

When Kahn reported the amended resolution to the Committee of the Whole, he also expressed the recommendation of the House Committee on Military Affairs that it pass with the proposed changes. The committee believed, Kahn explained, that "the tribute proposed by the resolution is of great significance and importance. The Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and

all patriotic American citizens will undoubtedly be glad to pay this recognition to one who, wearing the uniform of his country, made the supreme sacrifice for his Nation's cause."689

In his concluding remarks, Kahn noted that in crafting the resolution, the committee had been "mindful of the fact that both Great Britain and France, respectively, had similar services in connection with the transfer and reburial of one of their unknown dead." Furthermore, as in the British and French cases, the proposed tomb was intended to be a people's memorial. Kahn assured the House that "the people of the United States will undoubtedly be glad of this opportunity to honor the memory of an unidentified American hero who died for his country." By concluding with this statement, Kahn placed the citizenry at the center of his effort to persuade the House to pass the resolution. As Hamilton Fish had originally envisioned, the Tomb would have a single unknown soldier, but it would also serve as a symbolic communal grave, where all who lost or suffered during the war could come to reflect, remember, and attempt to heal. Thus, as Congress began to consider the resolution, it would also implicitly consider the American people's potential connection to the Tomb.

With the resolution now reported to the House and moving along through the legislative process, Secretary Baker took the opportunity to communicate the War Department's position to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. His letter copied, almost word for word, most of the language from his 3 February letter to the House Committee on Military Affairs, including the detailed estimation of costs. Most importantly, Baker repeated the War Department's strong support for the resolution, its preference to transport the unknown on the USS *Olympia*, and its belief that "Arlington would be a proper place for the final interment of the body." The *New York Times* reported on this letter, laying out for the public the War Department's support of the

Tomb legislation—including its view that the Tomb should be located at Arlington National Cemetery. ⁶⁹³

Public discussions of alternative locations for the Tomb continued, however. These discussions demonstrate the widespread national interest in the effort to honor an American unknown. They also indicate the public's understanding, even at this early date, that the Tomb would become a highly significant site, infused with meaning and able to draw visitors to, and create prestige for, its location. In addition to New York, Philadelphia lobbied to be chosen as the Tomb's location. On 10 February 1921, the Philadelphia City Council passed a resolution to this effect, encouraging the president and Congress to select the city's historic Independence Square—site of the signing of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—for the burial of "one of America's unknown dead" from the world war. 694 Though Philadelphia was unsuccessful in its bid for the Tomb, it would later, in 1957, become home to the tomb of an unknown Revolutionary War soldier.



Figure 5.9. Charles C. Pierce did not live to see the dedication of the Tomb. He died from illness on 16 May 1921, while inspecting American cemeteries in France. He and his wife Frances are buried in Section 15A of Arlington National Cemetery. (*U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser*)

As debate over the location of the Tomb continued, expressions of dissent toward other aspects of Fish's resolution, including the proposed timeline, also emerged. On this issue, the American Graves Registration Service weighed in. Charles C. Pierce, then a lieutenant colonel serving as chief of the Cemeterial Division, voiced the concerns of the AGRS by writing a memorandum for the quartermaster general on 8 February 1921. The memorandum laid out six major issues with the proposal to bury an unknown on Memorial Day. 695 Pierce began by acknowledging that because this unknown would be "representative of all the unknown of the A.E.F.," and because the selection effort would involve "practical difficulties," he wanted to provide suggestions to obviate "disappointment, discomfiture and the defeat of the very object" of the proposal. 696 Second, he emphasized the AGRS's great success in identifying the unknown dead through fieldwork and paper research—such that the percentage of unknown dead had "fallen to 1.603% of the entire losses of the A.E.F. or about 1237 bodies." Because all these bodies remained under investigation, Pierce explained, "it is utterly impossible for any person to make certification that an individual body is impossible of identification." ⁶⁹⁸ As a result, his third point stressed that rushing to inter an unknown in the proposed tomb represented a "great danger." Any errors in the effort, he wrote, would "absolutely destroy the sentiment of the people and convert an action designedly sublime into a consequence that seems ridiculous," thus destroying the whole intent of the tomb. ⁶⁹⁹ Fourth, Pierce argued that holding the ceremony on Memorial Day would be too soon to negate these risks; instead, he preferred Armistice Day, which "would fit well with the purposed sentiment, and which would come in point of time at practically the date when we hope to complete the exhumations in Europe for the purpose of removals to national cemeteries or the families of the dead in the United States." 700

In his fifth point, however, Pierce warned that even by the fall, some selected remains might still be identified. Pierce then proposed an idea that, he felt, might mitigate this risk. He suggested that it might be worth considering

the propriety of returning to Arlington for segregated interment in the World War Section, of all the bodies of the unknown, where they might be given fitting honor and where they would remain in our custody pending such final determination of the cases as may be possible. Identifications effected from among this group would in nowise spoil the patriotic expression of a people's pride, and if these dead were all gathered in a group, this bit of God's Acre would rapidly become a mecca for all the mothers of the land whose dead could not be given back to them. Each mother would soon feel that the body of her own boy lies within the confines of the unnamed, and would realize the supreme comfort of a visit to the very spot which has become actualized in her mind as the place of her interment.⁷⁰¹

Pierce's proposal to inter *all* the unknown American bodies in Arlington never came to fruition. Yet his rationale for this idea indicates that he understood the proposed Tomb's significance for the families of the unidentified dead, and particularly for mothers, who had a privileged role in the culture surrounding military mourning. The Tomb and graves of the unknown dead, no matter their location, would become places of pilgrimage for those who had no other grave to visit. ⁷⁰² Mothers were revered for their role in raising men to serve in the military, and those who had lost a child to this cause—Gold Star mothers, so named because of the gold star adopted to symbolize the war dead—were honored most of all. (For more on Gold Star mothers, see "Sidebar 05.b Gold Star Mothers and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.") In line with these beliefs, Pierce wanted the mothers of the men without known graves to have a grave to visit within the United States. Although Pierce died before its creation (and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery), the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier eventually filled this need, symbolically standing in for all the unidentified graves and missing service members.



Figure 5.10. During World War I, gold stars were used to represent the war dead, while blue stars symbolized an active service member. This song and its lyrics highlight how popular culture venerated Gold Star mothers. (*Library of Congress*)

To conclude, Pierce reiterated that his memorandum reflected his "intense desire" to help deal with the unknown war dead and was informed by his "long experience with the practical phases of mortuary difficulty together with what [he had] gained from innumerable interviews and correspondence with bereaved families." Having spent so much of his career in mortuary affairs, and having led the American effort to bury and identify the fallen in the recent war, Pierce understood, better than almost anyone else in the military or the government, the complexities that the resolution entailed. He also understood at a personal level the anguish of the families of the missing, and he desired to do whatever he could to support these grieving Americans while also honoring all unknowns.

Secretary Baker took Pierce's memorandum under consideration. On 12 February 1921, Baker wrote to Senator James W. Wadsworth (R-NY), chair of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, and provided him with a copy of Pierce's memo to review as Congress considered the resolution. Baker told Wadsworth that he had been "favorable to the project," but he urged Wadsworth and the committee to read Pierce's memo carefully and to contemplate his

arguments. ⁷⁰⁴ Although Baker disagreed with Pierce's recommendation to repatriate all the unknown American dead, he largely agreed with Pierce's other points, particularly his argument that rushing the selection and burial of the unknown for the proposed tomb would "rob the entire thing of its distinctive character." ⁷⁰⁵ "This seems to me," he wrote, "an important consideration and I am venturing to express the hope that the Senate committee will amend the resolution so as to leave the time of the return of the body wholly to the discretion of the Secretary of War." ⁷⁰⁶ Further, Baker suggested adding a statement to the text of the resolution itself that "the Secretary should postpone the action until the completion of our mortuary work in France and then make the selection from the bodies which remain definitely and finally unidentified." ⁷⁰⁷ Though Congress did not ultimately include this last suggestion in the resolution, it did give Baker, as the secretary of war, the authority to conduct the process however he wished.

On 16 February 1921, the *New York Times*, reporting from Paris, published a piece on the AGRS's concerns about the Tomb proposal. The reason for the AGRS's worries, the *Times* claimed, was "the constant reduction in the number of the unidentified Americans and the hope of the eventual identification of almost all of them through teeth charts which are being sent to Washington and compared with the records." The article noted that the AGRS had already identified hundreds of bodies this way, and that AGRS officers felt that "the time is not yet ripe for the selection of the unknown hero to be honored." While it is not clear how the *Times* received this information, the article echoed concerns expressed in Pierce's memo, Baker's letter, and the House hearings about the resolution. It made public the importance of choosing a date for the burial that would allow the AGRS enough time to provide a truly unidentifiable unknown for burial in the tomb.

Debate over the date of the interment continued even after the passage of the resolution.

Based on the arguments of the Quartermaster Corps, which was in charge of the American war dead, the War Department continued to oppose Memorial Day and to advocate for a later date. In the view of both the Quartermaster Corps and the War Department itself, ensuring the absolute impossibility of ever being able to identify the selected American unknown took priority.

In these debates over the location of the tomb and the date of the unknown's burial, the ultimate stakeholders were the families of the unknown dead. As the AGRS explained in its official history, "The sentiment of the parents was fully appreciated. It might be the frame of a body, or only a skull, but the entire interest in life for a heartbroken father or mother might lie buried in some grave in France." Too many American families depended on the AGRS to exhaust all possibilities to identify their loved ones, and the AGRS could not risk failing in that mission. Fish's resolution proposed to honor one unknown with the distinction of burial in a tomb at Arlington, and both the government and the public remained aware that this unknown would represent all American unknowns. Thus, beyond the details of the resolution itself, the debate reflected widespread recognition that the Tomb would serve as a powerful site of mourning and memory—particularly for grieving families. In this mission, the government could not be allowed to fail.

The Realization of an Idea: The Resolution Becomes Law

On 4 March 1921, the final day of President Woodrow Wilson's second term, Congress passed the revised version of House Joint Resolution 426 as Public Resolution No. 67. 711 Wilson, the wartime president, signed the bill into law during the final hours of his administration. 712 The idea of the Tomb had become a reality, and the country had taken a step toward moving past World War I. Hamilton Fish had finally succeeded in his effort to create an

American tomb for an unknown soldier. The process to plan and execute this sacred mission now began. Details would be hammered out, dates chosen, and procedures established to ensure that all aspects of the effort would be executed with honor and in ways such that the Unknown truly could never be identified.

On the same date that this resolution passed, Congress took two other related actions. First, Congress passed House Resolution 16076 (Public Resolution No. 388), which authorized the president to bestow the Medal of Honor on the British and French Unknown Soldiers, as a way of honoring the Unknowns of these Allied nations and the Tombs that had inspired the creation of the American Tomb. 713 Second, Congress passed House Resolution 8032 (Public Resolution No. 397), which provided for "the erection of memorials and the entombment of bodies in the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater," and thereby allowed the War Department to erect the Tomb there. 714 Dedicated just ten months earlier, on 15 May 1920, Memorial Amphitheater was built to serve as a larger, grander venue for the popular annual Memorial Day ceremonies held at Arlington National Cemetery. 715 Memorial Amphitheater now stood ready to take its place as the site of a new American military commemorative ritual: the entombment of an unknown soldier.



Figure 5.11. Memorial Amphitheater was officially dedicated on 15 May 1920. The structure included the amphitheater itself, with seating for 5,000; an interior chapel; and a display room, among other features. This view, from the east, is looking at the entrance to the display room, and the location in front of the building where the Tomb would ultimately be located.

(Library of Congress)

Public Resolution No. 397 took five important steps to ensure Memorial Amphitheater's significance as the site of the proposed Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. First, it reconvened the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater Commission, to be composed of only the secretary of war and the secretary of the navy. The commission would oversee Memorial Amphitheater and report annually on "recommendations as to what, if any, inscriptions, tablets, busts, or other memorials shall be erected, and what, if any, bodies of deceased members of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps" would be entombed there. The Bodies could be entombed within the amphitheater, but none could be buried within 250 feet of its exterior. Second, although the secretary of war would chair this commission, its executive and disbursing officer would be the depot quartermaster of the Army in Washington, D.C. This arrangement would prove important during the process of designing the Tomb, as it gave the War Department significant power over the Tomb's design. Third, this act required Congress to approve any additional memorials or burials within the Amphitheater. Fourth, the only people who could be commemorated at the amphitheater were those who "rendered conspicuously distinguished service in the United States Army, Navy, or

Marine Corps," and no one could be buried or memorialized in the amphitheater within ten years of their date of death unless also authorized by Congress. ⁷¹⁷ Fifth, "the character, design, and location" of any memorials or burials in the amphitheater would be subject to the approval of the commission created in the act, which would then obtain the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts—the federal agency that oversaw design for federal buildings and sites. ⁷¹⁸ All these stipulations would affect the process of creating and designing the final Tomb.

Even after Congress passed the three resolutions on 4 March, the War Department had many difficult decisions to make regarding the date and process of selecting the Unknown, the date of the burial, and the planning and logistics of the ceremonies. Hamilton Fish continued to play a key role in shaping these decisions. On 9 March, Fish wrote to John W. Weeks, the new secretary of war. Weeks had requested that Fish submit a statement "regarding the method of selection and transportation of the body and the burial of the remains with appropriate ceremonies." Eager to obtain the incoming secretary's support after working so hard to get Baker on his side, Fish seized this opportunity to brief Weeks on his vision for this process. Fish began by telling Weeks that he had introduced House Joint Resolution 426 in order to "honor and pay homage to our unknown dead and to all of their comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice." From the outset, Fish wanted Weeks to understand the significance of this project.

In the rest of his letter, Fish emphasized that ceremonies should surround all aspects of the process, beginning with the selection of the Unknown Soldier in Europe. The "transportation and burial of the remains should be conducted under the most impressive, yet simple and democratic conditions," he stated. ⁷²¹ Fish highlighted the importance of maintaining the anonymity of the selected unknown and referred Weeks to the House hearing for more ideas for

the selection process.⁷²² He also proposed that ceremonies be held in both Paris and London, noting their diplomatic significance.

As Fish explained, the events in the United States needed to be of the highest ceremonial level. The burial ceremony at Arlington, he wrote, "should require the presence of the President, the Cabinet and members of Congress, assisted by all arms of the service." Fish further proposed to invite, as guests of the government, "every American soldier, sailor or marine who has received the medal of honor, distinguished service cross, or French or British war cross"; every American Legion and VFW post should also be invited to send one member, at their own expense. His plans ballooning in size, Fish envisioned a massive event that involved thousands of participants from across the country. As a founding member of the American Legion, he wanted to ensure that his fellow veterans had a prominent role in these events.

Fish also continued to advocate strongly for Memorial Day as the date of the funeral. While he acknowledged that the AGRS must agree to the "feasibility of the date," in his opinion there was "plenty of time before May 30th to select an unknown . . . so that there can never be any doubt raised in the future as to his identity." As he noted, the French and British Unknowns had been selected for burial at an even earlier date—11 November 1920—and "there has not been a word of criticism nor of suspicion cast on the method of selection nor as to the absolute identification of the bodies selected." He argued to Weeks that the AGRS could surely carry out similar plans, "with the same degree of impartiality and safeguard against future identification." Ever reliant on the British and French examples, Fish omitted a key difference between them and the United States: the smaller number of American unknowns. Thus, the comparison was not actually equivalent.

Fish's commitment to holding the funeral on Memorial Day illuminates key aspects of American military memory during the half century after the Civil War. Of his five reasons for advocating for Memorial Day, two focused on the Civil War. First, Fish hoped that a Memorial Day burial would "develop a stronger interest among the veterans of the world war in Memorial Day and lead to the taking over of the ceremonies from the G.A.R." ⁷²⁸ He understood that for many Americans, Memorial Day remained uniquely associated with the earlier war. For Memorial Day's national significance to continue after Civil War veterans had died, World War I veterans would need to become involved, following the example of the aging veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic. Fish further contended that the burial of the Unknown Soldier could "cement the North and South in one common Memorial Day," making the Memorial Day observance a truly national one and erasing its sectional connotations. ⁷²⁹ Perhaps, Fish implied, this burial could transform the very meaning of Memorial Day, such that it would commemorate all American wars. In addition to these more symbolic reasons for selecting Memorial Day, Fish also told Weeks that he believed that the weather conditions would be better in May; asserted that "we have already delayed too long"; and worried that Congress would be less likely to be in session on 11 November, thus reducing attendance by members. 730

Finally, Fish recommended to Weeks that the Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Cross be bestowed on "this great unknown hero, chosen by fate to be the symbolic [sic] of America's soul and the supreme sacrifice of her heroic manhood of the World War." By encouraging the presentation of the United States' two highest military awards to the Unknown, Fish intended to further glorify the Unknown and, by extension, honor all Americans whose service in the war was symbolized by the Unknown.

Fish concluded his letter to Weeks by elaborating on his broader vision of the Tomb's present and future meanings. As Representative Kahn and others had stated during the congressional debate, Fish emphasized that the Tomb would "bring consolation and assuage the grief of the twelve hundred families whose sons died unknown and unidentified, for each and every family will proudly claim this body as that of their own son." In this sense, the Tomb would aid the nation's psychological recovery from the war, and would specifically help the families of the unknown as they grieved. Additionally, Fish explained, the Tomb's significance would endure well beyond the generation that had experienced World War I. "The grave of this unidentified warrior will become a shrine of patriotism for all ages to come, which will be a source of inspiration, reverence and love of country for future generations," he wrote. In explaining his vision to Secretary Weeks, Fish planted the seeds for the Tomb's future, affirmed its longevity, and helped define the meaning it would attain as it evolved over the decades.

In his reply to Fish later that month, Secretary Weeks acknowledged Fish's recommendations and his passion for the resolution. Weeks assured Fish that he would "carefully consider the suggestions" he had offered. He then specifically addressed the issue of the appropriate date for the ceremony, informing Fish that he had "probably noticed in the newspapers that [Weeks had] decided to have the interment in Arlington on Armistice Day." Weeks explained that while he had considered Memorial Day, he "found after investigation that [he] could not be assured that any unidentified body that could be selected now might not at some future date be identified."



Figure 5.12. John W. Weeks became secretary of war in March 1921, after serving several terms in Congress. A U.S. Navy veteran of the Spanish-American War, he is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. (*Library of Congress*)

In fact, the AGRS was working diligently to identify as many American unknowns as possible, and its success rate attests to its efficacy. According to the AGRS's official history, "an average of a dozen perfect identifications was made each month," and the effort to concentrate the dead into permanent American cemeteries materially reduced the number of unknowns. 737

The service's "whole vast interlocking machinery hinged on successful identifications, and the solving of many of these most difficult problems was due to the untiring patience, plus constructive reasoning, on the part of men devoted to the interests of this Service." 738 The AGRS explained that "in many hundreds of cases, where any trace of identification appeared at first impossible, a thread of light was thrown upon the case by the discovery of some remote evidence." 739 With the AGRS trying so hard to identify American unknowns, Weeks must have realized that rushing the selection process for a Memorial Day burial was risky. Despite Fish's plea for Memorial Day to be the date of the burial, the War Department prioritized the need to entomb a body that could never be identified. As the AGRS had argued, the process could not be rushed.

Newspaper coverage soon informed the American public that the War Department had selected Armistice Day, rather than Memorial Day, as the date for the burial. In an article published on 17 March, the *New York Times* reported this development and provided details about the planned events. The article explained that because President Harding desired "to take an active role in the ceremonies," Secretary Weeks had brought to the president the question of whether to hold the burial on Memorial Day or Armistice Day; Harding preferred Armistice Day, thus settling the issue. ⁷⁴⁰ The article also outlined plans for the burial, noting the major participants and distinguished guests likely to attend. Even at this early date, the *Times* expected the ceremony to be a massive event, "among the most impressive ever held in Washington," with "thousands at Arlington." This "impressive" ceremony was exactly what Fish himself had envisioned.

Newspaper coverage of the announcement also contextualized the Tomb's location at Arlington. The 17 March article in the *New York Times*, for example, provided comparisons to ceremonies previously held there. It noted that about fifty thousand people had attended the burial ceremonies for the dead of the USS *Maine*, and described similar sites in the cemetery, such as the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns. ⁷⁴² Additionally, the article provided historical context, acknowledging that the number of unknowns from World War I remained much lower than that of the Civil War, owing to "the care taken to provide identification for every American soldier, sailor and marine who took part in the that conflict." Such informative articles reminded readers of Arlington's national significance, as well as the meanings and historical context of the future Tomb.

Yet, a minority of veterans disagreed with the selection of Arlington as the location of the Tomb. Even though the chair of the American Legion's national legislative committee, as well as

the New York Department of the American Legion, had publicly expressed support for Arlington as the proper site, some legion members felt differently. The Hartford (CT) Courant, Washington Post, and New York Times all reported in June 1921 about a proposal adopted by the legion's George Washington Post No. 1, located in Washington, D.C., that favored placing the body of the Unknown in a crypt at the Capitol building instead of in Arlington. 744 This post's representative at the American Legion's upcoming executive committee meeting planned to present this resolution and to urge action on changing the location—possibly because members of this post preferred the tomb to be located within their city, rather than across the Potomac River in Virginia. 745 Some members of the public also echoed this stance, as indicated by a letter sent to Senator Kenneth Douglas McKellar (D-TN) in October 1921 from a constituent. Having visited the French and British Tombs, this constituent complained that because "so few people" go to Arlington compared to those who visit the Capitol, burying the Unknown in Arlington would cause it to be just "a short time before the memory of our hero would be almost forgotten."⁷⁴⁶ Such opposition to the proposed plan may have not been widespread, but it does indicate that veterans and the general public still did not all agree that the tomb should be located in Arlington. Furthermore, the continuing debate within the American Legion demonstrates that veterans in particular felt they had a deep stake in the Tomb, even when they disagreed about the specifics of the plan.

Despite such dissenting voices, the government's decision to bury an unknown American service member in a tomb at Arlington National Cemetery drew great interest and expressions of support during the months ahead of the ceremony. *Youth's Companion* magazine, for example, regretted that the United States had "no great historic national shrine like Westminster Abbey" or the Arc de Triomphe, but argued that "perhaps there is no other place in the United States so

appropriate as the great National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia."⁷⁴⁷ The article extolled the value of locating the Tomb at Arlington, exclaiming that "there the soldier slain on the fields of France will lie in the presence of nearly twenty thousand men who fell in the service of their country in the great Civil War or in the war with Spain. More than four thousand of them are, like himself, unknown. Among the others are men from every rank. . . . The unknown soldier will be at home among them. . . . Like them he helped to cement with his blood the foundations of the independence, the unity, the moral power of America."⁷⁴⁸ *Youth's Companion* implied that because the Tomb would be located among the graves of service members from other wars, Arlington would connect the dead of World War I to those from previous conflicts in American history. The magazine also accurately predicted that the Tomb would come to have "exceptional significance," and that in "the years to come that tomb will be one of the most frequently visited and one of the most sacred spots in the country."⁷⁴⁹ Aimed at the young people of the nation, who would form the next generation to honor the Tomb, this article was particularly important as an expression of positive support for this upcoming national venture.

Likewise, a 5 May 1921 *New York Times* article reflected on the overall significance of entombing an unknown soldier as a new memorialization ritual—and connected the United States' commemorative efforts to those of other nations. 750 "All the world has felt a peculiar propriety in this new custom of honoring the citizen soldier," the *Times* stated. "In war today it is the whole nation that fights, the whole nation that suffers and triumphs." While emphasizing the novelty of this tradition, the *Times* also noted its emergence from the specific conditions of the late war. It referenced the inspiration of the British tomb, noting that "no burial in Westminster Abbey of philosopher or statesman or king was ever more majestic, more moving to mankind, than that ceremony of Armistice Day last Autumn." With the expected presence of

Arlington would demonstrate "reverence to the memory of a man of the ranks, symbol of the prowess of a people, as the nations once did reverence only to conquerors." The participation of esteemed military leaders in these ceremonies to honor unknown soldiers captured the public's attention, and many Americans seemed eager to see who would pay homage to the American Unknown in November. Newspapers speculated on how Foch might participate in the ceremonies, and some rumors spread that he would accompany the American Unknown on his ocean voyage back to America. The furthermore, as the *Times* article suggested, the burial at Arlington would bring the United States into line with the global tradition pioneered by its wartime allies. It would also underscore the increasingly democratic nature of warfare, which now necessitated memorializing the common soldier just as much as the highest-ranking commanders. The participate in the ceremony at the properties of the participate in the ceremony at the properties of the participate in the ceremony at the properties of the participate in the ceremony at the participate in the ceremony at the participate in the ceremony at the properties of the participate in the ceremony at the participate in the p

Thus, in the aftermath of the legislative process to authorize the tomb, the American public, for the most part, eagerly awaited the burial of the unknown American service member at Arlington in November. Americans looked forward to the event as a day to inaugurate a new tradition, to mourn those lost in the war, and to search for solace at a memorial site anticipated to become a place of healing.

Conclusion

The months-long process to obtain congressional authorization for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier provided the nation's political, military, and veteran leaders with an opportunity to debate their visions for the Tomb and the ceremonies that would inaugurate it.

Spearheaded by Rep. Hamilton Fish, the proposal originated as a tribute from one world war veteran to his comrades. Inspired by the British and French examples as well as his own combat

experiences, Fish listened to the desires of the American people and used his new elected position to place the commemoration of the war on the congressional agenda. The ensuing debates reveal competing visions for the Tomb and an already-present understanding of the sacred nature of such a site. They also detailed how this effort would be executed and provided a foundational ideology for the emerging meaning of the Tomb. Although total public consensus on the plan remained out of reach even after the passage of the legislation, most Americans supported it, and anticipation began to build for the next steps of the process. By early fall 1921, attention would turn to the American cemeteries in France, where the single American to be the series interred in the Tomb would be selected and the series of ceremonies that would create the Tomb

Chapter 6: Out of Many, One: Selecting America's Unknown Soldier

After the passage of the legislation that authorized the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and located it in Arlington National Cemetery, the War Department embarked on a complex effort to select a single unknown American service member to inter in the planned Tomb. Due to the likelihood of the Tomb's deep emotional resonance throughout the United States and the world, much was at stake in the selection of the American Unknown. The War Department mobilized for this sacred undertaking, aspiring to execute it with dignity.

Throughout the logistically challenging process, the War Department left a paper trail that documented its actions. These sources demonstrate the meticulous nature of this work, performed under emotional pressure and time constraints. At every step, U.S. government and military personnel tried to proceed with respect and decorum, for the Unknown being honored was one of their own comrades.

On the ground in France, the Quartermaster Corps officers in charge of the selection process focused on ensuring the anonymity of the selected Unknown and managing the details of the selection. The Quartermaster Corps also began planning the corresponding ceremonies to mark the Unknown's selection and departure from France. These events would be opportunities to include the French military and people in this commemoration of American military service and sacrifice. Indeed, the French, eager to honor their American allies, played a large role in the overseas ceremonies. Their passion for honoring the American Unknown overtook the War Department's initial intention to keep the events in France small and simple—and indicated that the War Department would not be in complete control of the events and narratives connected with the Unknown Soldier. Both the French and American people viewed the Unknown Soldier as one of their own. The Unknown—and later the Tomb itself—would take on meanings larger

than the U.S. government could predict, ones that would continue to evolve through each step of the selection, ceremony, burial, and beyond.

Planning for the Selection

The U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, led by quartermaster general Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers, received the critical initial responsibility of selecting the unknown American service member to inter in the tomb. The Quartermaster Corps' orders, issued by the War Department on 9 September 1921, complied with House Joint Resolution 426, the congressional resolution passed on 4 March 1921 to authorize the burial. The War Department clearly instructed the Quartermaster Corps to ensure that its selection of the American Unknown would "preclude the possibility of future identification as to his name, rank, organization, service, or the battlefields on which he fell." These measures would not only guarantee the perpetual anonymity of the Unknown, but would also protect the Army from inquiries from families who hoped the body could be identified as their loved one. Any attempt to identify the Unknown would disrupt the intended sanctity of the Tomb and its symbolic function as a universal grave for all Americans. The War Department hoped to avoid a scenario in which a soldier who could be identified was interred in the Tomb. The Tomb.



Figure 6.1. Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers, Quartermaster General of the United States Army. The Quartermaster Corps had the responsibility to select and transport the American Unknown Soldier. (National Archives and Records Administration)

American military units that had been stationed in Europe since the end of the war were involved with planning the initial steps of the disinterment and selection process. On 8 September 1921, the secretary of war directed the Army's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Peter C. Harris, to send a cablegram to the commanding general of the American Forces in Germany, Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen, providing an overview of the events planned to transpire in France. The quartermaster general would select the body and transport it to the port city of Cherbourg, Allen would represent the United States at the ceremonies to take place there, and the U.S. Navy would then take the selected Unknown to the United States. According to this memo, the text of the cablegram would direct Allen to:

take up with our Embassy at Paris the question as to whether France wishes to render any honours to remains before departure from France and if so make all necessary arrangements. You will represent this Government at ceremony. It is not desired that there should be any ceremony in France except at the port of departure and this should be simple in nature. All our Allies in the World War who so desire will be authorized to bestow decorations on the unknown dead during ceremony in Washington. However, if France desires to bestow any decorations before the remains leave France you are authorized to arrange for it. ⁷⁶⁰

These instructions indicate that at this early stage in the preparations, the events in France were expected to be smaller and more unassuming than they eventually turned out to be. The U.S. government envisioned these events as "simple in nature" through the first week of October. ⁷⁶¹

As planning continued, additional American officials in France were brought into the preparation process. On 14 September, the adjutant general sent a confidential cablegram to the military attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, to be transmitted to the chief of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS). This cablegram provided basic instructions about the selection, asked the AGRS chief, Col. Harry F. Rethers, to confer with the American ambassador and General Allen, and noted that full instructions would be mailed. 762 With these initial instructions provided to key U.S. officials in France, the preparations could now begin in earnest.

During the first week of October, military and diplomatic leaders from the United States and France finalized plans for the selection of an American Unknown. Having received his orders, General Allen reported back to the adjutant general on 5 October with the results of his planning meetings. After a conference that included leaders from the French government, U.S. ambassador Myron Herrick, and Gen. John J. Pershing, the initial outline for the steps to be taken in France had been decided on. ⁷⁶³ Allen explained that "from 4 bodies from 4 cemeteries assembled at Chalons [Châlons-sur-Marne, now known as Châlons-en-Champagne] one will be selected. Pall bearers, and small Guard of Honor, all men from Coblenz, a few legionnaires and myself, will escort bodies from Chalons to [Le] Havre." While the French were willing to have the body stop in Paris, they agreed with the plan to take it directly to Le Havre. Allen then described the proposed ceremony in Le Havre, noting that André Maginot, France's minister of pensions and a World War I veteran, "will represent France at Havre and will there decorate remains with Legion of Honor. . . . French troops will assist in ceremonies at Le Havre and

French Naval vessel will salute the body. Short speeches will be made."⁷⁶⁵ Although the actual ceremonies would differ from this initial vision, Allen's cablegram laid out the basic elements of the events in France. It also reflected a recent decision to change the Unknown's port of departure from Cherbourg to Le Havre, after the Navy advised that Le Havre had more suitable docking facilities.⁷⁶⁶

That same week, detailed plans for the selection ceremony in Châlons-sur-Marne began to take shape. On 4 October, Lt. Col. William G. Ball of the Quartermaster Corps visited Châlons-sur-Marne with French liaison officer Captain Le Roch to make preliminary arrangements for the events related to the selection. Ball reported back to Colonel Rethers to describe the progress they had made. Significantly, he indicated that it had become increasingly difficult to control the scope of events and uphold the War Department's intention to keep the ceremonies in France simple. 767 Ball explained that the French desired to place a guard of honor along the streets of Châlons, from the Hôtel de Ville—the city hall, where the selection of the Unknown would take place—to the railway station. He also noted that as it would be "an occasion of ceremony," the French wanted to make several short speeches during the selection ceremony. ⁷⁶⁸ Moreover, the ceremony at the Hôtel de Ville would include a public viewing period of the Unknown's casket. "It was assumed," Ball wrote, "that the population of the town would many of them desire to pass around the catafalque" at the Hôtel de Ville. 769 He emphasized that "all authorities at Chalons were most courteous and expressed a very earnest desire to show the American government . . . every courtesy and honor possible on this occasion," even offering to house American troops in French barracks. 770

During this stage, French enthusiasm, which proved impossible to subdue, helped transform the selection and departure ceremonies into much larger events than the War

Department initially envisioned. The officers of the Quartermaster Corps thus needed to balance the desires of the French with the intentions of the War Department. Meanwhile, they had to coordinate the most critical task of all: disinterring four sets of truly unknown remains to become the candidates for the selection ceremony.

Disinterring the Four Unknown Candidates

Due to the sacred nature of the exhumation and preparation of the remains of the unknown candidates, the process was imbued with sensitivity. Coordinated and led by the AGRS, this special task involved men with deep expertise in burial and identification methods. Contemporaneous documents and later recollections indicate that they understood the sanctity and historic significance of their assignment. Usually relegated to often gruesome and heartbreaking behind-the-scenes work, the AGRS seized this opportunity to demonstrate the critical importance of its mission and the skills of its men in this most public of World War I commemorations. Indeed, 1st Lt. Arthur E. Dewey, the Quartermaster Corps officer assigned to exhume the unknown candidate from Thiaucourt, recalled years later that "great excitement prevailed at the American Cemetery at Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, (Meuse) France' when they received the "long-awaited orders covering the selection of the unknown soldier who was to be buried at Arlington."⁷⁷¹ Dewey recalled, too, that despite the intensive process involved in exhuming and preparing the candidate's body, what most stuck with him was the magnitude of the task at hand: "Work? . . . Yes, but an honor to be esteemed worthy of such a responsibility."772

Prior to the selection ceremony, the AGRS made careful preparations to ensure that each of the four candidates could never be identified. Early instructions from Col. George H. Penrose, chief of the Cemeterial Division, to Colonel Rethers emphasized the importance of ensuring the

Unknown's anonymity. Penrose explained that all markings should be removed from the caskets containing the four unknown candidates. He advised Rethers: "I cannot too strongly impress upon you the necessity that these bodies shall be absolutely unknown. Any data that you may have on the subject of the original burial places and concentrations will be entirely eliminated from the records." 773

Proud of its role in the selection of the Unknown Soldier, the AGRS undertook this sensitive mission with great seriousness and care. The AGRS's official history, which documents both the preparation process and the actual selection, sheds light on the hidden administrative logistics. The AGRS first made "a thorough search of all the Forms No. 16-A for unknown soldiers for the cemeteries at Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne, Somme and St. Mihiel. This search was for the purpose of locating bodies of unknown soldiers which gave no clue to, or evidence of, identity."⁷⁷⁴ Form 16-A indicated the grave location of each interred body. Next, "the original records, showing the interments of these bodies, were searched and the four bodies selected represented the remains of soldiers of which there was absolutely no indication as to name, rank, organization or date of death. In other words, these bodies were picked up in isolated spots and concentrated in the cemeteries above so that their identity could not be solved by any recourse to records."⁷⁷⁵ Colonel Rethers corroborated this in a speech years later when he recalled how "in our office in Paris we went carefully over the records of the unidentified bodies and selected such as had the least data concerning them with regard to their former place of burial prior to their concentration in the cemetery, and which also had no distinguishing marks which could possibly lead to future identification."⁷⁷⁶

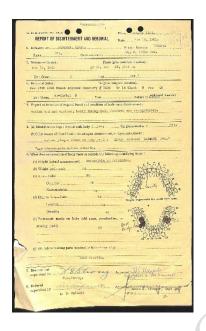


Figure 6.2. An example of a form 16-A. This specific form 16-A was part of the official paperwork the AGRS created to maintain the accountability of Private Hyman Aronoff's remains. Aronoff, originally from Illinois, served in the 33rd Division, 129th Infantry Regiment. He died on Oct. 17, 1918. He is buried at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in France.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

With this initial research work completed, Quartermaster Corps Maj. Robert P. Harbold took the lead as the officer in charge, working under Lt. Col. Gerrit Van Schaick Quackenbush, also of the Quartermaster Corps. Harbold put together a special team of military and civilian experts to disinter and prepare the four unknown candidates. The Four officers were charged with the disinterment of one unknown each from four American cemeteries in France: the Meuse-Argonne (then known as Romagne), St. Mihiel (Thiaucourt), Somme (Bony), and Aisne-Marne (Belleau or Belleau Wood). These cemeteries respectively represented the most significant American campaigns and combat areas during the war: the Meuse-Argonne Offensive; the St. Mihiel Offensive; Cantigny and the subsequent Somme Offensive; and Château-Thierry, the defense of the Marne, Belleau Wood, and the Aisne-Marne Offensive. Many bodies disinterred from places outside of the main battle lines, as well as from Germany, had also been gathered into these major cemeteries as well.



Figure 6.3. Robert P. Harbold served in mortuary affairs positions during World War I and was recalled from retirement to do similar work during World War II, including serving as chief of the Quartermaster Corps Memorial Branch. He died on Armistice Day in 1952 and is buried in Section 3 of Arlington National Cemetery. (U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser).

Disinterring four bodies from four different cemeteries was crucial to the ultimate anonymity of the selected Unknown. According to a later recollection by Rethers, this plan had been determined so that the "soldier thus selected might be representative of the various places wherein our units fought." For, if people knew that the Unknown had come from one particular battle area, relatives of the missing war dead "would naturally know that the unknown body selected could not possibly be that of their own, whereas if the selection were made from representative unidentified bodies from all principal battlefields over which American troops fought, the thought could then prevail that possibly the body of the unknown soldier might be that of their own."782 Likewise, according to Rethers's 1931 account, even the choice of staging the selection ceremony in Châlons-sur-Marne had to do with maintaining the anonymity of the Unknown. Rethers recollected that aside from the town being "on the main railway line from Verdun through Paris to La Havre . . . the idea was not to make the point of selection near any locality where our American troops had fought, for had it been made, for instance, at Chateau-Thierry, the inference might be created in the minds of many people that the body really came from the battlefield in that vicinity; Chalons was thus a neutral point which had not been

identified in the minds of the American people."⁷⁸³ The eternal secrecy of the Unknown Soldier's identity thus remained the most important goal throughout the selection process and dictated the choices and actions of the AGRS.

At each of the four cemeteries, the officer in charge led a team that consisted of one supervisory embalmer, two technical assistants, and one checker: 1st Lt. H. S. Harpole of the Quartermaster Corps led the team at Romagne; 1st Lt. Arthur E. Dewey of the Quartermaster Corps led the team sent to Thiaucourt; Maj. George F. Waugh of the Infantry led the team at Belleau Wood; and 1st Lt. John J. Powers of the Quartermaster Corps led the team at Bony. Feery officer except for Dewey was assigned to the cemetery where they worked; Dewey worked at Romagne, but took care of the exhumation at Thiaucourt. All four operated under similar specific, strict instructions as they carried out the task of disinterring an unknown.

The four disinterments were completed on 22 October 1921. The teams charged with excavating the remains of the four unknowns were under considerable pressure to follow the detailed instructions they received. The officers in charge had been directed to "carefully study these instructions, and to spare no efforts or plans in carrying them out exactly as required." Each team received a sealed envelope containing a single Form 16-A, which provided the grave location for the principal unknown to be exhumed. They also received another envelope with an additional Form 16-A for an alternate grave, which they were to disinter only if the first body showed signs of being identifiable. The Dewey recalled that these sealed orders contained identification numbers that began with the letter U, which indicated an unidentifiable set of remains. All such identification numbers were registered in Paris.

After exhumation, each team conducted a thorough search of their unknown candidate.

Directed to look "for any evidence of identification," they were told that "should there be

anything found on the body or in the coffin, which will tend to identify this particular body," they should exhume the alternate body and conduct a similar search. ⁷⁹⁰ The alternates provided a fail-safe, but because the four exhumed bodies "had absolutely no evidence of identity," none of the alternates were exhumed. ⁷⁹¹

Having determined that the exhumed body could not be identified, each team began to prepare that body according to standard Army regulations. Each body had to be "thoroughly searched by the technical group prior to its being placed in the new casket" for shipping. The team could make no marks on the body, which they wrapped in a blanket before placing into the provided casket. The four caskets and shipping cases had to be exactly alike, with no marks to indicate the cemeteries from which they came. Each identical, specially supplied, all-metal gray casket was "thoroughly cleaned and polished, and . . . put in absolutely first-class condition in every particular."

The caskets were then prepared for transportation to Châlons-sur-Marne. Each casket was sealed within a shipping case in a manner that would allow it to be easily opened, and would ensure the "lifting of the casket from the case without any difficulty."⁷⁹⁴ Here, again, perfection was the goal: any struggle or difficulty in the process would detract from the solemnity and dignity involved in paying the highest degree of homage to the four candidates for the Tomb.

The AGRS implemented multiple procedures to ensure the eternal anonymity of the selected Unknown, as well as the three other candidates. The Form 16-A for each disinterred unknown was sealed in an envelope and kept in the possession of the officer in charge until they were given to Major Harbold at Châlons-sur-Marne, along with the unused forms for the alternate unknowns. In Harbold's presence, Colonel Quackenbush took the forms pertaining to the four unknown candidates and destroyed them by fire. ⁷⁹⁵ Likewise, Rethers, upon returning to

AGRS headquarters in Paris, "burned all records which pertained to those four bodies" in the Registration Branch as, he explained, "a further means of preventing any possible future identification." Thus, according to the AGRS, "the four bodies have no record on file showing from whence they originally came and from which cemetery they were exhumed for shipment to Chalons-sur-Marne." At Thiaucourt, Dewey recalled, "the 'pick-up' card, which showed the spot where the body has been originally located" was also destroyed. ⁷⁹⁸

After the paper evidence was destroyed, the teams confirmed that no evidence related to the four candidates remained with the bodies themselves. They then turned to the matter of protecting the candidates' security both before and after the selection ceremony. For example, Harbold laid out precise instructions for the joint storage of two unknowns. "After the body [from Romagne] is prepared for shipment," he instructed, it should "be placed in a suitable building at Romagne, aloof from the other bodies, where also the body from Thiaucourt will be placed upon its arrival. A suitable guard will be organized to keep the bodies under constant observation and every precaution will be taken to see that they are in no way molested." The body exhumed from Belleau Wood (Aisne-Marne) was taken to Château-Thierry to remain overnight, under guard by the technicians who conducted the disinterment, to ensure that it too was "in no way molested." Most likely, the fourth body received similar protection. No risks could be taken with the preparation of the unknown candidates in the crucial days leading up to the official selection ceremony. Multiple layers of protection ensured the anonymity of the unknown candidates throughout the selection process—and, indeed, for eternity.

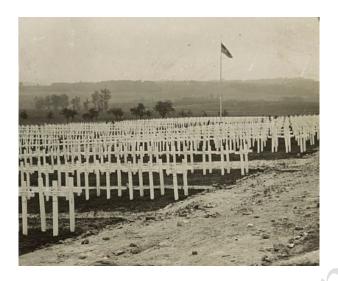


Figure 6.4. The AGRS disinterred one of the unknown candidates from the American Cemetery in Belleau Wood (now called the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery). This image was likely taken in 1918. (Library of Congress)

The Selection Ceremony at Châlons-sur-Marne

On 23 October 1921, the day before the scheduled selection ceremony, the town of Châlons-sur-Marne buzzed with activity as American and French service members prepared the Hôtel de Ville for the selection. Around noon, a delegation of American and French officers arrived from Paris. It included General Rogers, the quartermaster general; several Quartermaster Corps officers, including Colonel Rethers, Colonel Ball, and Major Harbold; French liaison officer Captain Le Roch; the chief supervisory embalmer, Charles Keating; and numerous reporters and photographers. The group met with the main French representatives for the ceremony: Gen. Pierre Georges Duport, commander of the French 6th Army Corps; Jules Brisac, prefect of Marne; and Joseph Servas, mayor of the town of Châlons-sur-Marne. ⁸⁰¹



Figure 6.5. The mayor of Châlons-sur-Marne, Joseph Servas, greeting dignitaries on October 24, 1921. Those in the photo include Major Harbold, Colonel Rethers, Captain Le Roch, and Major General Rogers. (Médiathèque Georges Pompidou, Ville de Châlons-en-Champagne.)

Mayor Servas took the group on a tour of the Hôtel de Ville to view the arrangements for the next day's ceremony. Decorated with American and French flags provided by the Quartermaster Corps, three rooms of the Hôtel de Ville were specially prepared for the selection. The main (central) hall contained a custom catafalque, created with the help of town officials, where the selected Unknown would lie after the ceremony. A reception room on one side would hold the four unknown candidates during the selection ceremony, and another room on the opposite side of the building would be used to transfer the chosen Unknown to his new, permanent casket. Flags and plants decorated the interior of the building to enhance the ceremonial mood. 802 Years later, Rethers recalled that the building was "most beautifully and appropriately decorated for the occasion." 803 The care taken by the French, evident even in the Hôtel de Ville's interior decor, showed their respect for the upcoming ceremony.

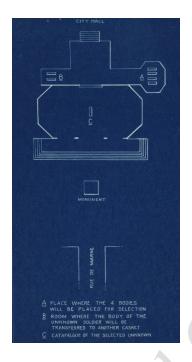


Figure 6.6. This blueprint of the interior of the front portion of the ground floor of the Châlons-sur-Marne City Hall (Hotel de Ville) shows each room as it was to be used for the selection ceremony.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

While the War Department had envisioned the ceremonies in France as simple in nature, the sheer enthusiasm of the French precluded the possibility of small-scale events. After the conclusion of the selection ceremonies, Mayor Servas explained to General Rogers why his initial desire to conduct the ceremonies "with the greatest simplicity" had proved impossible to uphold. Servas stated that he could not "prevent the citizens of Chalons from taking this opportunity of manifesting their sentiments of deep regard, affection and gratitude for those who came from so far away to fight for the triumph of Justice and Right." Indeed, as the town prepared for the ceremony, it became evident that this event would mean a great deal to the French people.



Figure 6.7. Located on a wall inside the lobby of the City Hall (Hotel de Ville) building in Châlons-en-Champagne (formerly Châlons-sur-Marne), this plaque commemorates the selection of the American World War I Unknown. It is written in both French and English.

(Allison S. Finkelstein)

The four unknown candidates arrived separately in Châlons-sur-Marne around 3:00 p.m. on 23 October. Each convoy arrived from a different direction; the convoy from Romagne, which carried the unknown from Thiaucourt and the unknown from Romagne in separate trucks, arrived first, followed by the convoys from Bony and then Belleau. Romagne in Separate trucks, arrived first, followed by the convoys from Bony and then Belleau. Romagne to Châlons. Romagne led the convoy of Quartermaster Corps vehicles from Romagne to Châlons. Romagne in Structions, they brought an extra vehicle to be available in case of a breakdown, and to help carry the unselected candidates back to Romagne for reburial after the selection ceremony. Romagne in every respect, Their vehicles were "thoroughly cleaned and of good appearance in every respect," reflecting the dignity and sanctity of the ceremonies. Romagne for reburial after the convoy was about two and a half miles away from Châlons-sur-Marne, it stopped so that, as Dewey remembered, "the trucks could be cleaned and flags placed over the caskets."

As each unknown candidate arrived, French noncommissioned officers, escorted by American officers, brought the casket into the designated room within the Hôtel de Ville. ⁸¹¹ Dewey recalled that as the men carried each casket out of its truck and into the Hôtel de Ville, they passed between two lines of French infantry standing at present arms, holding their weapons as a sign of respect. Meanwhile, the four officers in charge of the exhumations gave the associated paperwork, and the four unopened envelopes for the alternate unknown candidates, to Major Harbold for their pending destruction. ⁸¹² The caskets were taken out of their shipping cases, placed on top of the cases, and draped with American flags. A French honor guard remained in the room until 10:00 p.m., when six American soldiers arrived from Coblenz, Germany, to serve as pallbearers. ⁸¹³ With their French comrades, they formed a joint honor guard that kept a constant vigil over the four unknowns for the remainder of their time in that room. ⁸¹⁴ Guarded by the former allies, the unknowns would not be alone at any time before the selection ceremony.



Figure 6.8. French soldiers escort one of the four American unknown candidates into the Châlons-sur-Marne City Hall on October 23, 1921. The following day, one would be selected as the Unknown Soldier to be interred at Arlington. (National Archives and Records Administration)

In the early morning hours of 24 October, the day of the selection, preparations for the ceremony continued. Following instructions laid out by Colonel Rethers, Major Harbold—assisted by French and American soldiers—rearranged the four caskets so that each unknown candidate rested on a different shipping case than that in which he had arrived. ⁸¹⁵ The AGRS explained that "by this method there could be no opportunity for any person, even the employees of the American Graves Registration Service present at Chalons-sur-Marne, to recognize, through the order of arrangement, the bodies from the various cemeteries." ⁸¹⁶ The AGRS hoped that this measure would keep the selection as unbiased as possible.

As preparations for the selection ceremony continued, Major Harbold chose the American service member who would select the Unknown from among the four candidates at the Hôtel de Ville. Earlier plans had called for a commissioned officer to have this honor, but when Colonel Rethers informed General Rogers that the French had assigned it to an enlisted man, the general decided that the United States should do the same and he altered the plan, following the French example once again. ⁸¹⁷ Harbold gave the honor to Sgt. Edward F. Younger, a decorated World War I veteran and a member of Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 50th Infantry, American Forces in Germany. ⁸¹⁸ Younger had been in the group of American noncommissioned officers who traveled from Coblenz to serve as pallbearers at the ceremony. ⁸¹⁹ (For more about Younger, see sidebar 06a "A Humble Sergeant: Edward F. Younger.")

Before the selection ceremony began at 10:00 a.m., a French military band gathered in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville, near the space designated for the selection ceremony. 820 Dewey recalled that the town "teemed with citizens," and that it "seemed as though everyone wanted to be there early to secure a position of advantage on such occasion." 821 However, he noted, "no festival air prevailed, rather one of solemn dignity. The voices were low pitched and

often broke with sobs."⁸²² Amid this somber atmosphere, the official party of ceremony participants and observers processed into the building. Headed by General Duport, the procession included General Rogers, Brisac, Servas, the Châlons-sur-Marne town council, French guards and officers, Captain Le Roch, American officers (including Colonel Rethers, Colonel Ball, and Major Harbold), chief supervisory embalmer Keating, photographers, and members of the press. The group rendered honors and saluted as they arrived at the selection room. According to an AGRS report signed by General Rogers, the party "lined up on either side of the hallway connecting the main rotunda of the Hôtel de Ville and the room containing the bodies of the four unknown dead."⁸²³

At this point, the party paused for two brief speeches, one by General Duport and one by General Rogers. General Duport spoke first. In his speech, given in French, Duport explained that holding the selection ceremony in Châlons-sur-Marne symbolized France's continuing gratitude toward its American ally as well as the heavy toll that the war had taken on the French people. 824 He proclaimed:

At the time when the city of Chalons, which, during four years of War suffered severe hardships, has been selected for the honor of receiving in its City Hall the glorious remains of the unknown American soldiers, chosen from various parts of the Battle front, I wish, in the name of the 6th Army Corps, to bring a fraternal message of gratitude, admiration and respect to those gallant soldiers who gave their blood on the French soil that they had so valiantly defended. I hope you will see, in that homage, a deep and significant token of our faithful and unshakable fraternity in arms with the Great Army of the United States of America, who, by the side of our soldiers, fought with such noble valor and such magnificent courage for the most righteous of all purposes, and has so brilliantly contributed to bring about common victory through which the world was saved. 825

Duport viewed the French Army's participation in the selection ceremony as a way to publicly thank and honor the U.S. military for its key role in the Great War. By honoring the Unknown through these commemorative events, France paid tribute to all American forces. Like many

Allied leaders, Duport interpreted the war as a triumph of good over evil, and he used his speech to reiterate that message and demonstrate the United States' role in the victory. General Rogers then made a brief reply to thank General Duport, the prefect, and the mayor for preparing the town and its city hall for the day's events. 826

Meanwhile, Sergeant Younger received the flowers with which he would designate the selected unknown soldier. Deeply symbolic, these flowers consisted of a spray of white roses donated by Brasseur Brulfer, a former member of the Châlons City Council who lost two sons in the war. Roses In a letter written a few days after the ceremony, General Rogers thanked Brulfer for the flowers, which he described as the "Roses of France." Brulfer sent a heartfelt reply to Rogers. If it had been possible I should have liked to do much more, Brulfer wrote to Rogers, "for your unknown soldier whose coffin was exposed at Chalons represented for me not only all the Americans fallen in France, but also all the Unknown soldiers of whom my son is one, and that is why I unite them all in the same thought and in the same affection. I am very glad that my flowers have served such a purpose." Grown in French soil, these roses formed a tangible connection between the American Unknown, the unknown dead of France, and the French nation itself.

Rife with symbolism, the ceremony's climactic moment came next: the selection of the single unknown to be taken to Arlington National Cemetery and interred as America's Unknown Soldier. Sergeant Younger, who had been waiting in the rotunda, walked into the selection room carrying the spray of white roses. As the band outside in the courtyard played "The Death of Åse" from *Peer Gynt* by Edvard Grieg, Younger slowly walked around the four caskets. After making several revolutions, he placed the roses on one of the caskets, then faced it, stood at attention, and saluted. General Duport stepped to the other end of the casket, saluted, and bowed

on behalf of France. The other French and American officials followed and offered their respects to the newly selected Unknown. 830 The United States now had its Unknown Soldier.

The selection complete, the American noncommissioned officers assigned as pallbearers carried the casket of the chosen Unknown into the room designated for the next step of the ceremonial process: his transfer into a unique casket for the trip to the United States. ⁸³¹ Because the Unknown would lie in state in the U.S. Capitol and the casket would be visible throughout most of the ceremonies, the Army's standard casket would not suffice: a "suitable casket" was warranted "in lieu of the wooden box in which remains are usually buried." ⁸³² The "specially constructed steel casket," which had been shipped from the United States, was "triple-lined steel, covered with black broadcloth, [and] adorned with silver handles and a silver name-plate inscribed as follows: 'An Unknown American Who Gave His Life in the World War.'" ⁸³³

The chief supervisory embalmer, Charles Keating, took over for the next steps.

According to earlier instructions, this role could only be filled by someone who had not been involved with any of the exhumations of the unknown candidates. ⁸³⁴ A veteran and professional embalmer who served with the Graves Registration Service during the war and returned to France as a civilian employee with the AGRS, Keating brought much experience to his role at the selection. ⁸³⁵ In the presence of several American officers, including General Rogers, Colonel Rethers, Colonel Ball, and Major Harbold, Keating moved the body into the new casket, put pillows inside to hold him in place, and covered him with an American flag; he then sealed the casket and laid the spray of white roses on top. ⁸³⁶ Years later, near the end of his life, Keating would reflect on his part in the selection ceremony and the continued importance of maintaining the Unknown's anonymity. When asked whether he could provide details about the Unknown Soldier, Keating declined, replying that sharing any details "would tend to destroy something of

the Unknown Soldier's anonymity. As it is, the survivors of any missing WWI soldier can have the solace of knowing that he may be buried at Arlington."⁸³⁷ From his wartime experiences, Keating knew the grim reality of the unknown dead and recognized how deeply the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier could help the families of those service members—but only if the Unknown remained truly unknown.



Figure 6.9. Charles Keating, a WWI veteran and professional embalmer who served in the AGRS went back to France as a civilian after the war. He served as the chief supervising embalmer during the selection of the Unknown Soldier. (Corry Area Historical Society)

The now-empty casket in which the selected Unknown had lain during the selection ceremony was then taken back to the room with the unselected caskets, and one of the three remaining bodies was placed into it. According to a report signed by General Rogers, burying this casket would prevent any further possibility of determining the Unknown's identity; any identifying marks that could indicate which cemetery the selected Unknown came from would be inaccessible. ⁸³⁸ At 11:00 a.m., after the three unselected sets of remains were placed in shipping cases, the Army transported them by truck to the Romagne Cemetery for immediate permanent burial that day. These unknowns were given new unknown numbers and were buried in graves

"numbered 1, 2 and 3, Row No. 1, Block G," as recorded in the AGRS's official history: "The only record now pertaining to these bodies is the reburial record showing an Unknown Soldier buried in the graves above enumerated." Rethers emphasized the importance of the immediate burial of the three unselected candidates in his 1931 account. He explained that "the precautions thus taken were merely to insure [sic] that all means of identification, which possibly some of the personnel of the field force might have placed on the casket or shipping case which they had handled, had been destroyed. In other words, the casket that had contained the body selected was now placed underground with another body." These steps indicate again that the War Department intended the Unknown to remain unknown. They did not want there to be any future investigations into his identity. (For more on the Romagne cemetery, see sidebar 06b "The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery: Forever Linked to the Tomb.)

With the official and logistical aspects of the ceremony complete, the more public phase could commence. The casket had been draped in an American flag and the spray of white roses placed on top. The pallbearers carried it to the prepared catafalque in the main hall, which faced the entrance gate to the building. The official party—including General Duport, the American and French officials, and service members—followed as the band played Chopin's funeral march. A joint honor guard assembled on either side of the catafalque: six French soldiers on one side and, on the other side, five noncommissioned officers from the American Forces in Germany and one uniformed representative from the American Legion. He flowers, wreaths, and bronze tributes received thus far were placed at the catafalque's base, and the press was allowed to enter to take photographs and capture motion picture footage of the scene in the Hôtel de Ville.

The main hall remained open to the public from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. so that anyone who wished could pay their respects to the Unknown. 844 In a show of comradeship, General Duport hosted a luncheon for General Rogers and the other American officers and French dignitaries as they waited for the completion of the public viewing period. The AGRS reported that "a continuous procession" of people went into the Hôtel de Ville throughout the afternoon.⁸⁴⁵ In 1932, Dewey recalled his observations of the mostly French visitors in the Hôtel de Ville: "Each person in that long, steady line, as he reached the door bowed the head, offering a silent prayer, a prayer of sorrow and of thanksgiving, for the eternal rest of the souls of those Unknowns, far from home, who had given their lives in assisting France. Hardly a dry eye was to be seen in the crowd, for nearly every French family had lost dear ones during the awful four years of the war."846 Another American report noted that the crowd included many "griefstricken widows and mothers of French soldiers who had likewise given their lives and perhaps were among the unknown."847 For the French, the Unknown offered a reminder of how their national tragedy had become international, touching the lives of their American brethren across the ocean. They seemed to feel personally connected to the American Unknown and treated him as one of their own soldier dead.

At 4:00 p.m., the next stage of the ceremonies began as General Duport, General Rogers, and the rest of the official party, led by a troop of cavalry, returned by car to the Hôtel de Ville, where troops stood waiting, lined up for the departure ceremony. 848 The ceremony began with a speech by Mayor Servas, who remarked on the significance of his town serving as the site of the selection. 849 Servas noted Châlons-sur-Marne's proximity to American cemeteries in France, but also emphasized its wartime role as an important planning site, away from the main firing lines. "It is here," he said, "that plans were elaborated, it is from here that orders were sent which

broke the supreme German offensive and marked the beginning of final victory. You wished to honor Chalons, and it is an honor of which we are proud."⁸⁵⁰ However, Servas felt it even more important to express the gratitude of the townspeople, and the French people overall, to the Americans, and he spoke at length on that topic. He professed that "there is not a Frenchman, whether young or old, who does not know the extent of his indebtedness to free America."⁸⁵¹ He lauded the United States for understanding that

the war which was being fought was not that of one nation against another, but that the very existence of an ideal was at stake and that all nations, whether near or distant, fraternally united to fight against barbarism, were directly concerned in the triumph of Justice. The defeat of France meant not only its ruin and annihilation as a European power, but also, for the whole world, it meant Strength violating Right and Tyranny strangling Liberty. 852

Like General Duport, Servas believed that the Great War represented a fight for freedom against the brutal German invaders; he placed the blame for the conflict fully on France's wartime enemies, while describing America's assistance to France as aid that helped the entire world and preserved the ideals of democracy.

In his conclusion, Servas spoke on a more personal and emotional level, reminding the audience of the war's human toll borne by both the French and Americans: "Side by side your soldiers mingled their blood with French blood, and their inspiring courage had a share in the common victory." Referencing how General Pershing had recently presented the Medal of Honor to the French Unknown Soldier in Paris, he remarked, "A few weeks ago you bowed before the tomb of our Unknown soldier; it is our turn to bow before yours." As he drew his remarks to a close, Servas laid a "modest palm" on the Unknown's casket on behalf of Châlons—"as a tribute," he said, "of admiration and gratitude to a friendly nation. May it perpetuate beyond the Atlantic the memory of the Marne, that glorious Marne which twice marked the end of the savage onrush!" With this gift and his speech, Servas cemented the

enduring symbolic relationship between Châlons-sur-Marne and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Figure 6.10. Châlons-sur-Marne's mayor placed this bronze palm, affixed to a wooden base, on the American Unknown's casket to signify the friendship between the city and the United States. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Following this stirring speech, General Allen offered a brief response in French, expressing, again, the U.S. government's appreciation of France's part in the selection of the Unknown. Speaking on behalf not only of the U.S. government, but of "all of those in the United States whose hearts have been lacerated by personal losses in this World War, I cannot fail to express to you my profound gratitude for the tender solicitude and care with which you have honored this occasion," he declared. By invoking the families of the American World War I dead, rather than glorifying the war itself, Allen focused on the key audience for the many ceremonies involved in the creation of the Tomb: the American people. "As you know," he continued, "it was the expressed desire of the Government that there be no formal ceremony here, but knowing the soul of the French and their sincere esteem for the American soldier, I am not surprised at your beautiful and touching testimonial commemorating the departure of this champion of your life and of our rights." Perhaps taken slightly aback by the length of

Servas's speech and the grandeur of the day's ceremonies, Allen kept his own speech short. He thanked the French again and assured them that their beautiful thoughts would be "conveyed with our returning hero to his native soil, where you will shortly hear the sympathetic echo." 858

With the speeches concluded, at around 5:00 p.m. the assembled group began to prepare for the selected Unknown's departure procession through Châlons along the Rue de Marne, a road that linked the town to the railway station about a mile away. As the American pallbearers carried the casket out of the Hôtel de Ville and placed it on a waiting caisson (which would be pulled by six black horses), the French military band played "Aux Champs," the escort troops presented arms, and the officials stood at salute. See A group of French Boy Scouts got into position near the front of the caisson, having gathered the flowers and tributes that had been placed around the catafalque. French troops formed into a quadrangle in front of the Hôtel de Ville. They included an infantry regiment, a dragoon regiment, a motor transportation company, and two field artillery battalions; an honor cordon of dismounted cavalry lined the route to the train station. The procession also included the sole American Army unit present (the 6th section of the Quartermaster Corps), the official party of officers and civic leaders, firemen, delegations of several veterans' societies, local organizations, and schoolchildren. Seo

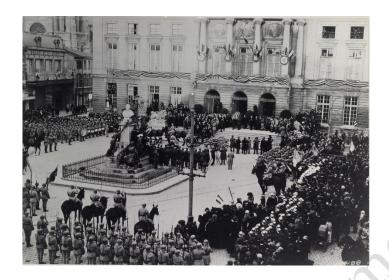


Figure 6.11. View of the Place de la Hotel Ville in Châlons-sur-Marne as the selected American Unknown Soldier was being moved to an awaiting caisson.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

As the French military band played a series of funeral marches, the procession began its slow march to the train station. Sell The AGRS later reported that "the streets of the city were thronged with people, as were also the windows of the houses. Sell Another American report noted that during the procession, bells tolled solemnly and the crowds reverently lifted their hats and bowed their heads. In the faces of the throngs assembled on the streets and in the windows of houses, could be seen expressions of tender feeling toward the unknown soldier who had come with his noble brothers a few years before, as a ray of hope when they were in the depths of despair. An account attributed to Capt. Charles Moslander echoed this description, and recalled that during the procession, the only sounds that could be heard were the iron tired wheels of the caisson rolling over the cobble stones, the clatter of the horses shoes and the music of the trumpets. Not a sound from the throngs on the sidewalks. Moved to honor the American Unknown, the local French community gave him a proper farewell.



Figure 6.12. In both France and the United States, public ceremonies allowed thousands of people to honor the American Unknown Soldier. Here, crowds watch as a military procession escorts the Unknown's caisson through the streets of Châlons-sur-Marne on October 24, 1921. Note the banner which reads (translated), "Glory to the Unknown American Hero."

(The Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

The procession paused when it approached the train station and marched past the caisson, where General Duport and General Allen conducted a review of the participants. ⁸⁶⁵ As Dewey recalled, "each company as it passed dipped its torn and bloody battle standards, the officers presented sabers, the men executed 'eyes right' and presented arms. For nearly an hour these honors were paid" to the Unknown Soldier. ⁸⁶⁶ After the procession passed, with the band playing the American national anthem, the pallbearers carried the casket into the train station. They then secured it in a decorated funeral car of a special train provided by the French government at no charge and reserved solely for the transport of the Unknown. At 6:10 p.m., the train departed Châlons-sur-Marne and traveled for three hours to Paris. ⁸⁶⁷ Dewey remembered that the train "pulled out of the station in such a slow and deliberate manner as to make one believe that the train itself realized the solemnity and importance of the occasion." ⁸⁶⁸ The train arrived at 10:00 p.m. at the Gare des Batignolles in Paris, where it stayed overnight with a guard of honor composed of three American soldiers and a uniformed member of the American Legion. Just as

the honor guard in Châlons had done prior to the selection, this guard stood watch over the Unknown throughout the night. ⁸⁶⁹



Figure 6.13. French troops line a street in Châlons-sur-Marne on October 24, 1921, as they await the procession carrying the American Unknown Soldier. The ceremonies honoring the Unknown had diplomatic significance and symbolized the alliance between the United States and France.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

Conclusion

The selection of America's Unknown Soldier showcased the diligent work of the Army's Quartermaster Corps during one of its most high-profile and public assignments of the postwar era. With the eyes of the world watching, it organized, planned, and executed the selection of the Unknown and the associated ceremonies. It operated under intense pressure to guarantee the perpetual anonymity of the body interred at the Tomb. Measured and meticulous, its work honored all unknown American war dead. Moreover, it set the high standards of care and respect for the Unknown Soldier that would remain in place throughout the Tomb's creation and evolution.

Filled with tributes and gratitude, this first stage of the Unknown Soldier's journey home already indicated international public interest in the Tomb and exposed raw feelings for those

affected by the Great War. Having suffered through four years of horrific combat in their homeland, the French people found solace in the ceremonies at Châlons-sur-Marne. They appreciated the opportunity to declare their gratitude to their American allies. A few days after the selection, Mayor Servas summarized what the ceremony had meant to his town. As he wrote to General Rogers:

On that day the heart of every citizen of Chalons went out to you. It was more than the accomplishment of a duty; it was a manifestation of deep affection, which I hope will have a far-reaching echo in our Country where we so sincerely feel it, and in yours which we particularly desire to honor. Such manifestations weave the threads which so powerfully bind us together and which nothing will ever break. The grave of the French Unknown Soldier under the "Arc de Triomphe" sends forth a ray of glory and love which meets, at Arlington, the tomb of the Unknown American Soldier, and that ray will never fade. 870

Because the American Unknown had been buried in French soil, the French felt a deep emotional connection to him—one that has lasted through the years. This Franco-American connection created one of the many layers of meaning that would envelop the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Châlons-sur-Marne would now be forever linked to Arlington National Cemetery. So too, would the city of Le Havre, where the Unknown traveled next on his journey home.

Chapter 7: The Final Journey Home

As the Unknown American service member selected for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier made his way home from France, he took a journey much different from the one he had taken when he sailed off to war several years earlier. Each step included ceremonies and gestures of respect from both the French and the Americans, and each served as another prelude to the events planned for Armistice Day. The War Department had wanted the departure ceremony at Le Havre to be simple, but as was the case in Châlons-sur-Marne, the enthusiasm of the French proved impractical to tamp down. ⁸⁷¹ The French government and people wanted to provide the American Unknown with a send-off reflecting their gratitude to the American forces for their role in ending the war. Having buried their own Unknown Soldier the year before, the French understood that this one Unknown represented the entire scope of American sacrifice. Their actions to honor him reinforced this message as the Americans prepared to inaugurate their tomb.

From Le Havre, the Unknown Soldier journeyed across the Atlantic on board the USS *Olympia*. Faced with stormy seas, the trip proved tense at times as the crew secured their fallen comrade. Once the *Olympia* arrived at the Washington Navy Yard, another set of ceremonies marked the Unknown's return home. These served as a counterpoint to the events in France before the Unknown's funeral.

The Route to Le Havre



Figure 7.1. American soldiers in Paris prepare to take part in the ceremonies for the Unknown Soldier and to escort his remains to Le Havre. The Eiffel Tower rises in the background.

(Bibliothèque nationale de France)

The special train carrying the Unknown Soldier spent the night of 24 October 1921 at the Gare des Batignolles train station in Paris. The next morning, 25 October, featured a few brief ceremonies before the train departed. 872 Starting at 8:45 a.m., several dignitaries arrived at the funeral car to pay their respects to the Unknown. First, Mr. Thomasset, a representative of the French National Association of Warriors, presented a wreath, which he placed inside the train car. At 8:50 a.m., the chief of the French Graves Registration Service, Intendant Bezondes, offered a bronze palm on behalf of the French government and two artificial flower wreaths, one each from the French Army and French Navy. 873 These brief ceremonies wrapped up just after 9:00 a.m. with the arrival of Col. T. Bentley Mott, the American military attaché who represented the American ambassador to France; the French minister of pensions, André Maginot; and Mr. Louvel, Maginot's chief deputy. Once on board, they saluted the Unknown's casket, and the train departed Paris around 9:20 a.m. In various train cars were Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen, the entourage accompanying the Unknown's body, and the French officials scheduled to join the ceremonies at Le Havre. 874 As the train made its way through France to the port of Le Havre on the northwestern coast, it stopped at Rouen to allow the commanding general of the

French 3d Army Corps, Maj. Gen. Denis Auguste Duchêne, to board with his aide-de-camp and join the military escort accompanying the remains. 875



Figure 7.2. During the brief ceremonies at the Gare des Batignolles train station in Paris on 25 October 1921, several tributes were presented to the American Unknown Soldier. These included a bronze palm on behalf of the Republic of France, likely shown here.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

Although few details about this journey by train can be found in official military documents, its solemn nature can be gleaned from the recollections of Charles E. Moslander, a soldier in the Air Service and a member of the first honor guard to stand watch over the Unknown, after the selection ceremony in Châlons-sur-Marne. In 1967, Moslander recounted that "it was quite a trip by rail to Le Havre, with many stops on the way, until the Unknown was turned over to the Navy for the trip to the States on the USS *Olympia*." ⁸⁷⁶ He especially recalled emotional interactions with the French public. "Many incidents occurred on that trip that were long remembered," he wrote, "like the lady who asked permission to come aboard the train at Epernay. She had lost a son in the war. And there was no record of his burial place. Just another GI who had lost his tags maybe." ⁸⁷⁷ As the honored Unknown traveled through regions of

France that had been devastated by the war, the people of France had yet another opportunity to pour out their grief, showing their deep emotional connection with the American Unknown.

Moslander observed these reactions and recognized the Unknown's importance. His experience as part of the honor guard made an impression on him that lasted through his long life. In 1982, he wrote to Benjamin Davis, a historian at Arlington National Cemetery, to share a group of documents related to his participation in the Unknown's selection that he had taken the initiative to gather. He understood the significance of his role in this historic moment. In his letter, he urged Davis, "Please do not thank me for securing these papers. After all, I was a part of this bit of history and have had a lot of pleasure securing and reading them." Even sixty years after the fact, Moslander's experience with the selection of the Unknown and especially the train ride remained a strong memory for him.



Figure 7.3. Charles E. Moslander served as an honor guard and accompanied the Unknown Soldier across France following the selection ceremony. His recollections provide context for the events in France in 1921. A veteran of both World War I and World War II, Moslander is buried in Section 69 of Arlington National Cemetery. (U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

The Procession Through Le Havre

As the train pulled into the station at Le Havre around 1:00 p.m., further ceremonies and military honors began. On the arrival platform stood a guard of one machine gun company, which presented arms as the train arrived as a way to honor the Unknown. A detachment of French sailors also presented arms, and a group of French officials and representatives of various societies greeted the train. The soldiers again presented arms when the casket left the train, and they held that position throughout the time it traversed the interior of the train station. The French officials present included, among others: V. Adm. Eugène Marie Clément Barthes, who represented the maritime minister; Léon Meyer, the mayor of Le Havre; Senator Louis Brindeau; Colonel Le Hagre of the 129th Infantry; officers from the Le Havre garrison; and Augustus Ingram, the U.S. consul in Le Havre. A group of thirty French soldiers entered the funeral car to retrieve the floral tributes already given to the Unknown and carried them off the train to be used later in the procession to the pier. These French soldiers then assembled near the front of the train station, ahead of the American honor guard. Sel



Figure 7.4. As the train carrying the American Unknown arrived in Le Havre, French soldiers stood at attention to render honors to their fallen comrade. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

With troops and dignitaries now all in position, the Unknown's much-awaited formal arrival commenced. The American pallbearers carried the Unknown's casket off the funeral car and marched to the square in front of the train station to take their places in the forming procession. A large group of French and American dignitaries, officials, and service members slowly and solemnly trailed behind them, with many military medals glittering in the crowd. While the French Army's 5th Division Band played "Aux Champs," the pallbearers carried the casket to the square, now filled with a formation of soldiers and the participants in the procession. The pallbearers placed the casket on a waiting caisson that had been draped in American flags, as French schoolchildren covered it with flowers. ⁸⁸² As the official history of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) described the scene, "a veritable shower of flowers then fell upon the casket." ⁸⁸³



Figure 7.5. Shortly after arrival, American pallbearers removed the Unknown's casket from the funeral car and transferred it to a waiting caisson. A formal procession of French and American civil and military leaders followed behind. (National Archives and Records Administration)



Figure 7.6. In this photo, the Unknown's casket is shown being transferred to a French caisson for the journey through Le Havre to the waiting *USS Olympia*. (Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

The procession set off from the square in front of the train station around 1:20 p.m. This was the second such procession to honor the Unknown in France, following the one held in Châlons-sur-Marne the day before. 884 Col. Harry F. Rethers had reported earlier in the month that the local authorities in Le Havre were "most insistent that a parade be held from the railway station through the town," and their eagerness resulted in a meaningful, well-attended procession, despite the U.S. Army's intention that the events in France remain simple. 885 According to a later account by Rethers, the city of Le Havre even suspended business for much of the day. 886



Figure 7.7. Once the transfer to the caisson was complete, the caisson departed the station and began the solemn procession through Le Havre. (Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

The large procession of French and American participants moved in the following order: a platoon of French mounted gendarmes; the bugles and drums of the French 129th Infantry; the band of the French 5th Division; two battalions of French rifle and machine gun companies, including Colonel Le Hagre and battalions of the Havrais Regiment; one-half of a rifle company; a section of the French Navy from the battleships *Verdun* and *L'Epernay*; French soldiers from the 129th Infantry carrying the palms, wreaths, and flowers presented to the Unknown; the American guard preceding the casket; the caisson carrying the Unknown with a section of the French infantry on either side; representatives of the French and American governments; members of various societies and associations; and one-half of a platoon of mounted gendarmes bringing up the rear. 887 According to the AGRS, eight American sergeants walked on each side of the casket, including Edward Younger, who had selected the Unknown the day before. 888

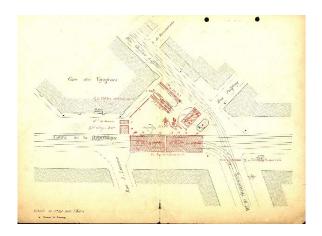


Figure 7.8. This diagram is one of several prepared to coordinate the elaborate procession escorting the Unknown to the *USS Olympia*. It outlines the placement of military units, bands, dignitaries, and civic organizations, each assigned a specific role in the ceremony.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

The procession continued on through Le Havre, its buildings and streets festooned with French flags at half-staff. 889 According to one American account, "it seemed as if all the populace was in the streets and along the quays, as the solemn procession passed." 890 The AGRS wrote that "the entire population of the city turned out to pay homage to America's Unknown Soldier and to show deep appreciation and respect. Many thousands of people lined both sides of the entire route." 891 Schoolchildren marched alongside the procession, many wearing sailor suits; one little boy even sported a child's version of the American doughboy uniform. During the procession, the French soldiers continued to carry the flowers and tributes given to the Unknown. Some bore them on flag-draped stretchers or outstretched American flags, visually evoking a sight often seen on the battlefield. 892 In effect, the procession reenacted the fate of some battlefield fatalities—a march to carry the dead man out of the combat zone and to his burial place, if he was lucky enough to get one.



Figure 7.9. These French soldiers—likely from the 129th Infantry—carry floral and ceremonial tributes presented in honor of the Unknown Soldier during the procession through Le Havre to the USS Olympia. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The procession paused at the Hôtel de Ville. There, delegations of the fire brigade, customs officials, and policemen gathered to watch the town's Municipal Council present a wreath tied with the French and Le Havre colors and a bouquet of roses at the base. This stop allowed Maginot to depart the foot procession and travel the rest of the way in a car. Severely wounded during the war, he was a living reminder of the wartime sacrifices made—likely one of many wounded French service members on the streets that day. ⁸⁹³ Maginot's presence, as well as the attendance of other French military and regional leaders, demonstrates the scale of French involvement in this event. It encompassed local, regional, and national levels and included all segments of the French populace.

The rest of the procession continued through the rue de Paris, rue des Drapiers, rue du Général Faidherbe, and Quai Auguste Brostrom, on to the end of the Pier d'Escale, where the *Olympia* was docked, awaiting its precious cargo. ⁸⁹⁴ The chimes of the cathedral rang as the procession passed through Le Havre, likely stirring the emotions of the residents, who still felt the impact of the recent war. An American report remarked that the procession passed "many

tear-stained faces of mothers and wives who had come to pay homage to another's boy, the bowed heads of the fathers and brothers, and the little children who were so eager to throw their tributes of flowers to the American soldier boy."⁸⁹⁵ An account attributed to Moslander mentions an old Frenchman saluting in the crowd who wore the ribbon and medal of the Grand Army of the Republic and turned out to be a Civil War veteran. This account also recalls "silent throngs" lining both sides of the streets. ⁸⁹⁶ Here again, the French people connected to the American Unknown as they dealt with their own grief. As in Châlons-sur-Marne, the local community and others in attendance mourned him as one of their own.



Figure 7.10. This photograph, taken as the procession made its way through Le Havre, highlights the large crowds of French citizens who lined the streets to pay their respects to America's Unknown Soldier.

The caisson carrying the flag-draped casket appears at the center of the scene.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

The Departure Ceremony

The procession escorting the Unknown Soldier arrived at the Quai d'Escale around 2:30 p.m. Here, among a large crowd of onlookers, another set of speeches and a departure ceremony marked the end of his journey in France. 897 The ceremony began with a speech by Mayor Meyer, who referred to the arrival of American troops in France during the war. He told the crowd in French how he experienced "a very deep emotion before this glorious bier, for my memory goes

back a few years to the time when the first American battalions were arriving." ⁸⁹⁸ He then addressed the Unknown directly, exclaiming, "Unknown Soldier, whoever you be, you are one of those who came to fight for justice, and the blood which you shed shall cement forever the friendship between France and the United States." ⁸⁹⁹ Meyer reminded the crowd of the United States' key role in the war and framed the conflict, like others had in the previous days, as one fought for justice and freedom.

General Allen, the commander of the American Forces in Germany, continued this theme in his subsequent remarks. ⁹⁰⁰ First, however, he thanked the U.S. Navy as it waited to take responsibility for the Unknown aboard the USS *Olympia*. Speaking in French, Allen explained that

in the transfer of this hero from the bosom of his foster mother across the seas to the arms of her who gave him birth, we place him again under the protection of our great navy. Without that efficient institution responding so nobly to the harassing burden imposed upon it, the glorious participation of our hero in the final stages of the greatest human endeavor could not have been realized. In the execution of this sacred mission, the navy is honoring the most precious element of its creed, devotion to duty. ⁹⁰¹

This opening statement ensured that the U.S. Navy received recognition for its role in the war and its important job of bringing the Unknown home from France. Allen spoke about the Navy's critical wartime task of transporting American troops across the Atlantic amid the constant threat of submarine attacks by the German Navy. He drew on nationalistic, gendered tropes that portrayed France and the United States as the "mothers" of their service members, building on a long cultural tradition of idolizing women as war mothers and describing nations with female terminology.



Figure 7.11. Major General Henry Allen, commanding general of the American Forces in Germany, addresses those gathered on the docks at Le Havre near the *USS Olympia*.

(Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

In the middle of his remarks, Allen returned to the meaning of the war that Meyer had emphasized in his short opening speech. Allen interpreted the war as a fight to preserve democracy against an uncivilized German foe. He recalled how, on the eve of the U.S. entrance into the war, "we, of far away America, thrilled by the amazing stand of our ancient ally against the terrific onslaught in the early years of the Great War, recognized that the tenets of our constitution—even the very foundations of our political institutions—were threatened." He remarked that "the ruthless treatment of Belgium with an imminent repetition of the same acts on the soil of our time honored friendly Republic and the barbarities at sea brought forth such a wave of indignation throughout the United States as to produce an hitherto unknown solidarity of sentiment and action." Allen reinforced accusations of German atrocities against Belgian civilians and dehumanized Germany using language reminiscent of wartime propaganda. By invoking the U.S. Constitution, he interpreted the war as a fight for the American way of life, rather than as a catastrophic outcome of tangled alliances, nationalisms, and imperialist ambitions.

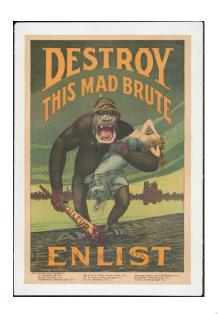


Figure 7.12. This World War I U.S. Army enlistment poster echoes one of the themes highlighted in Allen's remarks, depicting Germany as a brutal and uncivilized enemy. Like the speech, it cast the conflict in stark moral terms to justify the shared sacrifices of the French and American people.

(Library of Congress)

As he continued his speech, Allen turned from moralizing about the war's purpose to demonstrating its effect on the American populace, a topic aligned with the War Department's effort to make the ceremonies surrounding the Unknown democratic and inclusive. He praised not just the service members for their part in the conflict, but also the

super efforts of our fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers who did the impossible at home that their blood might be victorious abroad. To this spirit, the world owes its freedom, and mankind its liberty. The details of this struggle are so fresh in memory that we see, though dimly, the khaki and blue intermingled in the murky obscurity and mud of the deadly battle zones. 904

Allen's recognition of civilian contributions to the war effort helped make these ceremonies relevant to all Americans, even from afar, and resonated with the French civilians in attendance. He recognized that those most affected by the effort to bury an unknown included the families of the war dead. His admission of how "fresh in memory" the war remained serves as an obvious reminder that raw emotions suffused the day's events.

Allen closed his remarks by focusing on France, further strengthening the diplomatic ties reinforced that day on the pier in Le Havre. Speaking directly to the Unknown, Allen emphasized that

the Great Republic [France], which is rendering you homage this day is likewise paying tribute to your comrade in blue who fell with you and who lives in the hearts of his countrymen as you live enshrined in the loving memory of yours. Whoever you be, your gallant deeds are indelibly inscribed in the pages of history to the glory of your nation, and as long as these free states endure will your exploits be sung. In leaving hospitable France, who has so fondly cherished you, another voyage is prepared and further honors await you in the land of your birth. 905

Allen thus connected the American Unknown to the French soldiers who perished alongside him on the Western Front, fighting a mutual enemy. He made clear to the many French citizens present that the United States had not forgotten the high death toll they had suffered on their own land. Allen then thanked the French for their hospitality and the "extraordinary consideration" with which they had "honored this historic event. Even the French sun," Allen said, "appears to bid the Unknown farewell." 906 Allen's speech reiterated the key role played by France in the selection and transportation of the American Unknown and set the stage for the next part of the ceremony.



Figure 7.13. Issued for the American Ouvroir Funds, this poster emphasized the long-standing friendship between France and the United States. An American soldier stands protectively with French war orphans, while ghostly figures of Revolutionary War soldiers appear behind them—recalling the aid France once gave to the United States. The poster urged Americans to support France's widows and children in return.

(University of North Texas Libraries)

The climactic moment of the ceremony at the pier involved Minister Maginot's presentation of the Croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur (Cross of the Legion of Honor) to the Unknown. 907 This award is the highest distinction bestowed by the government of France. Maginot preceded the presentation with his own speech in the vein of Meyer and Allen. "Unknown Soldier," he began, "brave son of noble America who fell on our soil for the cause of right and civilization, the whole of France bows down with me before your coffin." 908

Maginot returned to the theme of the war as a battle between democracy and German tyranny. Maginot explained that France "cannot forget, it does not forget what you did for it in the hour of peril." France was being menaced, he asserted: "France which had helped American liberty to be gained, and whom in their turn the United States did not wish to let fall into slavery." By referencing how France had supported the new United States during the American Revolution, Maginot aligned the two nations as democracies resisting an evil foe; the historical ties between the United States and France served as a common trope during their

wartime alliance. By participating in the selection and transfer of the American Unknown, France continued the long tradition of the Franco-American alliance and symbolically strengthened it in a new way.

Maginot then turned to the connections between the American Unknown and the French Unknown, already entombed under the Arc de Triomphe. "We ignore your name," he told the American Unknown, "just as we ignore that of your brother, the unknown French Poilu who rests in Paris under the Arc dé Triomphe, but our gratitude goes out to you as it does to him." He dwelled on the connection between the French Unknown and the American Unknown and the sacred link between the Arc de Triomphe and Arlington National Cemetery. Maginot told the audience that now, when the French felt gratitude to their own Unknown Poilu, "some of our most fervent thoughts will go to you over there, in the Arlington Cemetery, for we could not separate in our own worship the two soldiers whose blood mingled on this soil, for our country and for humanity." With these words, Maginot linked the Arc and Arlington in the invisible yet interconnected landscape of world war memory, which also included other sites like Great Britain's Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. Though separated by an ocean and national boundaries, these two sites joined these longtime allies in a tradition of commemoration and cooperation.

Speaking to the French and American Unknowns, Maginot drew his remarks to a close. He told them, "You both have been the valiant artisans of our common victory. Your namelessness, which allows one to symbolize the obscure and magnificent sacrifice of the men of our two nations . . . has united you in the most moving apotheoses; our hearts cannot separate you any more than one could think of separating our two flags which the enemy grape-shot so interwove." Another translation of Maginot's speech, published by the French newspaper *Le*

Temps, reported that he had expressed how the French and American Unknown remained connected, for "we could not separate in our worship the two soldiers whose blood mingled on this soil." ⁹¹⁴



Figure 7.14. This photograph captures the moment when the French Minister of Pensions, André Maginot, awarded the *Croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*—France's highest honor—to the American Unknown Soldier. The decoration was pinned to the flag draping the casket, symbolizing France's tribute to the sacrifices shared in the Great War.

(Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

To solidify this inseparable bond, Maginot began the actual presentation of the Croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur to the Unknown. Colonel Le Hagre of the 129th Infantry gave the order for the band to resume playing, and it launched into the military song "Ouvrez le Ban" as Maginot presented the award to the Unknown by pinning it on the American flag draped over the casket. The band maintained the momentum of the presentation by playing "Fermez le Ban" (another military song) and "La Marseillaise" (the French national anthem) before the pallbearers started to carry the casket toward the USS *Olympia*. 915



Figure 7.15. The casket was removed from the caisson and carried by the American pallbearers down the dock toward the *USS Olympia*. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

The band played four ceremonial ruffles as the transfer of the casket began, signaling the high honor being given to the Unknown. 916 The Army pallbearers, joined by General Allen, carefully transferred the casket to a group of six sailors—two chief petty officers and four first and second class petty officers—and two Marine Corps noncommissioned officers, who transported it the rest of the way to the *Olympia*. Cameramen amid the large crowd recorded the event. 917 As the AGRS recalled, the transfer occurred without lowering the casket. One sailor or marine would relieve one soldier at a time, "so quietly and promptly that few realized the change had been made." 918 R. Adm. Lloyd H. Chandler formally accepted custody of the Unknown from General Allen. Stationed aboard the *Olympia*, Chandler served as train commander of the larger unit of which the ship was a part. 919 As the pallbearers brought the Unknown onto the *Olympia*, Admiral Chandler, his aide, three naval officers (including those from the USS *Reuben James*, which would be famously sunk by the Germans in 1941), and the ceremonial party of American and French officials followed behind them. 920

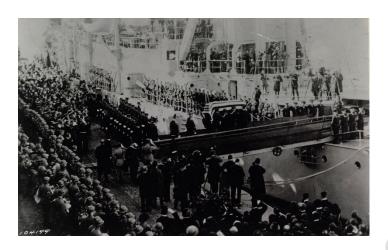


Figure 7.16. As the Unknown's casket was carried up the gangway onto the *USS Olympia*, R. Adm. Chandler and several other U.S. Navy officers followed closely behind. The Navy now assumed the sacred duty of escorting this fallen soldier home. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

On board the ship, the officers and crew of the *Olympia* stood at quarters in their dress uniforms, with the marine detachment and the band at the shore end of the gangway ready to render honors. ⁹²¹ To further honor the Unknown, all officers on the *Olympia* wore black mourning armbands on their left arms throughout the afternoon. Except while at sea, they kept these on until the Unknown disembarked in the United States. ⁹²² As the casket boarded the ship, the *Olympia*'s band played "La Marseillaise," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and Chopin's funeral march, while a section of American marines remained on the pier to present arms, and the men aboard the *Olympia* stood with their heads uncovered, saluting. ⁹²³ The French troops faced the marines and also presented arms at this time. ⁹²⁴

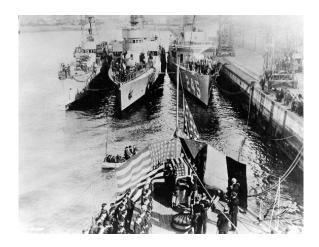


Figure 7.17. Once aboard, the Unknown's casket was placed with care on the ship's stern. American officers stood at attention while French soldiers followed the pallbearers and arranged the floral tributes around the casket. Note the American and French flags draped along the railings, symbolizing the Franco-American cooperation throughout the events in France. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

To recognize that an honored visitor—the Unknown—was coming aboard their ship, the crew of the *Olympia* enacted a series of symbolic naval rituals called "tending the side." Eight side boys (sailors who assisted important visitors by hoisting them onto the ship) remained at the ship end of the gangway. This demonstrated the highest honor to the Unknown, as only the highest-ranking visitors warranted eight side boys. ⁹²⁵ As part of this ritual, the boatswain (the sailor in charge of the small boat used by the captain to go ashore) piped the side, meaning he played particular musical calls on a shrill pipe to mark the Unknown's entrance onto the ship. ⁹²⁶ According to plans, a series of flag movements also honored the Unknown as he came aboard the ship, and flags remained at half-mast the entire time the body was on board. ⁹²⁷ With an American flag strung across the railing on the aft of the ship, another flying next to it, and the colors waving on the flagpole, the *Olympia* proudly proclaimed its nationality as it stood ready to undertake its unique and sacred voyage. ⁹²⁸

Once fully aboard, the sailors and marines carrying the Unknown's casket placed it on the stern of the ship, surrounded on either side by the wreaths, flowers, and tributes carried and placed by the French soldiers. According to an American report, the casket was "almost hidden by flowers." A group of French schoolchildren boarded the cruiser to arrange their own flowers near the casket. The inclusion of these schoolchildren is indicative of the War Department's intention to keep the events open and participatory at a grassroots level that sometimes contrasted with the formal elements of the proceedings. In this same vein, the Navy allowed the American residents of Le Havre to come aboard the *Olympia* to watch the ceremonies at the pier and to observe the casket being taken on board, though there was also a practical reason to do so, since the French plans did not allot them a specific role or place to witness the events. The Navy wanted these Americans to have this special experience, which would connect them emotionally to their nation even though they resided abroad.

When the Unknown came aboard the *Olympia*, another item arrived that would ensure that he remained physically connected to France, even when in his eternal resting place at Arlington National Cemetery: a box of earth from the American cemetery at Suresnes, near Paris. The Americans would place this dirt inside the Unknown's tomb at Arlington, just as the British had placed dirt from their battlefields into the grave of their Unknown Warrior. ⁹³¹ An American report noted that the French dirt would further facilitate the "linking in a consecrated bond of unity these two great Nations who in their struggles for ideals of liberty had become so closely allied." ⁹³² The French press expressed similar sentiments. The *Journal du Havre* described this earth from Suresnes as consecrating "the symbol of the unshakeable union of the three great allied nations: United States, France and Great Britain, because the coffin of the anonymous hero will, in its grave, be covered with French soil and British flowers." ⁹³³

Surrounded by ceremonies and naval tributes, the USS *Olympia* began its departure from Le Havre, preceded by several of the French ships. At 3:10 p.m., the *Olympia*'s main engines

"reported ready for getting underway," and the ship left the dock at 3:20 p.m. ⁹³⁴ The USS *Reuben James* followed astern of the *Olympia* and remained there until clear of the French escort, after which it proceeded to duty at Danzig. The French naval vessel the *Verdun*, moored just outside the port alongside *L'Epernay* and *L'Opinistre*, rendered a seventeen-gun salute (a number chosen by the French), and the *Olympia* responded in kind. Another such salute and response also occurred, this time from *L'Amiral Sénès*, one of the ships that had preceded the *Olympia*. ⁹³⁵ As the *Olympia* cleared the port, the Unknown's casket was moved from the quarterdeck to the aft end of the superstructure, placed into a transportation case, and secured for the sea voyage under the custody of a sentry. The ship's company remained at quarters during this process. ⁹³⁶ As French torpedo boats accompanied the Olympia to the waters just outside of French territory, they rendered a seventeen-gun salute, sending the ship off with a final honor from France. ⁹³⁷ Finally, at 3:28 p.m., the *Olympia* was fully underway. ⁹³⁸

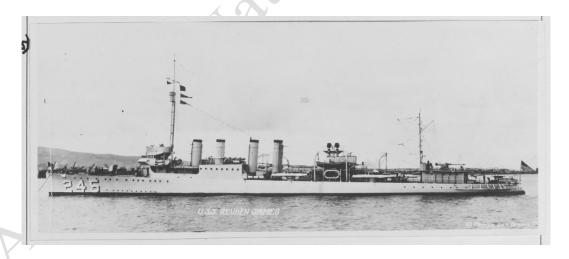


Figure 7.18. The U.S. Navy destroyer *USS Reuben James* (DD-245) was among the vessels that escorted the *USS Olympia* from Le Havre as the Unknown began the journey home. Two decades later, on 31 October 1941, the *Reuben James* was sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Iceland—over a month before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into World War II.

(Naval History and Heritage Command)

Gratitude and Gifts: Concluding the Events in France

The ceremonies at Le Havre, like the ones in Châlons-sur-Marne, were part of a Franco-American initiative to honor the American Unknown and to recognize the two nations' mutual sacrifices during the war. These intertwined commemorative efforts demonstrate the close ties that remained between these allies. Bonded by loss, the two nations understood their twentieth-century alliance to be a continuation of one forged during the American Revolution.

After the *Olympia* set off on her transatlantic voyage, the mayor of Le Havre hosted American and French dignitaries for tea to continue the camaraderie of the ceremonies. ⁹³⁹ The War Department took great care to express proper gratitude to the French and to encourage the future success of diplomatic and military relations with France. A few days after the Unknown sailed from Le Havre, General Allen relayed the United States' "sincerest gratitude" to the president of France, Aristide Briand. ⁹⁴⁰ Allen noted that "the Prefect and Mayors, the military and naval authorities and apparently all the population gave evidence of sincere devotion and sentiment to our returning hero." ⁹⁴¹ By highlighting the many French people who had attended the ceremonies, Allen demonstrated his awareness of the War Department's goal of making the Unknown's selection and burial a participatory and inclusive event, even for those outside the United States. Eager to maintain good relations at all levels with the French government and military, Allen sent similar letters of thanks to the prefect of Châlons-sur-Marne, the mayors of Châlons and Le Havre, Generals Duport and Duchêne, and Admiral Barthes. ⁹⁴²

Another vital task after the conclusion of the ceremonies in France involved the retention of records and documentation. The Quartermaster Corps had documented the events and saved the most significant associated paperwork. These materials eventually became part of the official historical record maintained by the National Archives. Likewise, the Navy understood the

historic nature of the ceremonies in France, and took note of the wreaths and tributes that accompanied the Unknown's casket when it came aboard the Olympia. This list included perishable items such as fresh flowers, as well as nonperishable ceremonial gifts, many made of bronze. 943 These came from a variety of people and organizations, mostly in France, but they included a few items from Americans, such as a "glass bead wreath" given by two women from Columbus, Ohio, a palm spray wreath from the "comrades of Paris Post No. 1 American Legion," and a fresh floral wreath from the "American Colony" in Le Havre. 944 The government of Portugal sent a bronze sword and palm spray, and a Belgian veterans' association offered a fresh floral wreath. The Navy also listed the items presented during the public ceremonies, including the Croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur and the large bronze palm spray from the French government, as well as items from citizens' organizations and local groups, such as an association of wounded veterans of the Great War from the Le Havre region and the Union des Femmes de France (Union of the Women of France, which would later be incorporated into the French Red Cross). 945 The breadth and variety of these tributes demonstrate the wide impact of the Unknown's selection and the gratitude it inspired overseas.



Figure 7.19. This bronze sword with palm spray, a tribute from the government of Portugal, was presented to the Unknown Soldier at Le Havre. After the funeral, the Signal Corps photographed many of the gifts presented to the Unknown in order to document the material culture associated with these events. (National Archives and Records Administration)



Figure 7.20. The Croix de chevalier de la Légion d'honneur presented to the American Unknown by André Maginot remains in the collection of Arlington National Cemetery.

(U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

Preparing the Olympia for Its Sacred Voyage

In September 1921, about a month before the *Olympia* would depart from Le Havre with the Unknown Soldier, preparations for the ship's role in transporting the Unknown had begun in Norfolk, Virginia, under the command of Capt. Henry L. Wyman. ⁹⁴⁶ Readying the ship and its crew for this significant voyage took time and involved participants beyond the *Olympia*'s normal crew. ⁹⁴⁷

Led by U.S. Marine Corps captain Graves B. Erskine, marines formed an important contingent that joined the ship for this voyage. 948 A wounded veteran of World War I, Erskine had been serving in Haiti, when, according to his recollection years later, he was "ordered home for some reason to organize the Guard of Honor for the Unknown Soldier and go aboard the Olympia and pick up the body."949 Erskine believed that he received this assignment because of his supposed skills with French, which he admitted were "practically gone" at the time. This made his later translation duties difficult; he remembered that he "made a pretty poor job of it," but thought it "got over all right." 950 However, this assignment turned out to be tricky for reasons beyond rusty language skills. Erskine recalled discussing the mission with Col. William N. McKelvy Sr. in Norfolk, who expressed his worry about having to organize a Marine guard of honor so quickly. Erskine "just had about one night there," but McKelvy "made everybody available that he could to help."951 Erskine thought that the Navy had chosen the *Olympia* for this mission "for sentimental reasons," because it was the "oldest ship in the Navy at the time," but the *Olympia*'s age made assigning so many marines to the ship challenging. "The old ship didn't have any regular quarters," Erskine remembered, and "they hadn't had any Marines on there for a long time, and we didn't have very much in the way of facilities."952



Figure 7.21. U.S. Marine Corps Captain Graves B. Erskine (seen here later in his career with the rank of Major General) led the Marine detachment serving as honor guards from France to the United States. Erskine later rose to general officer rank and was buried in Section 5 of Arlington National Cemetery following his death in 1973. (Naval History and Heritage Command)

The marines and sailors made the situation work nonetheless. Erskine and his thirty-eight marines reported for duty on the *Olympia* around 11:50 a.m. on 27 September 1921. Anchored in berth 24 in Norfolk, the ship received supplies before it steamed to Newport, Rhode Island, the point of departure for the transatlantic crossing. 953 On 1 October, while just outside of Newport at Melville, Rhode Island, where the Navy had a coaling station, the *Olympia* finalized its crew for the journey. Some men left, others came aboard, Admiral Chandler returned from leave, and Navy chaplain Lt. Edward A. Duff joined the ship on temporary duty. 954 To prepare for the journey, the ship received fresh produce, bread, and ice. Signaling the special nature of the ship's journey, several civilians authorized by the secretary of the Navy also came aboard: Elmer D. Randall, an International News Service representative, who would make the trip to Europe and back to the United States; James Seeback of Fox News, who came aboard "for purposes of making voyage to Europe with *Olympia* to take pictures"; and bandmaster A. Lamundo, who arrived with a contingent of fourteen musicians. 955

After a final day of preparations, the USS *Olympia* set off for its sacred assignment, leaving the Newport area at 6:20 a.m. on 3 October. The ship sailed first to the port of Plymouth, England, where it arrived around 12:37 p.m. on 14 October, amid naval salutes exchanged with the British. 956 The *Olympia* experienced favorable weather on the journey to England; it steamed across the Atlantic and arrived in Plymouth thirty-six hours earlier than expected. 957 The ship remained in Plymouth until 23 October. While there, the officers and crew participated in activities intended to foster friendly ties with the British. The commander of U.S. Naval Forces in European Waters, V. Adm. Albert Parker Niblack, sent a company of enlisted men to London to serve as an honor guard for Gen. John J. Pershing as he presented the Medal of Honor to the British Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey on 17 October. 958 This ceremony served as a prelude to the events that would take place in France. The London ceremony demonstrated the United States' participation in the nascent tradition of tombs for unidentified soldiers. It also provided another opportunity for the United States to use the commemoration of unknown soldiers as a means to enhance diplomatic ties with allies such as Great Britain.

Most of the rest of the men from the *Olympia* were given an opportunity to visit London, except for Admiral Chandler, who stayed behind with the ship. 959 Chandler noted with enthusiasm that the ship and its crew received a warm welcome during their stay in Plymouth. He wrote that it gave him

great pleasure to report to the Department, not only the extreme courtesy, but the very real warmth of our welcome in both Plymouth and London. Everything possible was done for us, both by officials and by the people, and there can be no doubt of the general and genuine warm friendship shown for us by the English. To Admiral Sir Montague Browning G.C.M.G., K.C.B.M.V.O., R.N. Commander-in-Chief of the Plymouth Naval District, special thanks are due for his courtesy and attention. ⁹⁶⁰

This statement came about after multiple interactions starting from the day of the ship's arrival in Plymouth; the British clearly felt keen to make the U.S. Navy feel welcome during its stay. 961

Throughout his stay in Plymouth, Chandler strengthened ties with the British as he and other officers visited with Adm. Sir Lewis Bayly and various military and civilian officials. Chandler noted in an official report that "the English officials in Plymouth, both naval and civil, were untiring in their attention and entertainment." The *Olympia*'s officers returned the courtesy by hosting Admiral Bayly and his niece for a luncheon on board the ship and by giving an official dinner to Admiral Browning and others the day before they sailed to France. Cognizant of the special nature of the *Olympia*'s stop in Plymouth, the British treated the ship and its crew with the utmost respect and helped inaugurate the international ceremonies connected with the American Unknown in both France and the United States. ⁹⁶³

While in Plymouth, the crew of the *Olympia* further prepared to transport the American Unknown from France to the Washington Navy Yard. In response to Admiral Chandler's request for an Army officer to board the ship at Plymouth to assist with the preparations, General Allen sent Maj. P. H. Bagby to the *Olympia*. ⁹⁶⁴ Major Bagby shared the plans for the ceremony at Le Havre and collaborated with his Navy counterparts as they readied for their roles. The Navy learned from Bagby that, "after appropriate ceremonies, Major General Allen, representing our Army, should deliver the remains to our Navy, represented by the Train Commander, with a clear line of jurisdiction at which the custody should pass from Army to Navy." ⁹⁶⁵ This transfer of remains would be a critical part of the ceremony, as the remains needed to be accounted for and secured at all times.

The *Olympia* left Plymouth on 23 October at 9:01 a.m. and arrived at the harbor of Le Havre, France, at 1:23 a.m. on 24 October. 966 Admiral Chandler reported that "the reception accorded to us at Havre was equally warm, although because of our short stay all ceremonies were omitted except those in connection with our mission, and there was no entertainment." 967

Focused on the ceremony about to happen, the men of the *Olympia* prepared for their role in France's final farewell to the American Unknown Soldier. On the morning of 24 October, the only official visits to the ship were by the American consul and Admiral Barthes, the commandant of the French 1st Naval District, both of whom called on Admiral Chandler. 968 Admiral Barthes had arrived from his headquarters in Cherbourg to run the naval aspects of the Unknown's departure ceremony. According to Chandler's report, he came "informally to discuss the arrangements, but otherwise, at his request, there were no calls made and no salutes fired except such as were incident to the main ceremony. Vice Admiral Barthes did not fly his flag." 969

The French and American navies remained concentrated on the Unknown Soldier and the events to occur the next day, 25 October. Their attention to detail and commitment to their roles in the events at Le Havre on 25 October contributed to the success of the ceremonies that day. According to a report signed by Admiral Chandler, "everything went very smoothly, quietly, and without a hitch; in fact the *Olympia* sailed from Havre more than an hour ahead of the hour anticipated." The Navy had accomplished the dignified and meaningful transfer of the American Unknown from the Army amid an emotional goodbye from the grateful French. Having completed this part of its mission successfully, the Navy now turned to the longer portion of its task, one filled with less fanfare but of equal importance: the transportation of the American Unknown across the Atlantic Ocean.

The Unknown's Atlantic Crossing

The *Olympia*'s transatlantic voyage with the American Unknown Soldier on board proved to be a difficult one, beset by rough weather. In an oral history recorded toward the end of his life, Erskine recalled:

There were times when we thought we might not make it home. We had a very famous chaplain we had picked up I think when we were at Plymouth, to bring home. It was so bad for several days that we couldn't eat at the table. You just sat down with sandwiches and coffee, and you'd hold on to something with one hand and grabbed your sandwich with the other. In the wardroom we had at least four inches of water most of the time. The chaplain and captain got together and he held a special service, praying to God that we wouldn't sink. ⁹⁷¹

In fact, research by the Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia indicates that the *Olympia* may have encountered the remnants of a hurricane en route. ⁹⁷²



Figure 7.22. This 1895 painting of *USS Olympia* in heavy seas illustrates the kind of rough North Atlantic conditions the ship likely encountered during its 1921 voyage returning the Unknown to the United States. Contemporary accounts noted waves breaking as high as the ship's bridge.

(Independence Seaport Museum)

The *Olympia*'s age and size made the impact of the weather even worse. Erskine pointed out that "she was pretty old," and "just long enough to pick up the long ones [waves] and short enough to pick up the short ones. Many times the waves would go back to the bridge. We had a

real rough trip back."⁹⁷³ The ship's deck log testifies to the severity of the weather. The entry for 31 October, for example, noted "heavy weather" at 10:30 a.m. and recorded that the "sea broke [a] life raft in port galley passage."⁹⁷⁴

During a routine peacetime crossing, the harsh weather would have been simply an added obstacle or an unpleasant inconvenience, but on this voyage, the stakes were much higher. The *Olympia* could not risk doing any harm to its precious cargo, or endure any accident that might tarnish the storied ship's symbolic importance. The officers and crew took great care to ensure the safety of the Unknown during the turbulent weather. According to Erskine, "The Captain didn't want to put [the Unknown's casket] down in the hold for fear that something might happen to it. He wanted to keep it under surveillance the entire time, and as soon as we got out of the harbor . . . we took the casket up to the signal bridge." On the signal bridge, Erskine recalled, he and the men "lashed this fellow down with everything that we could tie on him." They took no chances and protected the Unknown at all costs.



Figure 7.23. After departing Le Havre, the Unknown's casket was secured on the *USS Olympia*'s signal bridge and lashed firmly to the deck to withstand the rough North Atlantic crossing, as shown in this photo. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

As the *Olympia* neared the United States, the press reported its movements and remarked on the meaning of the voyage. On 7 November, the *Washington Post* alerted readers that the ship was approaching the Virginia Capes and would soon arrive at the Washington Navy Yard. This arrival would, the paper explained, "be the signal for a period of impressive official mourning that will come to a climax with solemn services at Arlington." The *Post* further explained that the ship's arrival and the subsequent burial of the Unknown would create "a sad but significant atmosphere for the start of the conference on the limitation of armaments, the delegates for which are virtually all assembled in the Capital." ⁹⁷⁸

The *Olympia* entered the Chesapeake Bay, concluding its ocean voyage, at 11:00 p.m. on 7 November. The ship's deck log recorded that it anchored near Piney Point, Maryland, at 6:49 a.m. on 8 November, a Tuesday. At 8:20 a.m. that morning, the Potomac River pilot came aboard, and in the next few hours, the *Olympia* was joined by other vessels, including the *Contoocook*, the *Crowninshield*, the *Blakely*, and the *Barney*. The USS *Bernadou* and the USS *North Dakota* joined them in the afternoon. The *Olympia* got underway again around 7:30 p.m., traveling north on the Potomac toward Washington, with the *Berandou* and the *Crowninshield* following astern. 979 The *Washington Post* reported that as dusk set that night, "groups of silent citizens lined both shores of the majestic river and paid their mead [*sic*] of tribute to the flagdraped casket which the vessel carries."980

The ship reached Indian Head, Maryland, by 2:00 a.m. on 9 November, where it again dropped anchor. 981 The Associated Press's report of the Unknown's arrival that day noted that it took place under "sodden skies and a gray, creeping chilling rain" that "seemed to mark the mourning of this American soil and air at the bier of this unknown hero." 982 At 11:25 a.m., the

Crowninshield, the *Blakey*, and the *Barney* "stood up the river," steering a course toward the nation's capital. ⁹⁸³ The *Olympia* got underway again at 12:38 p.m., beginning the last leg of its journey to the Washington Navy Yard. ⁹⁸⁴

The arrival of the USS *Olympia* at the Washington Navy Yard just after 3:00 p.m. set into motion another series of salutes and ceremonies. ⁹⁸⁵ The *Olympia*'s role in these events served as a reminder that the Unknown represented all American unknowns and recovered service members, from every branch of the military—including not just those lost to the bloody battlefields of the Western Front, but also those lost at sea. The Navy and Marine Corps seized the chance to commemorate their unknown sailors and marines. The Navy reported that "twenty-one minute guns were fired from Fort Washington as the ship passed on her way up the River, also by a battery stationed at the Lower end of Potomac Park, and also from the Navy Yard as the ship approached." This symbolic gun salute, in which guns or artillery pieces are discharged twenty-one times at one-minute intervals, is an honor traditionally reserved for heads of state, although today it is also used during certain observances like Memorial Day. ⁹⁸⁷

The firing of minute guns at all these locations in the vicinity of the Washington Navy Yard produced a thunderous noise that alerted the public that the next stage of the ceremonies was about to start. As described in a narrative of the events, these salutes "signaled that 'he' was on his way . . . the nation's salute boomed forth in solemn, deep-toned welcome." The Associated Press wrote that the "far boom of saluting cannon down the river signaled the coming of the great gray cruiser *Olympia*" and marked the start of the day's ceremonies. 989

As the *Olympia* approached the Navy Yard, it also overtly connected the Unknown to the larger history of America, through reference to the father of the nation. At 2:00 p.m., as it "passed Mount Vernon on port hand," the ship "rendered prescribed honors" consisting of a full

guard standing at attention on the ship's deck, the tolling of the ship's bells, the sounding of taps, and a rendition of the national anthem by the ship's band. 990 The *Washington Post* reported that this ritual would honor George Washington's home and final resting place as part of the Unknown Soldier's journey. 991 Another article in the *Post* made the symbolism of the Mount Vernon honors even more clear. George Rothwell Brown wrote that the ship passed Washington's home "in honor of the soldier who had no son, and so became the father of his country"; in so doing, it symbolized how "the soldier who had no name to leave to posterity . . . became the son of his country." Even before the interment ceremony, this action portended how the Tomb would evolve into a site connected to all periods of American history.



Figure 7.24. This photograph shows the *USS Olympia* approaching the dock at the Washington Navy Yard just before 3:00 p.m. on 9 November 1921. Units and equipment for the ceremony to receive the Unknown are already assembled along the pier in preparation. (*Naval History and Heritage Command*)

As the crew moored the *Olympia* to the dock at the Washington Navy Yard around 3:00 p.m., a party of dignitaries and troops waited at the shore end of the gangway. ⁹⁹³ They included a troop of U.S. cavalry under the command of Maj. George S. Patton Jr., along with a cavalry band, both from the 3d Cavalry at Fort Myer; secretary of the Navy Edwin C. Denby; secretary

of war John W. Weeks; chief of naval operations Adm. Robert E. Coontz; commandant of the Marine Corps Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune; Army chief of staff General Pershing; and Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, Pershing's executive assistant. 994 An Army escort at the gangway, under the command of Brig. Gen. Harry H. Bandholtz, also waited to escort the Unknown to the Capitol. The assembled troops, musicians, and dignitaries created a box formation into which the Unknown was taken after he was removed from the ship. Additionally, the *Olympia*'s marine detachment and band "were paraded at the shore end of her gangway, as at [Le] Havre." 995

Many aspects of the ceremonies at the Washington Navy Yard re-created specific parts of the ceremony at Le Havre. According to a Navy report signed by Admiral Chandler, "The attendant ceremonies were the same as those conducted in Havre, in reverse order, except that the French flag was not displayed, the French national air was not played, and twenty-one minute guns were fired by the *Olympia*, beginning as the casket was lifted from its place on the gun platform." The ceremonies at Le Havre and the Washington Navy Yard provided fitting bookends to the *Olympia*'s sacred journey, showcasing the crew's ability to execute formal, high-pressure duties.

For the men serving on the USS *Olympia*, the ship's role in transporting the Unknown home gave them a way to honor both their forces and their fallen comrades from the world war. Not long after the Unknown's interment, Admiral Chandler remarked that he had "made arrangements to secure a suitably inscribed brass tablet to be placed upon the hatch whereon the casket was secured during the voyage from Havre to Washington." Chandler understood the historic importance of the job the *Olympia* and its crew had executed on behalf of the Navy and Marine Corps, and he recognized the eternal connection forged between the ship, its crew, and the Unknown Soldier.

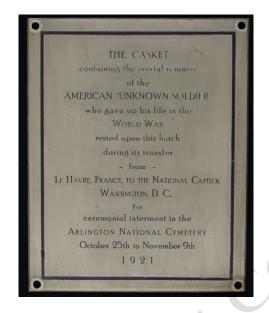


Figure 7.25. This plaque commemorated the *USS Olympia*'s role in transporting the World War I Unknown Soldier. It marked the location where the casket rested during the voyage home to the United States. (Naval History and Heritage Command)

The focus now turned to the Unknown's departure from the *Olympia* and the second formal transfer of the remains—this time from the Navy to the Army. This phase of the events, as with all aspects of the Unknown's selection and burial, came with clear instructions that all prescribed details should "be executed in a simple manner, but with all solemnity and dignity due the occasion." Because the casket had been placed in a more secure location on the ship for the voyage, the crew first moved it to the quarterdeck gun platform, then removed it from its transportation case, and surrounded it with "bunting and . . . such of the wreaths and palms received in France as were not perishable." A tented awning, lined on the inside with American flags, was erected above the casket, and the white roses that had been used for the selection ceremony at Châlons-sur-Marne were placed on top of the casket.

With everything now ready for the official transfer, Navy buglers aboard the ship sounded attention. At 4:00 p.m., ten sailors and marines carried the casket over the *Olympia*'s

gangway to transfer custody from Admiral Chandler to General Bandholtz as the ship's bells rang out eight bells to signify the time. 1001 To accompany this moment, the Olympia started a salute of twenty-one minute guns and the ship's band played Chopin's funeral march, while the crew and the waiting crowd all stood with uncovered heads. 1002 The ship's boatswain piped the Unknown ashore, according him the honors reserved for an admiral. In his detailed description of arrival ceremony, Kirke Larue Simpson of the Associated Press commented on the overlapping sounds that greeted the Unknown, noting that the boatswain's pipe "sounded oddly against the background of the dirge." ¹⁰⁰³ The *Olympia*'s band did pause to allow a marine bugler to sound four flourishes, after which the band played the national anthem and then returned to the funeral march as the procession continued. 1004 As recorded in the Olympia's deck log, "at 4:06 the body was placed on Army Caisson and was officially delivered into the custody of the Army by Admiral Chandler. At 4:08 the cortege was formed and the body left the dock followed by the officials." ¹⁰⁰⁵ The eight specially selected Army body bearers received the casket from the ship's detail and began their service as the Unknown's honored handlers throughout the next few days. 1006 America's Unknown Soldier was ready for the next phase of his solemn homecoming: the one-and-a-half-mile journey through the Navy Yard and to the Capitol.



Figure 7.26. After *USS Olympia* arrived, sailors and Marines carried the Unknown's casket from the ship. Once ashore, custody was formally transferred to the U.S. Army, and the casket was placed on an Army caisson for the next phase of its journey. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

The route through the Navy Yard was lined with marines standing at present arms on both sides. 1007 Simpson described this route as being "packed" with "thousands of just plain American citizens who had braved cold and rain for hours to stand bareheaded as the body of this honored fellow countryman was carried by." 1008 Initial plans had called for the Unknown to be "transported on motor hearse to the East front of the Capitol," but a traditional horse-drawn caisson was used instead. 1009 This change ensured that the trip remained formal and somber, indicating to any passersby that the procession carried precious cargo. Indeed, one account described the trip as a "solemn procession to the Capitol" and observed that "every street through which they passed was lined with sorrowing people standing bareheaded in silent tribute, regardless of the rain." 1010

More crowds waited on the roads outside the Navy Yard's gate, where, to facilitate the Unknown's transportation, the commandant of the Navy had provided guards. Led by Fort Myer's band, the procession traveled on M Street and New Jersey Avenue toward the Capitol. The caisson was sandwiched between two squadrons of cavalry and followed by the military and

civil officials in their automobiles. The District of Columbia police commander kept the route clear and worked with the Capitol Police to control the crowds on the Capitol grounds. ¹⁰¹¹ Once the caisson arrived at the east front of the Capitol, a guard of honor composed of a selected company of engineers received the body, and the body bearers carried the casket up the steps, past an honor cordon, and into the Capitol Rotunda. ¹⁰¹²

The nation's newly anointed Unknown Soldier had now arrived at the legislative heart of the country. He would lie in state in the Capitol Rotunda, honored like a president and feted as a hero. His journey from France aboard the storied Olympia, tossed about by the sea and storms, ald to res had been his final travail. Henceforward, he would be shrouded in peace and surrounded by his fellow Americans, until, at last, he would be laid to rest in his eternal tomb at Arlington National

Chapter 8: Commemorative Nationalism: Planning the Tomb and Burial Ceremonies

The Unknown Soldier's arrival at the Washington Navy Yard and procession to the U.S. Capitol on 9 November 1921 marked a solemn homecoming for this representative combatant. It brought him one step closer to his eternal resting place in Arlington National Cemetery and the series of ceremonies that would enshrine him in the collective memory of the American people. While personnel of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, Navy, and Marine Corps had been hard at work planning and executing events in France and facilitating the Unknown's passage home, their counterparts in the United States had been organizing the stateside events. Careful preparations took place over several months and involved officials from across the government and the military. Concurrent work focused on essential tasks yet to be completed: presidential proclamations that signified the gravity of this event; the construction of the Tomb; the securing of funding to finance the Tomb and all the ceremonies; and the logistical planning to execute these events.

Each of these tasks formed an essential component in the complex effort to inter the Unknown Soldier with dignity and honor. In keeping with this intention, every effort was made to create a reverential atmosphere, solemn in nature and sensitive to the still raw feelings of the citizenry. Many were reeling from the recent war, and it was hoped that they would find in this burial some sense of solace or a new outlet for their pain. The American people formed the central audience for this state funeral, and each choice in the planning process was directed toward making the events accessible to them and as national in scope as could be achieved at the time.

When the caisson carrying the Unknown Soldier pulled up to the Capitol, it set off a series of events that continued, both in spirit and in practice, those that had taken place in France. Though separated by an ocean and the intervening weeks, the ceremonies in the United States picked up where the earlier ceremonies had left off. Now on his home soil, the Unknown Soldier would be honored by his people and government as a hero. He would be treated with the respect and honors due to the highest leaders in the land yet would represent the common soldier. He would be feted by foreign and domestic dignitaries as he waited in the seat of the government for his impending burial at Arlington National Cemetery, a moment that would inaugurate a new facet of civic religion focused on his grave.

From the President's Pen: Presidential Proclamations Ahead of the Burial

The focus of this new civic ritual would be the American people, the main audience of mourners for whom the Tomb was being created. Without the participation of a broad swath of Americans in the ceremonies, the Tomb would lose much of its meaning and impact. Its future status would be imperiled. Intended as a people's memorial accessible to all who wanted to mourn or remember the dead of the recent war, the Tomb needed clear messaging from the government. This messaging ideally would communicate the inclusivity of upcoming events related to the Tomb, the War Department's intention that all Americans claim the Unknown Soldier as their own, and the idea that, in perpetuity, this grave belonged to the American people.

Throughout the planning process for the events in the United States, as had been the case for the events in France, military and government organizers incorporated opportunities for grassroots participation. They sought to make the November ceremonies as inclusive and unifying as possible, regardless of any geographic bounds. One way they achieved this was by involving the most important spokesperson in the nation: the president of the United States.

President Warren G. Harding released several sweeping proclamations ahead of the funeral. Issued on 30 September 1921, Harding's first proclamation began by summarizing the overall plan for bringing home the remains of an unidentified service member to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery. The proclamation went out to many newspapers, including the *Baltimore Sun*, which printed the president's statement in its 1 October edition. ¹⁰¹³ The proclamation emphasized that "these remains will be representative of all unidentified American dead who in the World War gave their lives in their country's cause." ¹⁰¹⁴ Harding used his platform to spread the message that the upcoming events would address the sacrifices of the entire nation, so all Americans should feel connected to the interment. He underscored the fact that the Tomb was to be a universal grave meant to honor all the unknown American war dead from the First World War. These concepts were essential to the Tomb's success. Voiced by the president, they could achieve the gravitas needed to establish the symbolic foundation of the Tomb's meaning.

Having contextualized the upcoming events, Harding then explained what he was asking of the American people. He desired that, in honoring this Unknown, "grateful recognition of their loyal devotion to country and of their sacrifice should be appropriately shown with due solemnity by their God-fearing and patriotic fellow-countrymen." Harding called on "all devout and patriotic citizens of the United States to pause from their accustomed occupations and labors on Friday, the 11th day of November, next, from 12 o'clock noon to two minutes past that hour for a period of silent prayer of thanks to the Giver of All Good for these valuable and valorous lives and of supplication for His divine mercy and for His blessings upon our beloved country." All Americans, no matter where they lived, were beseeched to pause on the day of interment to honor and pray for the Unknown Soldier as he was being buried in Arlington. This

national time of silent prayer would unite Americans and help overcome the geographic barriers that prevented many from being at Arlington. Participation on this level would foster national unity and help bolster the imagined community of the nation, just as had happened with the British on the day of their Unknown Warrior's funeral.¹⁰¹⁷

Despite the intended message of plurality and unity, Christian religious language infused much of this proclamation. Common at the time, such language was rooted in the assumption that Americans shared or supported basic Christian beliefs. Although it was watered down enough to avoid denominational differences, it did not address the actual religious diversity of the American people or the many possible religions of the serviceman who had been selected as the Unknown. A larger attempt at religious pluralism was made during the actual funeral, with representatives of most major Christian denominations and a rabbi present, but American religion was even more diverse than that, of course.

Religious aggregation aside, this first proclamation was still focused on uniting the nation. Toward that end, it directed that "the national flag be displayed at half-staff upon all the public buildings of the United States and all stations of the army, navy, and Marine Corps throughout the world as well as upon all American embassies, legations, and consulates, from sunrise until sunset, on November 11, 1921." This directive was intended to create visual markers of the solemnity of the occasion throughout the nation and the world. Whenever and wherever a person encountered the American flag at half-staff that day, they would be reminded of the Unknown and hopefully take part in the silent prayer.

The War Department took this proclamation seriously and disseminated it among the various geographic commands. Around 29 October 1921, the adjutant general of the Army, Maj. Gen. Peter Charles Harris, sent a copy of the proclamation to the commanding generals of the

corps areas around the nation, as well as the Hawaiian, Panama Canal, and Philippine

Departments. By order of the secretary of War, Harris directed them to "issue the necessary instructions to all posts, camps and stations within the geographical limits of your command." Harris also had similar instructions sent to the commanding general of the American Forces in Germany, stationed in Coblenz, as well as officers in Manila in the Philippines, Balboa in Panama, and Honolulu, Hawaii. 1020 On 1 November 1921, a detailed distribution sheet outlined more ways the proclamation would be disseminated throughout the military. It listed additional contacts to be given the instructions, with the goal of ensuring that these observations would occur at as many military installations as possible. Named contacts included, among others, both the chief of the Coastal Artillery and the chief of chaplains. The military would honor their unknown comrade around the world. 1021

To further increase the reach of the Unknown Soldier, Harding issued a second proclamation, on 4 November, creating additional ways for the public to participate from their hometowns. Most importantly, this proclamation declared the day of the Unknown's interment to be a national holiday. Doing so would allow more Americans to participate in the nationwide observance of two minutes of silent prayer. Harding also recommended to the "governors of the several States that proclamations be issued by them calling upon the people of their respective States to pause in their usual pursuits as a mark of respect on this solemn occasion." This request further democratized the ceremonies by involving state governments in what had largely been a federal effort, and encouraged grassroots participation by citizens at the state and local levels.

In declaring this day a holiday, Harding followed the lead of Congress, which had approved a joint resolution that same day authorizing him to do so. Harding cited the text of this

legislation in his proclamation to underscore the motivation behind his action. The legislation explained that the "unknown soldier represents the manhood of America who gave their lives to defend its integrity, honor, and tranquility against an enemy," and noted that "the nations of the earth are on that date joining with the United States in paying respect and homage to this unknown soldier." ¹⁰²³

This language of "manhood" reflected a belief that the military represented the nation's virility and masculinity, which in turn affected its global power. A key player in the Allied victory and an emerging leader on the global stage, the United States was believed to exude a martial masculinity that would be evoked during the upcoming ceremonies. This could contribute to the United States' international influence, as Congress recognized in issuing its joint resolution. ¹⁰²⁴ The United States would back away from strong international involvement in the coming decades. However, in 1921, Washington, D.C., was to host the diplomatically consequential Washington Naval Conference, set to start just after the Unknown's funeral. Many international participants were attending both events, so the international engagement derived from the ceremonies was seen as key by both Congress and the president. (For more on the Washington Naval Conference, see Sidebar 08a "A Solemn Prelude to Action": The Unknown Soldier and the Washington Naval Conference.")

Harding's second proclamation focused on explaining the meaning of the holiday he had just announced. Similar to his earlier proclamation, it emphasized that this date was to be "a mark of respect to the memory of those who gave their lives in the late World War, as typified by the unknown and unidentified American soldier who is to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery on that day." These words indicated, again, that the Unknown represented more than just one individual American service member from the war. He symbolized all Americans

who had died in the war, and his Tomb would act as a grave for every family, friend, and veteran who had no grave to visit. Harding's words set the stage for the later evolution of the Tomb into a memorial to all those Americans who had served and died in America's wars, both subsequent and previous.

In this second proclamation, Harding made one more request of the American people. He recommended that all "public and church bells throughout the United States . . . be tolled at intervals" between 11:45 a.m. and noon on the day of the funeral. ¹⁰²⁶ Doing so would further emphasize "the solemnity of the occasion" on a national scale. Harding also repeated his earlier request that Americans observe two minutes of silent prayer. ¹⁰²⁷ His goal with these two requests was to make the ceremonies as participatory as possible, with those who could not attend in person still encouraged to join in the simultaneous observance across the nation.

To circulate this proclamation throughout the country, the Department of State issued a press release with the proclamation's text. ¹⁰²⁸ The War Department shared it among the nation's forces, as it did the first proclamation, so that the various corps areas could organize the appropriate observances. ¹⁰²⁹ Beyond the government, the Motion Picture Theater Owners of America supported the president's declaration by publicizing it to movie house audiences. ¹⁰³⁰

Considered together, the president's proclamations represented a purposeful attempt to include the populace in the funeral and, in the process, create a sacred national shrine that belonged to all Americans. Coming from the president, these invitations carried weight and helped broadcast the goals that underpinned the entire effort. Such messaging, shared just before the funeral, helped create the symbolic mythology of the Tomb.

Building the Temporary Tomb

Without a permanent Tomb in place for the funeral, Harding's proclamations would matter little. The short interval between the passage of legislation authorizing the Tomb and the interment ceremony did not allow for the design and erection of the final Tomb to be completed in time for the funeral. Unlike Great Britain, which created its tomb within an extant building—Westminster Abbey—and France, which temporarily installed its Unknown Soldier in a room inside the Arc de Triomphe before burying him underneath, the United States planned to start from scratch. An entirely new site was to be added to the recently finished Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery.



Figure 8.1. One half of a stereographic image of London's Westminster Abbey. The church's history dates back nearly 1,000 years and over 3,300 individuals are interred within its walls, including the Unknown Warrior. (*Library of Congress*)



Figure 8.2. Constructed between 1806 and 1836, the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile (or simply the Arc de Triomphe) was designed to honor those who fought and died for France during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The French Tomb of the Unknown Soldier eventually added beneath the arch.

(Library of Congress)

Leadership in this high-stakes project went to the quartermaster general, as had been the case in so many other components of the effort surrounding the Unknown Soldier. ¹⁰³¹ By order of the secretary of War, on 9 September 1921, the adjutant general of the Army, Harry L. King, instructed that the quartermaster general "cause a temporary sarcophagus to be prepared in the apse of the Amphitheatre at Arlington, in which the remains will be interred. In this connection it is deemed important, that you consult with the architect of the Amphitheatre." ¹⁰³² As a result, members of the Quartermaster Corps collaborated with the amphitheater's architect, Thomas Hastings, of the architectural firm Carrère and Hastings, and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), which was established in 1910 to advise the federal government on the design of federal buildings and monuments, as well as other matters related to the arts and architecture. ¹⁰³³ This group worked together to quickly prepare a temporary tomb to be used for the interment and later be transformed into a fitting, permanent memorial.

The first task in the process focused on where exactly to inter the Unknown and place the Tomb. Hastings had started thinking about this question even before official discussions began.

He clearly understood the need for urgency. Hastings wrote to Elliott Woods, the architect of the Capitol and a member of the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater Commission, on 29 July 1921, explaining that "something should be done, before too late, as regards the solution of the problem of memorializing the burial of the unknown dead, which I believe is to take place in the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater." 1034 While in Europe, Hastings had "looked into this question both in France and England to see the way they did it and I think we have an opportunity to do something far superior and more interesting." ¹⁰³⁵ As architect of Memorial Amphitheater, Hastings felt informal ownership of this site and seemed eager for the chance to design a Tomb that might surpass the French and British antecedents. He had an idea of where the Tomb should be located: "on the steps of the building on the main approach side towards the river in exactly the same position as the monument was shown in our original drawings but which was never executed because of economy." ¹⁰³⁶ He also already had a vision for the Tomb, which he described as "possibly a sarcophagus or something of this character," and he expressed the hope that Woods might want his suggestions. 1037 Woods shared Hastings's letter, which he found "so interesting," with the secretary of War, who was also chairman of the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater Commission. Woods put Hastings's idea into the ears of the War Department even before Hastings had been formally brought into the process of creating the Tomb. 1038

Hastings had been right to start thinking about the design of the Tomb, and by August or September 1921 he had entered into informal discussions about the location with Representative Hamilton Fish. As Hastings recalled, they had run into each other, and Fish, after "saying nice things about the amphitheater," had asked for his friend's help in designing the Tomb monument. ¹⁰³⁹ Hastings described their conversation in a letter to Charles Moore, the influential

longtime chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts. ¹⁰⁴⁰ Hastings told Moore that Fish "was so much interested that he made me all kinds of promises in the way of writing suggestions or looking up what should be done or giving him some kind of sketch suggesting the placing of the monument. I have done nothing in the matter as I don't want to butt in or do anything really unless it is official." ¹⁰⁴¹ Nevertheless, aware of the limited time before the Armistice Day interment, Hastings admitted that he had, "so as to not lose time, made a drawing incorporating the suggestion so that when sent for I will have something ready and at the same time avoid delay." ¹⁰⁴²

After that first chance encounter between Fish and Hastings, Fish followed up with Hastings by letter on 2 September, clearly eager to keep the architect engaged and ready for this potential project, although Fish had no actual authority to participate. Fish told Hastings to send him a sketch "as to where the monument of the Unknown Soldier should be placed in the Amphitheater" and said that he would "be glad to take this matter up with Secretary Weeks." ¹⁰⁴³ Fish promised Hastings that he would be in touch about this matter and complimented his suggestion of "laying the cornerstone of the small monument in front of the Amphitheater" and then "burying . the casket in its foundation." This interim solution "certainly would make a most impressive ceremony for November 11th," while also laying the literal groundwork for the permanent structure. ¹⁰⁴⁴ He also assured Hastings that "the War Department will be glad to have your suggestions and assistance." ¹⁰⁴⁵

With such assurances from Fish, Hastings alternated in his letter to Moore between shamelessly proposing himself for the design job and humbly acknowledging that it was not a given that the job would go to him. Writing "confidentially" to Moore, Hastings claimed that he didn't know anything about Fish's relation to the matter. ¹⁰⁴⁶ He thanked Moore for supporting

that I should take part in some way, helping them with the design. Otherwise, don't say I am over-modest, you might have landed upon someone else who would be more competent and better fitted." ¹⁰⁴⁷ He even ended his letter by explaining that "if the Committee or the War Department were to send for me I would go to Washington on my hands and knees." ¹⁰⁴⁸ Hastings desperately wanted to be chosen to design the Tomb for two reasons. First, as the architect of the monumental Memorial Amphitheater, he would have the chance to preserve his design and ensure that the Tomb fit within his vision for the site. Second, he already recognized, like many other Americans, the important place the proposed Tomb would have in the American memorial landscape. He understood that designing it would be an accomplishment perhaps even greater than his role as the architect of the amphitheater.

Maintaining his vision for Memorial Amphitheater would remain a key motivating factor for Hastings over the coming years of contentious discussions about the Tomb. Even at this early stage, however, he saw the Tomb as an opportunity to complete his initial plans for the amphitheater. He told Moore that he had originally planned to include "quite an important monument in the form of a high figure of 'Justice' or something like that on the steps of the main front towards the river . . . this was taken out of the scheme in order to economize—an old story!". 1049 Hastings realized that the Tomb project "might give us an opportunity of coming back to the same scheme only without a statue, but a very simple high pedestal with a sarcophagus on top of it . . . something very stony and fine in the way of a silhouette against the open landscape looking towards the river. Such a monument would, of course, not be very expensive to execute. In my opinion, the pedestal should be quite high." 1050



Figure 8.3. Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater pre-dated the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The initial designs for the amphitheater envisioned a monument or statue located roughly at the location where the Tomb ultimately was constructed. (*National Archives and Records Administration*).

Having outlined his vision for the Tomb, Hastings defended it by referencing another high-profile recent memorial to the First World War: Sir Edwin Lutyens's Cenotaph (whose name means "empty tomb") in England. ¹⁰⁵¹ Hastings told Moore that "we have a precedent for this sort of thing in the cenotaph designed by Lutyens in London. . . . Lutyens is a very clever man but I do not think this is one of his best things. The idea is a good one however and the very fact that it has been done so recently, if well done with us makes it all the more interesting." ¹⁰⁵² While drawing inspiration from the Cenotaph, then, Hastings also seemed to feel himself in competition with Lutyens, not unsurprising given the memorial "boom" occurring in the Allied nations during the postwar era.



Figure 8.4. The Cenotaph in London, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was referenced by Thomas Hastings as he considered designs for the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was unveiled as part of the British Unknown Warrior's procession to Westminster Abbey on 11 November 1920. In this photo, the wreath that King George V laid during the ceremony is visible on the left.

(Imperial War Museum)

Hastings emphasized to Moore that he understood the short time available to create the Tomb, and he laid out a plan to deal with this challenge. He explained the importance of "having the idea sufficiently studied so as to be able to build the foundations hurriedly and bring the socle [the plinth or base] up to a proper height so as to bury the casket in the monument itself and lay a cornerstone to the monument as part of the scheme." Having thus demonstrated his ability to deliver a tomb for the interment ceremony, Hastings added that Fish also wanted a cenotaph (following the British model) to be constructed somewhere in Washington, D.C., perhaps, Hastings thought, in the center of the Capitol Rotunda. He stated, "Mr. Fish seemed to think that he would have considerable influence in the matter and even said he would like me to design that, but this has no relation to the Amphitheater, and I am not looking for a job, as you may imagine." Although he envisioned a larger scheme for commemorating the First World War in the nation's capital, Hastings remained focused on the opportunity to design the Tomb and complete his concept for Memorial Amphitheater.

The arguments in his letter seem to have somewhat persuaded Charles Moore. Like Hastings, Moore believed that the Tomb should be located in Memorial Amphitheater and that the Capitol would "not be a sufficiently distinctive place." Having considered Hastings's letter, he thought that the "idea of a cenotaph in front of the Amphitheater might work out excellently. Of course you know the present background of the Arlington Farm barns which we hope to get rid of in time but probably not during our lifetime. At any rate not mine." Moore was referring to the Department of Agriculture's Arlington Farms Experiment Station for plant research, which existed circa 1903–1939 on land that now makes up the eastern side of Arlington National Cemetery. Moore evidently found the experiment station to detract from the views from Memorial Amphitheater's hilltop location and wanted it removed to improve the overall design scheme of the cemetery, particularly since the Tomb would overlook that vista.

However, Moore explained that he actually thought that the Tomb should be located within the apse of the amphitheater itself, the semicircular niche on the elevated stage inside the domed bowl of the marble structure, rather than placed in front of the eastern entrance to the amphitheater. He reminded Hastings that he had "talked this matter over with you last time we met and you agreed with me and said nothing about the site in front of the amphitheater. Relying on this conversation, I recommended the Apse site when suddenly called before the Committee, but insisted that you should be consulted." Moore valued Hastings's opinion and assured him that "if in consideration of both sites you shall determine on the site in front of the Amphitheater well and good but I hope that you will get as far away from the Lutyens design as the east is from the west." Moore had seen Lutyens's Cenotaph and heard only criticism of it in London. Having expressed his agreement with Hastings's dislike for the Cenotaph, Moore seemed eager, like Hastings, to do better than the British while also taking inspiration from them. He did not

dwell too long on Lutyens in his letter, though, and he returned to his chief concern: securing the best design possible for the American Tomb. He supported Hastings's effort to design the Tomb and reassured him of as much as he closed his letter. He told Hastings, "you know that I would hold out for the architect of a building having control of everything pertaining thereto, having learned the lesson from you." With Moore and Hastings allied, conditions were set for discussions to plan the Tomb, ahead of the quickly approaching Armistice Day interment. Eventually, there would be a multiyear struggle over who would design the final version.



Figure 8.5. The apse and the stage just in front of it, are the visual focal points of Memorial Amphitheater. (Library of Congress)

Around September 1921, the Commission of Fine Arts and the Office of the Quartermaster General began more formal discussions about the placement of the Tomb. They approached Hastings to come to Washington to share his insight, as he had hoped. They also arranged a meeting between Hastings, War Department officials, and CFA representatives. Attendees included Charles Moore, Col. George Penrose, Brig. Gen. Krauthoff, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter and his aides, and a Major Gibbs. ¹⁰⁶¹ They discussed various location options for the proposed Tomb in great detail, including the apse of the amphitheater. ¹⁰⁶² Hastings cautioned against this suggestion. According to a CFA memo, he explained that "a part of the

chapel was below the apse and . . . the foundations were thus not sufficiently strong to hold the weight of a heavy memorial." Thus, this option was abandoned.

Instead, Hastings proposed a plan that maintained his overall vision for the amphitheater and its aesthetic continuity. As the CFA memo recounted, in his design for the amphitheater Hastings had originally intended to "have some leading motif in the way of a monument in the front of the amphitheater, east of the main terrace," but funds for it were no longer available after the building's construction, so it never came to fruition. ¹⁰⁶⁴ As a result, the CFA reported that "Mr. Hastings said that a memorial to the unknown soldier would therefore give a splendid opportunity to place a suitable memorial at this location, and it would be part of the original composition for the building." ¹⁰⁶⁵ Eager to design the Tomb and finish his vision for the amphitheater, Hastings now officially began what became a protracted campaign to be chosen as the designer of both the temporary and the permanent Tomb, a high honor and a plan that would, if successful, enable him to preserve his vision for the amphitheater. ¹⁰⁶⁶

During this meeting, Hastings submitted sketches for the proposed Tomb at his preferred location on the east side of the amphitheater. Coincidentally, Hastings explained that he had just returned from visiting the counterpart tombs in London and Paris. He outlined his vision for the Tomb and "proposed to construct the foundation in its permanent form and a sarcophagus in which the coffin may be placed to remain there forever." ¹⁰⁶⁷ It would be built lengthwise on the axis of the amphitheater's main entrance, and a part of the steps would be taken out at that location to make room. ¹⁰⁶⁸ Hastings recognized that with the impending interment about two months away, he must first prioritize the creation of the permanent foundation and grave (crypt) for the Unknown Soldier to be buried within on 11 November. Only later could he take the time to design and construct the rest of the monument, which would go above those elements.

Nonetheless, Hastings had already started outlining his vision for the permanent, ornamental monument to be placed on the Tomb. ¹⁰⁶⁹ According to the CFA, Hastings stated that the "part of the memorial which will be over the casket . . . would probably be designed to have a series of columns as on the Colleoni Monument" in Venice, Italy; he estimated that it would cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000. ¹⁰⁷⁰ By citing the Renaissance era Colleoni Monument as his inspiration, Hastings revealed his vision for a grand and imposing statue to be placed on top of the Tomb, one with elaborate details and a base of classical columns. ¹⁰⁷¹ He wanted to get to work on these permanent decorative elements right away and engage a construction company, but Colonel Penrose conferred with the other officers at the meeting and asked for a sketch they could submit to the secretary of War, "in the hope that he would approve it so that there would be no delay in beginning work on the foundation." ¹⁰⁷²



Figure 8.6. The Colleoni Monument in Venice is a bronze equestrian statue created by Andrea del Verrocchio to honor the 15th-century Venetian military leader Bartolomeo Colleoni. Hastings mentioned this monument as partially inspiring his vision for the design of the permanent American Tomb.

(Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

By "foundation," Penrose meant the foundation for the actual burial crypt (grave), in which the Unknown Soldier would be buried on 11 November. Time was of the essence for this large, high-profile project, and the foundation and crypt were the essential elements needed for the burial. Although a permanent, ornamental memorial structure would eventually be added above the crypt, this was not intended to be completed in its permanent form by Armistice Day; instead, a flat top was to be used to seal and cover the crypt as a simple, yet elegant, interim solution. That practical plan had to take precedence with time so short. ¹⁰⁷³

Hastings knew that he had to work quickly to prepare the site for the Tomb and to ensure that his vision for the entirety of the amphitheater would be preserved, and perhaps improved. He "urged that steps be taken to place memorials of the World War, and of possibly other American wars, in the rooms available for such use in the Amphitheater," by which he likely meant the Display Room. 1074 Excited by the prospect of this project, he also reminded everyone that the amphitheater contained dedicated crypts for burials and was "designed so as to become a campo santo," referencing the Italian and Spanish word for cemetery. 1075 He even offered advice on how to improve the landscape surrounding the amphitheater. He urged the quartermaster general to see about "thinning the planting about the Amphitheater." Moore reported on these directions with more specificity to the quartermaster general, explaining that before the memorial service for the Unknown, Carrère and Hastings wanted the straight walks running east and west in front of the balustrade on the amphitheater's east front to be removed, along with five patches of plantings, so they would "instead simply have the green grass." 1077

All in all, Hastings offered a sweeping plan for layering the memory of World War I throughout Memorial Amphitheater, whose authorization predated the war and which thus did not include that conflict in its original inscriptions or symbolism. ¹⁰⁷⁸ Unknowingly, with his

grand concept for the Tomb and its environs, Hastings had set up what would become a drawnout negotiation, and later fight, between him and the government, as he tried to maintain control over the amphitheater and fought for the honor of designing the final Tomb. This battle he would eventually lose.

With the 11 November interment rapidly approaching, the CFA unanimously agreed on the location at the amphitheater's east front, as suggested by Hastings. ¹⁰⁷⁹ According to a 1923 report by the CFA, Hastings was instructed to "prepare a design for a monumental shaft and to prepare working drawings and obtain estimates for the foundations, plinth, and all the arrangements for receiving the body of the Unknown Soldier. The necessity of making immediate provision for burial, impelled the committee to order the base at once, leaving the design to further study while the plinth was being executed." ¹⁰⁸⁰ Following these instructions, Hastings prepared a tentative design and presented it to the committee. They approved it in this draft format. ¹⁰⁸¹ It seemed that Hastings was well on his way to becoming the ultimate designer of the Tomb.

The War Department, the CFA, and influential politicians like Fish originally intended Hastings to serve as the designer of the finished monument. In a 27 September 1921 letter, Moore told sculptor George Conlon that "I would say that the memorial to the unknown dead, to be erected in Arlington, is in charge of Thomas Hastings, architect, New York City." ¹⁰⁸² As the CFA later told the secretary of War in 1923 while fighting in support of Hastings's original design and role as designer, "in conformity with this design and as a portion of the entire structure, the present base was constructed." ¹⁰⁸³ Indeed, this base, though used for the interment ceremony as a temporary solution, was also intended to integrate into Hastings's eventual design for the final monument.



Figure 8.7. This image, photographed one week before the interment service, shows the original marble base installed over the Unknown's crypt. The mechanism to lower the casket is also visible.

(Library of Congress)

With time running out before the burial, construction of the temporary Tomb needed to begin as soon as possible. The bureaucracy moved slowly, however, even for this important project. Moore wrote to Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers, the quartermaster general, on 14 September 1921 to share the recommendations from Carrère and Hastings regarding landscape and pathway improvements around the amphitheater, as well as the building's long-term care and use. For the short-term planting changes, Moore advised the quartermaster general that "this will require no appropriation and it is earnestly desired that this work be done before the Memorial Service in Arlington in honor of the unknown American to be held in November." 1084

If the landscape changes were easily handled, the construction of the Tomb posed more of a challenge. Even as late as 3 October, construction of the temporary Tomb does not seem to have begun. ¹⁰⁸⁵ In a memorandum to the Army chief of staff, Gen. John J. Pershing, on that date, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter recounted that around 23 September, the secretary of War had approved the expenditure of about \$4,000 for the "construction of the base of the sarcophagus." ¹⁰⁸⁶ In this memo, Lassiter submitted an informal proposal from the George H.

Fuller Company to construct this base, and explained why this particular company needed to be used. "In view of the limited time," Lassiter wrote, "it is not practicable to advertise for this work, and also due to the fact that the George H. Fuller Company constructed the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater, it is deemed advisable that this firm construct this base to the sarcophagus, in order that the same material of marble and the same line of architecture may be carried out." Lassiter requested that an exception be made to the standard protocol so that the secretary of War could "authorize the acceptance of this proposal without formal advertisement." The secretary of War accepted this proposal, finally enabling the construction process to begin, under the oversight of the quartermaster general. These memos make clear that Lassiter and his colleagues in the War Department understood the urgency of their mission. If they were to construct an acceptable temporary tomb in time for the funeral, they would need to expedite the bureaucratic process as much as possible.

With the approval of the secretary of War now in hand, the Quartermaster Corps quickly started construction. On 5 October 1921, the quartermaster general directed the quartermaster supply officer of the Washington G.I. Depot to enter into a contract with the George H. Fuller Company, "at a cost not to exceed \$4,000," for the base of the sarcophagus, with the work to be completed before 11 November. 1090 A Quartermaster Corps contract for this work, however, predates the quartermaster general's letter of 5 October, making it unclear exactly when the contract began and when work on the Tomb started. This contract is dated 26 September, and it specifies that work should also have been started on that date. Whether the extant document was an outdated or unused draft cannot be determined, but the contract does provide revealing details about the construction of the temporary Tomb. 1091

According to this contract, the George H. Fuller Company would furnish all labor and materials for the project. The base of the sarcophagus needed to be "constructed on a secure and firm foundation, and to be complete and first-class in all particulars in conformity" with the plans of Carrère and Hastings. ¹⁰⁹² The contract's specifications required the highest quality work from the contractor, despite the quick timeline. Nothing less than perfection would be suitable for this sacred structure. Furthermore, it was essential that the marble sarcophagus mirror the aesthetics of the surrounding amphitheater. The construction process was to include:

removal of such portion of existing steps, replacing, cutting and fitting same . . . all excavation as required, including shoring and bracing, to secure a foundation satisfactory to the Officer in Charge; furnishing and placing the concrete foundations in suitable forms, this concrete to be composed of one part Portland cement, two parts clean, sharp sand and four parts clean gravel; all of the marble work, including hauling, necessary painting on back to prevent staining, and the setting thereof, this marble work to be of the finest quality, pure white Vermont, to match the existing marble in the Amphitheatre; the work also to include one suitable and approved steel plate which will be used as a temporary cover at the time of the ceremonies after the body has been placed; also the covering over of this plate immediately after the ceremonies, or at such time as may be designated by the Officer in Charge, with reinforced concrete slab. 1093

Carrère and Hastings thus designed a simple structure to hold the remains of the Unknown Soldier in a dignified manner until the final design for the Tomb could be completed and installed on top of the burial crypt.



Figure 8.8. This portion of a Carrère and Hastings blueprint shows a profile view of the structure designed to hold the Unknown's remains until the final Tomb could be designed. Note the position of the casket within the base. (National Archives and Records Administration)

According to that design, a three-level marble tomb was placed into the stairs on the eastern side of Memorial Amphitheater. ¹⁰⁹⁴ Its center aligned with the center line of the amphitheater, creating a balanced symmetry that would help the Tomb blend into the amphitheater and seem less like a later addition to the site. ¹⁰⁹⁵ The lowest level, a vault (crypt), would contain the casket. Reinforced concrete and steel plates supported the marble structure topping the vault. ¹⁰⁹⁶ This top comprised a flat pedestal, on which the completed monument, of a much more complex design, could later be placed. ¹⁰⁹⁷

No matter when the contract was actually executed, construction work appears to have started by 11 October, if not earlier. ¹⁰⁹⁸ On that day, testifying before the Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations regarding the expenses for the burial of the Unknown, Maj. Jonathan M. Wainwright of the General Staff reported about Hastings's recent visit to Arlington, his preliminary study for the sarcophagus, and the current progress on the Tomb. According to Wainwright, "it was necessary to undertake at once the work on the base, because the remains

are to be placed there on November 11. That work is being done at the present moment." ¹⁰⁹⁹ Wainwright explained that the design and cost estimate for the final sarcophagus would require more time, as Hastings needed to prepare a final study. Col. G. C. Barnhardt, also from the General Staff, emphasized that the work currently being done was on the base only, which would be completed ahead of the burial. ¹¹⁰⁰

Despite only planning to have a temporary tomb in place for the funeral, the War Department urged Hastings throughout October 1921 to provide it with more finalized drawings as soon as possible. Colonel Penrose explained to Hastings around 21 October that he wanted to submit them to the secretary of War for his approval. Penrose also provided an update on the construction of the temporary Tomb. "The work being done by the Fuller Construction Company seems to be progressing very favorably," he wrote. 1101 "The foundation is completed and Mr. Baird today informs me he expects the marble tomorrow or Monday, and he hopes to complete the base by the latter part of the coming week." Hastings responded that he was happy about the construction progress, especially that this "portion of the work will be done in time," but said that he did not have the final drawings ready, although he had been working on them. 1103 He wrote that he "did not realize that you were in any special hurry to receive the final drawings with further study," apologized for not having them ready, and promised them by the first of the month. 1104 Penrose soon wrote to Hastings again, though, this time to request that he also submit cost estimates with his drawings, as the issue of funding had come up and Congress would not consider the matter without a cost estimate, which Penrose was also trying to obtain from the Fuller Company. 1105 With pressure increasing, Hastings replied that including a cost estimate would delay the drawings slightly, and noted that he had "given the design very careful study and [had] considerably simplified it, and [was] trying to do everything to make it impressive and

expressive of what it memorializes." He finally sent the drawings on 17 November and the cost estimates a little later. 1106



Figure 8.9. Workers prepared the site on the east side of Memorial Amphitheater to accommodate the crypt and the placement of the Tomb's base. This construction work began in mid-October 1921, just about one month prior to the Unknown's funeral. (*Library of Congress*)

Thus, even as the temporary Tomb remained under construction, with time ticking before the funeral, the War Department had begun looking ahead to the steps needed to finalize the Tomb. This process would ultimately become mired in debate and disagreement in the years after the funeral, and progress on the permanent Tomb would be slow. In the weeks leading up to the funeral, however, things progressed as needed. With construction of the temporary Tomb underway at last, one of the most critical elements required for the funeral was one step closer to completion.

Planning (and Funding) a National Funeral

As planning for the temporary Tomb and the ceremonies picked up speed in September, the War Department began to focus more on the costs associated with these events. On 13 September 1921, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter, assistant chief of staff, directed the chief of

finance to determine the appropriation to which these costs could be charged. ¹¹⁰⁷ An investigation into the estimated costs of the events began in earnest, and it soon became clear that the War Department needed clarification from Congress about where the funds would come from. The legislation that authorized the Tomb stated that "such sum as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of the joint resolution is hereby authorized to be expended by the Secretary of War," but it did not specify the source of that sum. ¹¹⁰⁸

The War Department proposed that the expenditures should come from an appropriation for the "Disposition of Remains of Officers, Soldiers and Civilian Employees," a course of action deemed appropriate by the comptroller general of the United States and submitted to Congress. ¹¹⁰⁹ As discussion continued, the secretary of War presented an initial estimated cost of \$175,000 to Congress, a price that included construction of the sarcophagus, casket, and catafalques, temporary seating at Arlington, all troop expenses and the movement of numerous participants to the ceremonies, and other incidental expenses. To add the original plan to line the streets with troops, another \$48,000 would be needed. ¹¹¹⁰

On 11 October, Congress took up the matter of the cost of the ceremonies, and the question of whether they could indeed be funded from the appropriation for the "Disposition of Remains of Officers, Soldiers and Civilian Employees," in Senate Joint Resolution 123 and House Joint Resolution 203, discussing it in a hearing before the Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations. ¹¹¹¹ The hearing, held exactly one month before the day of the funeral, revealed how much remained to be figured out for the planning and funding of these events. At this hearing, the War Department presented the estimated total cost as \$129,650, a decrease from the secretary of War's earlier estimate. ¹¹¹² Yet, the committee questioned the War Department's representatives as to various ways they could decrease expenses. For example,

Chairman Martin B. Madden (R-IL) suggested only inviting Medal of Honor recipients from the recent war to attend, to which Col. George C. Barnhardt of the General Staff responded that cutting any portion of the program "would deprive us of some representation that we think ought to go in." The committee looked closely at the breakdown of each item to be funded through the requested appropriation and whether those expenses could be justified based on the appropriation's purpose. It especially scrutinized the \$50,000 requested for the sarcophagus, casket, and catafalques. After some discussion, it was agreed that those costs could be properly chargeable against the appropriation for the disposition of remains, and the chairman expressed his desire to eliminate that item from the request. 1114

After further debate about details of the expenses, the chairman asked for assurances that sufficient funds would still be available from the unexpended balance of the appropriation set aside for the disposition of remains to pay for the remaining expenses related to the war dead, which Maj. Jonathan M. Wainwright assured him was the case. 1115 As the discussion in this hearing demonstrates, Congress did not give the War Department carte blanche to execute these events. While Congress believed in the importance of the ceremonies, much still remained to be questioned and debated; approval was not guaranteed. With these discussions taking place so close to the date of the funeral, the War Department faced obstacles to receiving the funding needed to execute the ceremonies in such a way as to properly honor the Unknown and make the events truly representative of the American people.

As Senate Joint Resolution 123 made its way through the consideration process, the War Department had reason to worry about obtaining the full amount of funding it had requested. The House of Representatives discussed the resolution on 15 October, when Representative Madden called it up for consideration. 1116 After reading the resolution and providing context about it and

the plans for the ceremonies in the Washington area, Madden shared his committee's recommendations for the cost. He explained that they thought that the funding for the sarcophagus should be eliminated from the cost of the ceremonies, and that with the removal of several others costs, the committee had cut down the recommendation to \$50,000. 1117 Despite these cost-saving measures, Madden emphasized that

it seemed to the committee that this ceremony was of such importance that there ought to be no question whatever about the attitude of the Congress. The mothers of those who fell upon the battle field and were unidentified at the close of their career undoubtedly have wept many bitter tears of regret at the thought that their boys were lying in unknown graves, and it is a happy thought, it seems to me, that originated the idea of this ceremony. While every unknown soldier can not be buried under this resolution, yet every mother whose son has been unidentified may hope, pray, and think that maybe this is her boy. There is no reason to believe she may not rejoice to think, although she is not certain, it is her boy and that he is buried with honors such as have never before been accorded to the soldier dead. This is the ceremony of the Nation, a tribute to be paid by every citizen who lives under the flag to the unidentified soldier who laid down his life that liberty under American institutions might be preserved. 1118

With this stirring explanation of the resolution's importance, Madden justified the importance of funding these events despite the suggested cuts. He contextualized them within the larger goals of the effort: to honor an unknown American, to bring solace to the mothers and families of those service members who remained unaccounted for, and to unite the nation through the democratic ideals that many believed underpinned the war.

Rep. Joseph W. Byrns of Tennessee, also a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, then added his perspective and demonstrated his support for the committee's recommendations. ¹¹¹⁹ While he conceded that the resolution would not provide the full amount of funds requested by the War Department, he argued that "in the judgment of the committee, it does provide a sufficient amount which will enable proper tribute to be paid to this soldier and to provide for the transportation of the guests who have been invited by the Department." ¹¹²⁰ To drum up more support, Byrns reminded his colleagues that both France and England had already

buried an unknown soldier with "elaborate ceremonies," and that Congress had directed the Medal of Honor to be awarded to each of them, the execution of which was being carried out by General Pershing himself. ¹¹²¹ To Byrns, the comparison with Great Britain and France, and the plans already underway, indicated that the public would approve of the sum "as an expression of the gratitude of this Nation to this unknown soldier and to all his comrades who made the supreme sacrifice in behalf of their country." ¹¹²²

While Byrns personally would have preferred the Unknown to buried at the Capitol, he supported Congress's choice to inter him with his comrades at Arlington. He took issue with those who claimed that Congress and the government were "influenced by mere sentiment" in supporting this plan and funding it. 1123 Byrns argued in favor of being influenced by sentiment, and asserted that this effort was "a most commendable and a most beautiful one. . . . The person who is wholly devoid of sentiment, or the Government which is not, at least, to some extent influenced by proper sentiment, can not expect to accomplish very much for the real and lasting benefit of mankind."1124 Like Madden, Byrns believed that the burial of the Unknown Soldier would be "the expression of a Nation's gratitude for the sacrifice made by this soldier," and that by honoring him the nation would pay "honor to the thousands of his comrades for the sacrifices they have made" and also bring comfort to the "many sad mothers and fathers who mourn the loss of a devoted son."1125 Talking directly to the Speaker of the House, Byrns asserted his confidence that "the entire American public will rejoice in the fact that this great honor is being paid to this unknown American soldier." ¹¹²⁶ Given this rousing testimony of support for the resolution—in words that invoked the intentions of the whole effort—it seems that even with the funding cuts many in Congress did understand the symbolic importance of the ceremonies and their benefit to a nation still recovering from war.

However, at least one member disagreed with this funding measure, expressing his opposition in a lengthy diatribe: Rep. Thomas Blanton of Texas. 1127 While Blanton assured his colleagues that he believed in the propriety of the planned tribute to the Unknown Soldier, he objected to funding it through the resolution in question. He argued that Congress had already passed adequate legislation authorizing the War Department to bring back not only this one unknown service member, but also all the unidentified American dead. 1128 Blanton maintained that all these unidentified remains should be repatriated by the government, despite the plan to only bring home the one set of remains intended for the Tomb. His dissent indicates that, even so close to the burial, there remained disagreement in Congress about the appropriate way to memorialize unknowns.

Blanton went on for some time, claiming that the secretary of War had ample funds to pay for the costs in the resolution, and criticizing the War Department for a myriad of issues related to its handling of the war and its aftermath. He claimed that the War Department would use the \$50,000 being discussed not to honor the Unknown Soldier, but to "provide a special junket trip here to Washington for a number of special civilian pets and favorities [sic]. Not a dollar of it will be spent in doing honor at this funeral." He took issue with almost every part of the proposed plan, such as the fact that units of soldiers were to be brought to Washington from some states but not others, and that inconsistent numbers of representatives of the American Legion were being selected for attendance. Blanton brought up several examples of how Congress had been asked to help destitute veterans but refused either to allot the full amount requested or, in one case, to provide an opportunity for a hearing. He criticized his colleagues for claiming that the country was not able to financially support such requests for veterans, yet could now pay for the expenses related to this funeral. 1130

Blanton admitted that he knew he spoke on "an unpopular theme. Whenever you bring a resolution in here to spend just \$50,000 in the name of our soldiery it is almost dangerous for a Member to speak against it. Everybody wants to do that to appease the men to whom our Government owes an everlasting debt of gratitude and whose appeals have been denied." But, Blanton argued a little later that

the ex–service men who are needy have asked you to give them bread and not a stone. I am one who is not afraid to get up here in front of you and speak frankly. I am paying an extra private stenographer, Miss Elizabeth Johnson, her salary right out of my own pocket now to answer the letters of soldiers in hospitals who are living in other States, trying to get their compensation adjusted, because when they appeal to me I do not stop and ask them where they live; I answer them. . . . I have shown my friendship for the soldiers, not by voting to pass a resolution that frivolously spends \$50,000 for junket transportation unnecessarily . . . the ex–service men know that I am their true, loyal friend. I have voted for every measure on their great relief, rehabilitation program. I have never yet turned down one of them who appealed to me for assistance, white or black, living north, south, east, or West; I have responded promptly and have done everything in my power to help them. 1132

While much of Blanton's long speech involved accusatory and inflammatory statements against Congress and the War Department, his concerns demonstrate several important points. He was not alone, in the war's aftermath, in balking at the "ostentation and expense" of commemorative events when ordinary veterans were in need of help. 1133 While Blanton agreed that unknowns should be honored, he disagreed with some of the means of execution. His viewpoint shows that support for the Tomb and the upcoming ceremonies was broad but not unanimous: it was not a foregone conclusion that the events would be successful or even appreciated by the entire population. Likewise, although the War Department aimed to make these events a moment of national solidarity, patriotism, and remembrance, dissent could not be entirely avoided, and total unity remained out of reach. As indicated by Blanton's focus on what he viewed as the mismanagement of the War Department during and after the war, raw feelings remained, indicative of a brewing backlash about the war overall. 1134

Despite Blanton's outrage, however, he was in the minority. Rep. Thomas Terry

Connally, also from Texas, fiercely countered Blanton's perspective and shared an impassioned defense of the resolution. 1135 Connally asserted that he did not consider it to be a "frivolous purpose for a great Nation like our own, the richest in resources, the most nearly unimpaired in its wealth by the ravages of war and the expenditure of money, to spend the comparatively paltry sum of \$50,000, even though the critical may call the purpose one of ostentation, to do appropriate honor to one whose identity is unknown." 1136 He explained that the "Republic is not paying this tribute to him to build up his own individual greatness or pay tribute to his name; but the Nation through these ceremonies will do honor to all the heroic unknown who slumber on distant and cheerless battlefields with no stone above them to guide the searcher for their names." 1137

Having visited the battlefields of Europe himself, Connally had seen the morbid aftermath of combat, a sight that surely affected his view of this resolution. At Belleau Wood, he had witnessed "portions of limbs protruding from the earth" as Army representatives gathered the unknown dead, while the graves of the enemy remained without honor from their emperor. Moved by this experience, Connally told his colleagues that he "felt an utter scorn and contempt for any American who could associate with the solemn thoughts that crowded our minds the idea of a sordid dollar." He pleaded for the adoption of the resolution so that

the whole country everywhere may know that this Republic is not fitly described by Europeans when they speak of the dollar idea in American life, but that the Republic of the United States can feel the sentiment of pride and appreciation . . . let not the dollar stand between us and fitting honor to their sacred memory. Let the world know that not only will we hold this exercise with befitting memorial ceremonies, but will inter this soldier yonder in Arlington and erect above his grave a tomb that neither time nor circumstance can destroy, and that the whole Republic will enshrine his memory as emblematic of all of the unknown dead forever in our hearts and consciences. 1140

Fully grasping the long-term vision for the Tomb, its potential value as a site of memory and mourning, and its ability to show the world that the United States did not forget its war dead and would honor them in ways equal to that of the other Allied nations, Connally made a powerful final argument in favor of the resolution.

Connally's remarks left little to add and brought the discussion to a close. Although Blanton demanded a division of the votes after the Speaker determined that the "ayes" had won, the joint resolution passed, with ninety-five in favor and just one against. Soon after, on 21 October, Senate Joint Resolution 123 was approved by Congress as Public Resolution 24. It specified, in line with the earlier recommendation, that the "amount to be used for the expenses incident to ceremonies connected with such burial shall not exceed \$50,000." After much consternation and debate, the War Department finally had funds for the upcoming events. Although it did not receive the full amount requested and would have to adapt its plans, it could, at least, proceed unhindered.

The War Department had tasked Brig. Gen. Harry H. Bandholtz, the commanding general of the District of Washington, with planning and executing the ceremonies and events in the United States. ¹¹⁴³ The War Department also formed a committee composed of one member from each division of the General Staff and one from the Navy. ¹¹⁴⁴ With Bandholtz at the helm, this endeavor consumed much of the War Department's attention in the months leading up to Armistice Day. Tasks were delegated and assigned to various units, officers, and enlisted men as the War Department tried to think through every step necessary to ensure that the ceremonies would be executed without flaw and rendered the utmost honor. Planners knew that they should evoke reverence throughout the events, both to the Unknown and to the Americans mourning

him. This meant taking every measure to create the correct reverential atmosphere during the ceremonies, especially during the burial at Arlington National Cemetery.



Figure 8.10. Brig. Gen. Harry H. Bandholtz, the commanding general of the District of Washington, had served in France during World War I. Much of the planning for the Unknown's ceremony fell to him since he oversaw the military assets in the area. (*Library of Congress*)

U.S. Army chief of chaplains Col. John T. Axton explained in a memorandum of 25

October that he had previously witnessed "confusion . . . at many military funerals at Arlington National Cemetery." ¹¹⁴⁵ He advised that a War Department circular from the previous year be republished "for the benefit of the military personnel attending the funeral of the Unknown Soldier in individual capacity." ¹¹⁴⁶ The next day, the secretary of War directed that this circular, titled "Courtesies at Military Funerals," be "distributed to all officers stationed in the District of Columbia, and to all those who come to Washington to attend the ceremonies on November 11, 1921." ¹¹⁴⁷ The circular outlined the proper protocol for military personnel to follow at military funerals, such as standing at attention with their heads covered. ¹¹⁴⁸ The distribution of this circular represents just one way that the War Department attempted to maintain a dignified

atmosphere throughout the events and to ensure that all attendees understood the sacred nature of the proceedings.

Given the complexity of the planned events in the Washington area and the participation of so many nonmilitary entities, military personnel received orders to multitask, taking on a variety of roles. For example, Maj. Edgar B. Colladay received orders that in addition to his other duties, he was detailed to assist the Metropolitan Opera Quartet on the day of the service. 1149 Maj. Charles H. Steese received almost identical orders that detailed him to assist the British and American war mothers on the day of the funeral. 1150 Other officers received orders to support the seating arrangements in the amphitheater, direct traffic at the cemetery, help organize the formation of the funeral procession, assist military representatives, serve as ushers in the amphitheater, and function as aides to the many dignitaries participating in the events. 1151 Orders were still being sent to officers as late as 8 November, demonstrating how, with so little time to plan, the War Department remained in a continuous planning mode during the days preceding the ceremonies. This likely created a sense of chaos among military personnel stationed in the area as they geared up for this large-scale event.

The officers and enlisted men to be present at the events surrounding the ceremonies were issued strict instructions regarding their uniforms. They were required to wear their service uniforms with cap and belt. The War Department could also prescribe the wearing of their overcoats—but not raincoats—in case of inclement weather. Servicemen who had earned the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Medal, or the Victory Medal could wear them, but no other medals were permitted. Although not specifically stated in the War Department's instructions, the prohibition on wearing other medals might have been intended to maintain a sense of humility on such a solemn day. 1152

Ahead of the ceremonies, General Bandholtz directed that a "Reception Bureau" staffed by five officers be established at Washington's Union Station to deal with the many guests arriving for the ceremonies. ¹¹⁵³ The bureau would serve as a critical clearinghouse to share information with participants, enable the public to obtain information about the ceremonies, and help the War Department maintain the public inclusivity of the events. Indeed, in the days ahead of the ceremonies, the *Washington Post* reported on the crowds descending on the city. They filled the trains arriving at Union Station and crowded into local hotels struggling to handle those who needed accommodations for the ceremonies and also for the Naval Conference. ¹¹⁵⁴

Clear communications with the public formed an essential part of the War Department's planning. To this end, it distributed a press release about the funeral on 7 November. This statement requested that "these directions be read and carefully observed by all who attend the ceremonies at the Cemetery. This in order that the confusion incident to a ceremony of such magnitude may be reduced to a minimum and the ceremony carried out in a befittingly dignified and solemn manner." It then provided detailed information about driving directions, parking, road closures, transportation on trolley lines, requested arrival times, and other logistics. Ever cautious to make the public feel welcome, the press release specifically noted that "amplifiers will make it possible for the President's address to be heard in all parking places," allowing chauffeurs, who were requested to remain with their cars, to also listen. With such thoughtful details, the War Department tried to foster a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. In addition to creating goodwill with the public, these instructions were intended to help the War Department maintain order during the complex events and promote an atmosphere of respect and dignity.

The planning for the ceremonies also included another action that would ensure a glimpse of the events for both the public and posterity. The secretary of War directed that the chief signal

officer communicate with General Bandholtz in order to "make the necessary arrangements to have an official set of photographs and motion pictures made of the procession on November 11th, in honor of the Unknown American and of the ceremonies at Arlington." The resulting motion picture footage documented the events that brought the Unknown Soldier to his final resting place, starting with the day of the selection in France and continuing through the funeral at Arlington. Silent films vividly capture the massive crowds that came to participate at Arlington and the deep interest of the American public.

Likewise, the Signal Corps documented these events in numerous photographs, in addition to those photographs taken by the press in attendance. The images printed in newspapers across the country served as a public record that brought the ceremonies to life for Americans, making the ceremonies accessible to those who could not attend and reinforcing the memories of those who could. Together, the motion picture footage and photographs created a visual historical record that attests to the national significance of the Tomb's creation and allows some parts of these events to be witnessed by subsequent generations.

At Repose in the Rotunda: Honoring the Unknown Soldier in the U.S. Capitol

With plans in place, funding secured, and the temporary Tomb under construction, the next stage of the ceremonies for the Unknown Soldier commenced. After the ceremonial arrival at the U.S. Capitol on the late afternoon of 9 November 1921, the Unknown Soldier lay in state inside the Rotunda. Here he remained as an object of reverence until his transportation in a grand military procession to Arlington National Cemetery on 11 November. The great honor of this time in the Rotunda, bestowed on so few, again demonstrates the magnitude of the respect being shown to the Unknown and to World War I service members overall. Such tributes are usually reserved for presidents, members of Congress, and high-ranking military officers and

government officials; the World War I Unknown was only the eleventh person to receive this honor since the tradition began in 1852 with the death of senator and Speaker of the House Henry Clay. 1158 Prior honorees had included Presidents Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, and William McKinley, as well as Admiral George Dewey (commander of the victorious U.S. fleet and the USS *Olympia* during the Battle of Manila Bay in 1898). 1159 The World War I Unknown was only the second American not of a high office or military rank to be so honored. The first was Pierre Charles L'Enfant, veteran of the American Revolution and designer of the city plan for Washington, D.C. Originally buried in Maryland, he lay in state in the Rotunda in 1909, ahead of his reinterment at Arlington National Cemetery. 1160

The memory of President Lincoln was given an especially prominent place in the rituals at the Capitol. The Unknown's casket rested on the Lincoln catafalque, a wooden structure built in 1865 to hold Lincoln's coffin and subsequently used for most caskets that lay in state inside the Capitol Rotunda. ¹¹⁶¹ The War Department recognized the significance of this catafalque and the way that it further increased the respect shown to the Unknown. In a press release from 4 October, it announced that the Unknown would rest on "the same catafalque as that used for Presidents Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley. The drapings used at the Presidential funerals referred to are being carefully reproduced for use on November 10th." ¹¹⁶² The War Department thus understood that the use of this catafalque should be highlighted for the public as one of the elements chosen to connect the Unknown with earlier periods of American history.

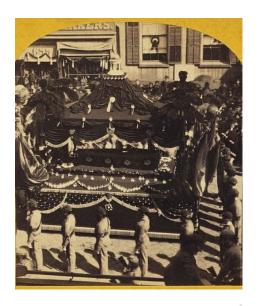


Figure 8.11. The Lincoln Catafalque is the wooden platform built in 1865 to support President Abraham Lincoln's casket. It has since been used for nearly all Americans who have lain in state. In this image, the catafalque is seen with President Lincoln's casket as his funeral procession passed through New York City. (Library of Congress)

The task of preparing for receiving the Unknown in the Capitol Rotunda, arranging for a guard, and dealing with visitors and floral tributes went to Colonel Penrose. ¹¹⁶³ Inside the Capitol Rotunda and throughout the Capitol grounds, a rotating Guard of Honor was established, composed of a company from the 13th Engineers from Camp Humphreys (now Fort Belvoir), Virginia, and commanded by Maj. Charles P. Gross. This was the main contingent of soldiers providing honors to the Unknown. ¹¹⁶⁴ For the tribute of 10 November, however, the commanding general of the District of Washington appointed representatives of the "Cavalry, Artillery, Infantry, Navy, Marine Corps, and National Guard," as well as the Coast Artillery and Army Aviation, to join the 13th Engineers from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. in the Rotunda. They would surround the Unknown's elevated casket, with one man at each of its four corners and a noncommissioned officer at its head, and would keep a constant vigil as visitors poured in to pay their respects. ¹¹⁶⁵ The arrangement on this day would ensure that "the four on duty at one time

will represent different arms or branches of the service," making the ceremonies inclusive of the entire military. 1166

The soldiers chosen for this duty were "carefully selected for their physical and military appearance" and had to "stand motionless for the necessary time between reliefs." As described by Kirk Larue Simpson of the Associated Press, the guards on duty surrounding the casket each stood with "body rigidly erect, but also with head bent forward until cap brim was level with the point of his gleaming bayonet. These soldiers moved not a muscle except at stated intervals when slight changes of position, made simultaneously, eased the physical strain." ¹¹⁶⁸ Officers of the 13th Engineers told the *New York Times* that these men had been in intensive training for this guard duty for weeks. ¹¹⁶⁹ Unknowingly, these soldiers set a precedent for perfection of movement that would become a key part of the rituals of the Tomb Guards in later years. Importantly, Simpson claimed that even "negro troops took their turn" as guards, further diversifying the military presence in the Rotunda, though the military remained segregated. ¹¹⁷⁰

Plans called for the rest of the "specially selected company" of engineers to line the steps to the east entrance of the Capitol starting on 9 November, to be in place as the remains were borne into the Rotunda. ¹¹⁷¹ This group would also "furnish the lines of guards, at intervals, extending on both sides of the entrance from the foot of the Capitol steps to within the rotunda," where the remains would lie in state, as well as provide "suitable guards" to be stationed at other entrances to the Rotunda. ¹¹⁷² These guards remained there during the whole time the Unknown lay in state. ¹¹⁷³ Around 250 Marines joined the engineers on 10 November outside of the Capitol to assist with controlling the movement of public visitors into the Rotunda. ¹¹⁷⁴ These service members imbued the ceremonies at the Capitol with the atmosphere of military formality, precision, and honor that colored the entire process of the Unknown's selection and burial.

No public visitors could enter the Rotunda when the casket arrived on 9 November. The War Department intended this to be "a solemn night." A party of high-ranking officials did pay their respects to the Unknown that evening. ¹¹⁷⁵ Their simple ceremony, brief and silent, functioned as part of the nation's official welcome for the Unknown Soldier, a homecoming presided over by the nation's highest civilian and military leaders. ¹¹⁷⁶

As eight soldiers from the 3d Cavalry carried the Unknown Soldier through the Capitol plaza, lined with service members, and up the steps into the Rotunda, the secretary of War and secretary of the Navy followed behind them bareheaded, along with officers and other members of the official party who had accompanied them from the Washington Navy Yard. 1177 Shortly thereafter, President and Mrs. Harding arrived. They stopped at the casket for a moment of silent prayer, and Mrs. Harding "draped on the casket, a white silk ribbon bow, deftly made by herself." The president then pinned a silver national shield with forty-eight gold stars to the ribbon and offered a wreath of red roses and red ribbon, "his deep emotion . . . plainly visible" according to the *Washington Post*. 1179 In his account of the ceremony, Kirke Larue Simpson of the Associated Press described the shield as being "symbolic of the heart of the nation that goes with this soldier to his tomb." A similar metaphor would be used by Harding two days later in his address during the funeral.

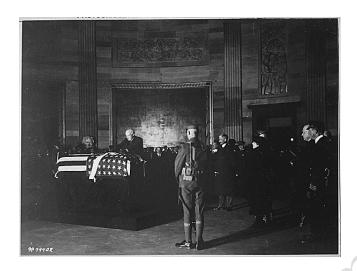


Figure 8.12. Shortly after the Unknown casket's was carried into the Capitol Rotunda on the evening of November 9, President Harding placed a wreath of red roses and red ribbon on the casket. In the background, other senior civilian and military leaders took part in this simple and private ceremony.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

Vice President Calvin Coolidge and Speaker Frederick H. Gillett left a wreath of pink roses and snapdragons as a tribute from the Senate and House of Representatives. ¹¹⁸¹ Chief justice and former president William H. Taft presented a wreath of chrysanthemums and carnations from the Supreme Court, secretary of War John W. Weeks gave a wreath of white roses from the Army, and secretary of the Navy Edwin Denby left one of chrysanthemums and roses from the Navy. ¹¹⁸² Next came Gen. John J. Pershing, who presented a wreath of giant pink chrysanthemums, pausing as he placed it, after which he drew "his figure to its full height" and "lifted his hand to his cap brim in rigid salute to the dead." ¹¹⁸³ Against the wall rested the floral tributes taken aboard the USS *Olympia*. During the Unknown's time in the Capitol Rotunda, his casket was draped in the bunting flag that had covered it during the voyage on the *Olympia*. It remained so draped until midnight on 10 November, when Colonel Penrose replaced the bunting "with a beautiful silk one which had been especially made" in preparation for the burial the next day. ¹¹⁸⁴ By showcasing the bunting used on the casket's transatlantic voyage, the War

Department allowed visitors to glimpse items from the earlier ceremonies honoring the Unknown.

The Unknown Soldier rested in the Capitol Rotunda overnight, alone but for the continuous presence of the rotating guards. The next day, 10 November, the public was allowed to view the Unknown's flag-draped casket on the Lincoln catafalque starting at 8:00 a.m. ¹¹⁸⁵ The Associated Press reported that the flowers placed on the casket the previous night had been set on each side of the bier, and the white roses from the selection, now "withered and yellow," laid on the flag covering the casket, along with the white ribbon placed by Mrs. Harding and the shield from the president. ¹¹⁸⁶

Members of the public were permitted to walk past the continuously guarded casket but not allowed to stop at it. 1187 This opportunity proved popular to a nation still mourning the war. More than an hour before the doors of the Capitol opened, crowds gathered in a line that extended for over a block. The rain and fog of the previous day had dissipated, and they stood under a blue sky. 1188 Footage filmed at the Rotunda that day shows streams of people processing through roped-off waiting areas lined with soldiers as they entered the Capitol. 1189

Miriam "Mimi" Felt, an employee of the U.S. Health Service, arrived at the Capitol around 6:00 p.m. with a friend, thinking that the line would not be so long. She described how even at that time, "the line (four abreast) extended over two blocks, and by the time we had reached the Capitol steps and could look back at the crowd, it extended up one side of the park, down another side, then the third side of it and on beyond around the Capitol building where we could see no farther." Felt noted that the line was "perfectly beautifully managed, and there was no crowding, and everyone, strangely enough, acted as though they really were there to pay

respect to the memory which that body was to represent to the country, and not there to see out of curiosity." 1191

Indeed, the *Atlanta Constitution* remarked that "the arrangements for viewing the catafalque were perfect; never have the police of the district shown to better advantage: there was an utter absence of confusion, disorder or crowding." ¹¹⁹² Perhaps much of that had to do with the mood of the people who came to the honor the Unknown and their understanding of the sacred nature of these events. As the *Atlanta Constitution* observed, "the very air of the nation's capital seemed charged with a something—an air that was sorrowful, triumphant, and commemorative of the one body which was being paid tribute, in memory of the thousands of others who had fought as nobly and fallen as did "the unknown." ¹¹⁹³

Since the lines of people at the Rotunda remained long at 10:00 p.m., the planned hour for closing, the Rotunda stayed open until midnight in order to admit as many people as possible. In total, about ninety thousand people visited the Unknown, and people moved through the line at a rate of about one hundred per minute. 1194 One report described the scene in the Rotunda as "a continuous stream" of people who moved "in line for hours waiting to enter the sacred chamber. 1195 It explained how "on entering the sacred portals of the Rotunda, one gasped in amazement on beholding the masses of floral pieces—a veritable field of flowers, tributes from all parts of the world. 1196 The Associated Press described how, "hour by hour the heaping flowers about the casket grew mountain high and spread about the vast chamber. there was not a minute of the day unclaimed by those who would do honor to the dead," and the "rotunda was literally filled with flowers. 1197 With the exception of the bust of Lincoln and a few others, the statues normally displayed in the Rotunda had been moved farther back, and by 3:00 p.m., as

tributes were moved from the catafalque to the wall, the wall itself was hidden by flowers. Within two hours, these flowers were placed three deep. 1198

The *New York Times* pointed out the diversity of those who came to the Rotunda. It noted that the line included "old and young, black and white, crippled and stalwart, soldier and sailor and civilian." ¹¹⁹⁹ The Associated Press, too, reported that "every class and every age was represented in the line of march." ¹²⁰⁰ Wounded soldiers from the recent war limped past the catafalque, many of them pausing to stand "awed and abashed at the solemn majesty that had come to this comrade," and elderly veterans of older wars paid their respects. ¹²⁰¹ The British writer H. G. Wells, in attendance at the procession and funeral, found the crowd at the Rotunda to be "fairly representative . . . of the Washington population as one sees it on the streets: all classes were represented, but chiefly it consisted of that well-dressed, healthy-looking middle-class sort of people who predominate in the streets of most American cities." ¹²⁰²

The opportunity to view the casket proved to be an emotional moment for those who took part. According to the Associated Press, as the first visitors entered the rotunda, a group of men started to sing the last verse of "America" with "a peal of victory and no hint of sorrow." Yet others, the reporter explained, fought tears as they viewed the casket. "A frail woman, aged and bent, stopped at the bier and dropped a handful of withered roses. As she turned away, she seized a soldier guard by the arm and tried to have him answer, but he remained motionless. Many of the women in the line were weeping as they left the rotunda." 1204

Many people left individual floral offerings, often without a card and sometimes presented by a child. "Old men and old women," the Associated Press recounted, "the grandparents of some soldier perhaps, were the most visibly affected, tears streaming down their cheeks as they turned around for a farewell look at the flower-covered coffin. . . . Led by a little

girl, a blind man, responding to her signal, stopped there and, crossing himself, passed on." ¹²⁰⁵ Two war mothers from Hoboken, New Jersey, saluted the casket and presented a wreath, but the ordeal, the Associated Press noted, "over taxed one of them, who sobbingly gave way to her grief and had to be assisted out of the rotunda." ¹²⁰⁶ For these women, and other families, viewing the Unknown's casket may have been as close as they could ever come to viewing the casket of their lost service member.



Figure 8.13. Many groups and individuals offered floral tributes to the Unknown while he lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda. This photo shows the large number of arrangements placed around the Lincoln Catafalque and the Rotunda. (Library of Congress)

This outpouring of public interest in the ceremonies surrounding the Unknown's funeral meant that the War Department had to carefully coordinate each moment of this event. So many organizations expressed a desire to formally lay floral wreaths and other decorations on the casket in the Rotunda that the schedule had filled to capacity by 7 November, and only approved groups could make ceremonial tributes. Each group—more than forty—received a specific time to make their offering and strict instructions about the protocol to follow, with warnings that "the services of each will of necessity have to be brief and within the allotted time limit." Each group had between five and fifteen minutes to conduct their ceremony at the casket, escorted by an officer from the Guard of Honor. 1208

The selected parties represented a diverse cross-section of veterans' groups going back to the Civil War, wartime welfare organizations, patriotic societies, diplomatic delegations from several embassies, and many others. 1209 The groups included: the American Legion, the Jewish Welfare Board, the Hebrew Sheltering Immigrant Aid Society of America, the YMCA and YWCA, the National Catholic War Council, the Knights of Columbus, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the American Red Cross, the American Federation of Labor, the Boy Scouts of America, the American War Mothers, the National Women's Overseas Service League, the 28th Division Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Peruvian Embassy, the British ambassador and a large delegation representing the British Empire (which also presented tributes from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, and Newfoundland), a delegation from Japan including Baron Shidehara, the minister of Honduras, Premier Aristide Briand and the French delegation to the Arms Conference, and representatives from Czechoslovakia, Cuba, and Belgium, among others. 1210 Secretary Weeks, Assistant Secretary Wainwright, and Gen. James Harbord were on hand to receive the foreign delegations. 1211 The commandant of the Marine Corps, Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune, also placed a wreath that evening, at 8:25 p.m., with a delegation of Marine officers. 1212 Once schools let out, schoolchildren joined the crowds passing through the Rotunda. 1213

Many of the ceremonies in the Rotunda held deeply personal meaning for the participants. A group of twenty Gold Star mothers, "dressed in black from head to foot . . . brought to the bier a great plaque of white carnations with a star of yellow carnations at its center." Wounded men from the nearby Walter Reed Hospital "hobbled in stiffly on crutches and saluted," and "an organization of ex–service men placed on the catafalque a white pillow, bearing in purple flowers the words: 'Our Pal." These groups, like others in the Rotunda that

day, probably thought of the Unknown as a man they once knew, and seized this opportunity to memorialize those who had no known resting place.

While details about each of the individual ceremonies are scarce, the plans for the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) ceremony indicate the seriousness with which the ceremonies were conducted, although the VFW ceremony may have been more elaborate than others. Founded in 1899 after the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, the VFW remained one of the most prominent and politically powerful veterans' organization in the years after World War I. 1216 It gained many new members who had served in that war and felt a deep connection to the Unknown. The VFW ceremony in the Rotunda reflected that connection and involved many of the organization's highest leaders. It included a prayer, a eulogy, and the pinning of the VFW medal and insignia on the cushion on the Unknown's casket. On the casket itself, VFW leaders placed a sprig of evergreen as a symbol of their "undying love" for their comrade, a white carnation as a "symbol of purity and the emulation of unselfish devotion to duty of our comrades of this and future generations," and a small laurel wreath "as a last token of affection from his comrades in arms and a crown symbolical of immortal victory to this devoted comrade." 1217 These rituals demonstrated the gratitude of the VFW and its members toward the Unknown and all the others who had lost their life while fighting for their country in the war, and they forged a lasting bond between this organization and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Taken together with the ceremonies held by the other groups, the VFW ceremony indicates the cascade of remembrance rituals enacted at the Rotunda on 10 November.

The ceremonies and tributes of these groups and the many individuals in attendance visually demonstrated how not just Americans but also their international allies felt connected to the recently arrived Unknown Soldier. One account described how "beside the casket on a black

silk cushion were pinned badges presented by various Societies. . . . At one corner of the catafalque stood a bronze statue of the 'Winged Victory' on a marble base, a gift of the Chinese nation." ¹²¹⁸ The minister from the Republic of China, Mr. Alfred Sze, unveiled it that day, accompanied by his staff, all of whom gave low bows when they walked to the casket and when they departed the Rotunda. ¹²¹⁹ This statue remains in the collection of Arlington National Cemetery today, along with other items left during the ceremonies surrounding the Unknown's interment.



Figure 8.14. This statue, a small bronze cast of sculptor's Augustus Saint-Gaudens piece named Victory, represents the winged figure of triumph, a symbol of courage, honor, and sacrifice. Presented to accompany the remains of the America's Unknown Soldier, Victory was displayed in the Capitol Rotunda at the head of the Unknown's casket and today is in the Memorial Amphitheater's Display Room.

(National Archives and Records Administration)



Figure 8.15. The Victory sculpture was presented by the Republic of China's government. Here, members of the Chinese delegation arrive at the Capitol accompanied by General Pershing. The Chinese minister, Mr. Sze, is seen standing next to Gen. Pershing. (*Library of Congress*)

Among these items is an album titled "Memorial Tributes" that contains a collection of the cards that were attached to the wreaths presented to the Unknown. 1220 Although not all the cards include labels, most are dated 10 November 1921, suggesting that they represent wreaths presented while the Unknown lay in state within the Capitol Rotunda. Many seem to be from groups that held a ceremony in the Rotunda, such as those from the British delegation and the Women's Overseas Service League. Others, however, appear to be from individuals and organizations not included on the official list of ceremonies, indicating that the album includes wreath cards left by members of the general public as they passed through the Rotunda.

Some of these cards include messages to individual service members without a known grave. Perhaps these families hoped that the casket contained the remains of their loved ones, or, at the very least, perhaps they felt that it symbolically stood in for the missing body. One card reads, "In loving memory of Edward Ray Gozzett & his comrades of the 'Alcedo' from Mother & Father." Gozzett had served on the USS *Alcedo*, which sank on 5 November 1917 after a German U-boat attack; Gozzett would eventually be memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at

Brookwood American Cemetery in England. ¹²²² Another card is dedicated "in loving memory of Essel M. Maxwell. Killed in action, unknown" and signed, simply, "Mother." ¹²²³ Maxwell would later be memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in France. ¹²²⁴ These cards reveal the deeply personal meaning of the Unknown's burial to Americans whose loved ones remained unaccounted for, something picked up on by the media.

The cards also provide evidence of the many relatives of the dead who came to the Rotunda, refuting a claim by H. G. Wells that few people there seemed to be "actual mourners of a dead soldier" because the people he saw seemed "characterized by a sort of bright eagerness and approval." 1225 Wells used this assumption to justify his claim that the events surrounding the burial of the American Unknown "contrasted very strongly" with his "memory of the great column of still and mournful people under the dark London sky, eight deep." 1226 While there is no contesting the stark difference between the number of war dead lost by Great Britain and the United States, Wells underestimated the personal impact of the Unknown Soldier to Americans, especially those who did lose a relative, as the wreath cards demonstrate. Wells argued that "because America is still so much less war-stricken than any of the other belligerents of the great war that so much more powerful a sense of will was apparent in all these proceedings. The burial of the Unknown Soldier in America was not a thing in itself as it was in London, in Paris or Rome—it was a solemn prelude to action, the action of the great [Naval] Conference." 1227 Perhaps cultural differences account for Wells's misunderstanding of Americans' attitudes toward the Unknown, for he disapprovingly described how "everywhere the Stars and Stripes, the most decorative and exhilarating of national flags, waved and fluttered," and called it "an irresistible expression of America's private life and buoyant well-being." "For most of the gathering," he wrote, "that coffin under the great flag held nothing they had ever touched

personally; it was not America's lost treasure of youth, but rather a warning of the fate that may yet overtake the youth of America if war is not to end." 1228

But Wells misjudged the American people and the form of civic nationalism that was combined with mourning rituals in the events honoring the Unknown Soldier. Americans that week mixed patriotism with reverence and pride with sadness in a uniquely American fashion. American writer Kirke Larue Simpson of the Associated Press, a Spanish-American War veteran who would win the 1922 Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the Unknown Soldier events—one of two journalists who won for pieces about the Unknown Soldier that year—understood the sentiments of the American people much more clearly than Wells did. 1229 Simpson wrote of how "there were many pathetic scenes as men and women whose sons had not come back from the front halted at the bier." Simpson observed these people and their grief and shared this in his reporting. Whether their beloved service member was lost at sea or on the battlefield, these Americans may have viewed the selected Unknown as a proxy for the individual they mourned, and many likely held out the hope that the casket contained the remains of their loved one. 1231

The broad range of communities and interest groups that paid tribute to the Unknown in the Rotunda also demonstrates the universality of the Unknown's symbolism and connections to an American and global audience. Interest in and appreciation for the Unknown cut across all strata of American society, briefly unifying much of the nation with the purpose of honoring the Unknown and all who served in the First World War. The choice for the Unknown to lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda allowed these people to take part in the ceremonies and feel included in this national ritual. It ensured that these ceremonies remained participatory and focused on those who served and suffered in the war. Although the tribute in the Rotunda was organized by the War Department, the participation of ordinary Americans added a grassroots component to the

events. It helped everyday Americans—especially those whose loved ones remained missing or unknown—take part in an officially sanctioned method of mourning.

Conclusion

After the doors to the Capitol closed to the public around midnight on 10 November, this interlude of intimate, familial closeness with the Unknown Soldier concluded. Throughout the day, visitors had been able to closely approach the Unknown, stand near the catafalque, and pay their respects. Whether a noted dignitary or a modest citizen, all who visited engaged in a near-universal form of mourning as they gazed on the casket holding the remains of this humble soldier, feted in the same manner as the nation's most highly regarded heroes. The next day, this intimacy would be replaced by the formal grandeur of the military procession and burial, which would enshrine the Unknown in a new altar of commemorative nationalism.

It had taken many steps to reach this point. From the initial legislation and the selection and transportation of the Unknown, to the urgent planning that prepared for his arrival, officials at all levels of the military and government had worked together ahead of Armistice Day. At the center of all these coordinated efforts stood the desire to properly honor the Unknown and the hope that doing so could provide some consolation to the nation. With the temporary Tomb in place and ready for its eternal occupant, on the next day—Armistice Day—all eyes would turn to the route from the Capitol to Arlington. The Unknown, surrounded by his comrades and representatives of the nation, would make one last journey, this time to the newly created Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Chapter 9: A People's Funeral: Burying America's Unknown Soldier

After so many months of preparation, the climactic moment finally laying America's newly selected Unknown Soldier to rest came on 11 November 1921, the third anniversary of the Armistice. Gone were the brief opportunities for more intimate moments of grief, such as had been seen inside the Capitol Rotunda on the previous day. Now, more so than at any event thus far in his journey, and on a scale unlike anything yet seen in the nation's history, the Unknown Soldier became the undisputed centerpiece of a nationalistic moment of collective mourning. Taking inspiration from Great Britain and France yet remaining uniquely American in its execution, the War Department used every available tool and ceremonial device to forever enshrine the Unknown Soldier and his newly created Tomb in the national consciousness. Employing the latest technology and age-old rituals, the War Department approached this mission with the same attention to detail, organization, and dedication it would have given to a wartime campaign.

The mission included multiple goals. First and foremost, the nation needed to commemorate and bury its Unknown Soldier in a way that demonstrated the government's commitment to honoring all who had served and died in the recent war. This meant ensuring that the procession, funeral, and burial all went off without any issue. Second, the events needed to be as inclusive and democratic as possible so that all Americans would feel that their communities were represented. The Unknown Soldier's power was rooted in part in the belief that he could have been any American. The War Department's effort represented a uniquely diverse day of inclusivity, despite the social divisions of the time. And finally, with many foreign guests in attendance, the day also had a diplomatic purpose. This was an opportunity for the United States to host its allies and showcase American patriotism and commemorative traditions. The

Washington Naval Conference, a much-anticipated arms limitation conference, would begin the next day in Washington, so the timing was propitious.

Amid these several goals, the central mission of burying and mourning the Unknown Soldier reigned supreme. Instead of being a straightforwardly celebratory Armistice Day observance, this 11 November was to be one of grief and consolation, remembrance and community. The streets of Washington would see not a rousing victory parade, but rather a funeral cortege carrying the mutilated remains of an American service member whom war had rendered unidentifiable. It was to be a funeral for the whole nation. For some families it would be the only funeral they would ever have for their loved one; for them, the day's ceremonies would be both a moment of closure and also an acknowledgment that true, complete closure would likely never come. The Tomb was to be a national grave, inaugurated amid a collective grief that connected the nation from coast to coast. This day would create a new site of civic religion and pilgrimage atop the hill at Arlington National Cemetery.

A People's Procession of Grief

The ceremonies on 11 November 1921 began in the morning with the procession to Arlington National Cemetery for the funeral. 1232 This massive military procession provided another opportunity for Americans to participate in the national moment of mourning by honoring the Unknown Soldier and all Americans who had served in World War I. The streets and sidewalks of Washington filled with crowds several rows deep to view the procession, despite what one report recalled as "a heavy mist hanging over the city and a penetrating chill in the air." 1233 The *Ashburn Guardian* of New Zealand reported that crowds started gathering along the route of the procession at about five in the morning, well before sunrise. 1234 Streetlights and

storefronts were decorated with American flags as part of the full display of patriotism, infusing the mournful procession with elements of nationalism and pride. 1235

Although the procession proved to be a massive military and civic parade, initial plans drafted by the War Department in September 1921 had envisioned even more troops than actually participated. Planners originally intended for the entire route of the march, from the Capitol to Memorial Amphitheater, to be "lined on both sides by troops placed at about five yard intervals." This would total about "5000 foot troops" from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and National Guard. ¹²³⁶ The Office of the Adjutant General of the Army sent letters to the various corps areas around 15 September to request troops for this duty and to begin tackling the logistics of organizing the planned numbers of soldiers. ¹²³⁷ By 29 September, however, the office had rescinded most of these offers due to funding limitations. 1238 Faced with the news that the streets of the procession could not be fully lined with troops, the War Department next sought to ensure that at least the Organized Reserve (known today as the U.S. Army Reserve) would be represented, since they too had participated in the war, albeit under a different wartime designation. 1239 It asked the corps areas to determine whether they could prepare one or two companies each to participate and represent the Organized Reserve. 1240 Even this proved to be too expensive, and modifications to the plan continued to be made. By 18 October, the secretary of War directed the adjutant general to send letters to the commanding general of the Second Corps Area, whom they had previously contacted about sending troops, to inform him that financial limitations now prevented any troops from being brought to Washington for participation in the ceremonies. Except for a firing battery from nearby Fort Meade in Maryland, all participating troops would be selected from those stationed in the Washington, D.C., area. 1241

These financial constraints are indicative of the hurried nature of the planning, as well as the high cost and logistical complexity of the events. Since the passage of the legislation authorizing the Tomb only occurred in March 1921, the War Department and the government did not have long to prepare for, fund, and execute these large-scale, high-visibility events.

Moreover, service members detailed to support the events would need to be provided with lodging, money for meals, and funds for other expenses. 1242 Obviously, certain elements would have to be scrapped or scaled back. But given the sacred nature of the War Department's unusual mission, none of these factors could be allowed to prevent the execution of the ceremonies with the highest degree of honor possible.

Despite such challenges, the planning still resulted in a spectacle of military precision and civilian cooperation that showcased the diverse constituencies who contributed to the war effort. These Americans now reunited on a carefully chosen route from the Capitol to Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater. The selection of the route required coordination with government officials from the District of Columbia, whose police force was to play a key role in handling the parade. ¹²⁴³ J. M. Wainwright, then acting secretary of War, acknowledged as much in a letter of 30 September to the president of the District of Columbia Board of Commissioners, writing that it was "greatly appreciated that you have given up your plans of having any municipal function on November 11th." ¹²⁴⁴ By this, he meant that the district had sacrificed its own local plans for Armistice Day so that it could support the Unknown Soldier's burial and related large-scale events being hosted in the nation's capital.



Figure 9.1. Jonathan Mayhew Wainwright, Assistant Secretary of War, played an important role in the planning of the ceremonies honoring the Unknown Soldier in the DC area. (Library of Congress)

In this letter, Wainwright went on to discuss the challenges of staging a funeral procession between two sites at some distance from each other, separated by the Potomac River. Wainwright explained that "the route of the march from the Capitol to the cemetery is much longer than would be desired for a ceremony of this kind, regardless of which route we adopt." ¹²⁴⁵ Of the options then under consideration, he suggested using the route that crossed the Aqueduct Bridge (today's Key Bridge), as it would be about a mile shorter than the route over the Highway Bridge, and would allow more people to see the parade. This point was critical as the War Department desired the procession to "pass through populous districts under observation of as many people as possible," thereby being easily accessible to the public. ¹²⁴⁶ The War Department planned each detail of the day with this mission of accessibility in mind and in line with the belief that the Unknown Soldier belonged to the American people. His family, though anonymous and unknown, was part of the populace.



Figure 9.2. At precisely 8:00 a.m., body bearers carried the Unknown's casket from Rotunda and down the Capitol's East Steps to the waiting caisson. A military honor guard on the steps stood at attention as the casket passed by. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The military procession overtly reflected this aim, as it included not just a large contingent of government and military officials and dignitaries but also a diverse assortment of Americans who had supported the war effort. The morning of the procession was chilly and crisp. One newspaper reported that "banks of clouds canopied the city," and for onlookers at Memorial Amphitheater, a "gray November mist completely obscured the distant dome of the Capitol," though the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial could be seen. ¹²⁴⁷ The procession started to form at 8:00 a.m., when the body bearers brought the Unknown's casket from the Rotunda to the east steps of the Capitol. ¹²⁴⁸ (For more on the body bearers, see sidebar 09a "The Body Bearers of the Unknown Soldier.) Followed by the honorary pallbearers, the body bearers placed the casket on the waiting caisson, while the U.S. Army Band played a dirge, the military members in attendance stood at present arms, and field artillery near the Washington Monument began firing minute guns. These minute guns would continue to fire until the conclusion of the day's ceremonies, pausing only at noon for the prescribed two minutes of

silence. By 8:30 a.m., the procession had begun its steady march across the city, with the caisson, which was pulled by six horses, following the first groups. 1249



Figure 9.3. Once the Unknown's casket was placed on the caisson, the honorary pallbearers lined up as the military cordon remained at attention. (*Library of Congress*)

Gen. Harry H. Bandholtz, the commanding general of the District of Washington, served as the escort commander at the front of the procession, which he had been tasked with organizing and executing. He was accompanied by a staff of three officers: a Lieutenant Perry, Lt. Col. H. N. Cootes, and Col. C. S. Babcock. 1250 Behind them marched the U.S. Army Band and a section of the Army Drum Corps, followed by a composite foot regiment. This foot regiment included men from the 3d Battalion, 64th Infantry, of Fort Washington, Maryland; a combined battalion of "bluejackets" from the Navy and Marines stationed at the Washington Navy Yard and Quantico; and an engineer battalion from the District of Columbia National Guard. Each group in the composite regiment was accompanied by staff officers, and Col. William C. Rivers of the 3d Cavalry was in charge of the entire group. 1251 Next marched a mounted field artillery battalion from the 2d Battalion, 3d Field Artillery, out of Fort Myer, Virginia; and the 2d Squadron, 3d Cavalry, also from Fort Myer. 1252



Figure 9.4. The U.S. Army Band, pictured here, played a prominent role from the moment the Unknown Soldier was carried down the Capitol steps and throughout the funeral procession. When the formation reached the Aqueduct Bridge, the U.S. Marine Corps Band replaced the U.S. Army Band in the procession. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Then came four current and former military chaplains: the Right Reverend Charles H.

Brent, an Episcopal bishop who had previously served as the chief chaplain of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) and who would also lead the religious aspects of the funeral ceremony for the Unknown; Morris S. Lazaron, a Jewish rabbi and member of the U.S. Army Reserve; Navy chaplain J. B. Frazier; and Army chaplain J. T. Axton. ¹²⁵³ (For more on the chaplains, see sidebar 09b. "Faith and Service: Four Military Chaplains, Four Religious Traditions.") Following the chaplains was the caisson holding the casket, surrounded in a column formation by the body bearers, four to a side. ¹²⁵⁴ The twelve honorary pallbearers (who did not carry the casket) walked on the outside of the two lines of body bearers. They included Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord at the head, followed by generals George C. Rickards, William Haan, David C. Shanks Jr., Morton Edwards, Charles Menoher, Charles Bailey, and John F. O'Ryan, admirals Charles P. Plunkett, Henry B. Wilson, and Hugh Rodman, and Maj. Gen. Wendell Cushing Neville of the Marine Corps. ¹²⁵⁵



Figure 9.5. As the procession set off for Alington National Cemetery, four current and former military chaplains marched just in front of the caisson. From left to right these chaplains were: Chaplain John T. Axton; Morris S. Lazaron; Charles H. Brent; and John B. Frazier. (*Library of Congress*)

Immediately behind the caisson came a series of the nation's highest ranking government officials (including the president, vice president, Supreme Court justices, cabinet members, state governors, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives), along with the distinguished officers chosen to escort them. ¹²⁵⁶ This group started together at the Capitol. The officers were each assigned to escort one or more government officials, in the following order:

The president: Gen. John J. Pershing

The vice president: Admiral Robert E. Coontz The chief justice: Admiral Hilary P. Jones

The associate justices: Lt. Gen. Nelson A. Miles and Lt. Gen. Samuel B. M. Young The cabinet: Maj. Gen. Tasker H. Bliss and Rear Admiral Clarence S. Williams

The Senate: Maj. Gen. Robert L. Bullard The House: Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune 1257

The personal aides to these officers marched "opposite their respective chiefs about ten yards to the right or left respectively." ¹²⁵⁸



Figure 9.6. Twelve honorary pallbearers lined up on both sides of the caisson. These honorary pallbearers accompanied the Unknown Soldier throughout the entire route to Arlington National Cemetery on foot, walking next to the caisson. (Library of Congress)



Figure 9.7. High-ranking government officials marched directly behind the caisson. Each was accompanied by a senior military officer. President Harding (left front) and his escort General Pershing (right front) the took the lead. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Plans originally called for former president Woodrow Wilson, in ill health at the time, to ride in a carriage in a prominent place behind the chief justice of the Supreme Court. However, he arrived late and preferred to be placed wherever most convenient, so he joined the procession farther to the rear. ¹²⁵⁹ His participation was an emotional highlight as crowds yearned to see the

commander in chief who had led them through the war. President Warren G. Harding even took off his hat to salute Wilson as the carriage passed him at one point in the procession. ¹²⁶⁰ The *Ashburn Guardian* observed that when the crowds saw President Wilson, "thunderous cheers . . . broke the silence of the throngs. He was the chief centre, next to the Unknown Soldier's coffin, of the crowd's attention. The ex-President's face was wrinkled and drawn and worked with emotion. He struggled to keep back the tears as the people strained the lines to see him and greeting him with cheers." ¹²⁶¹ The *New York Times* corroborated this observation, describing how, "it was apparent that the sight of Wilson, his once strong body broken by ill-health, his limbs too frail to permit his marching with the other great men who followed the Unknown caisson on foot, was a grim reminder that he had been an outstanding figure in the world conflict which today's ceremony typified." ¹²⁶² Another article noted that the Wilsons were later met at their home by "a great ovation by friends and admirers." ¹²⁶³ For many Americans, the opportunity to witness the sickly Wilson in the procession must have brought back memories of the war and emphasized the fragility of the lives of those connected to it.



Figure 9.8. Former President Woodrow Wilson and his wife, Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, rode in a carriage further back in the procession. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The next segment of the procession was composed of veterans, citizens, and organizations related to the war. Headed by another section of the Army Drum Corps to keep up the quick-time cadence, it began with recipients of the Medal of Honor. These men were arranged by date of award (starting with the oldest), without regard to rank. The government paid the expenses only of those awarded the medal during the most recent war, a budget-driven change from the War Department's original intention of paying for all recipients. ¹²⁶⁴ Following the Medal of Honor recipients came a large contingent of officers and enlisted men from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, including representatives from each of their services, arranged by rank. ¹²⁶⁵ Behind them marched 132 veterans of the First World War, chosen by their governors to represent their state or territory; they were arranged alphabetically by state from the front to the back. ¹²⁶⁶



Figure 9.9. World War I veterans from each state and territory, selected by the governors, participated in in the procession. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The final and perhaps most "grassroots" portion of the procession consisted of contingents from forty-four citizens' organizations, each led by a chosen representative and

arranged in no particular order. These groups, with backgrounds stretching from the Civil War through the First World War, included veterans' service organizations, women's groups, welfare organizations, patriotic and hereditary societies, community service groups, and others. A battalion of about 250 cadets from Georgetown University brought up the rear. ¹²⁶⁷

In their diversity, these groups showcased a cross-section of American society at the time, if also—in their juxtaposition—revealing paradoxes in the democratic spirit supposedly at the heart of the procession. The Grand Army of the Republic, a powerful organization of U.S. Civil War veterans, headed this section of the procession, directly followed by Confederate veterans. ¹²⁶⁸ Such a combination epitomized the era's prevalent spirit of "reconciliation" between North and South, which often came at the expense of African American civil rights. In his account of the events that week, H. G. Wells found the participation of Civil War veterans to be especially "rich with association and suggestion," since they represented, in his view, "a great fight against a division, a separation, that today, thanks to their sacrifice, has become inconceivable." ¹²⁶⁹ Wells's perception fit the dominant mood of reconciliation at the time, but he overlooked how the glamorization of the Civil War and the apparent reunion of the nation hid deeper divides over racial issues and the meaning and memory of the war.

Organizations of other older veterans were prominently featured toward the front of this section of the procession, including the Indian War Veterans Association, the Spanish-American War Veterans, and the Naval and Military Order of the Spanish-American War. 1270 Their presence emphasized that the Unknown Soldier, while intrinsically connected to the Great War, was also intended to evoke the memory of all of America's conflicts. As the *San Francisco Chronicle* observed, "all of America's wars were represented . . . it was the hope of the people who gave up the 'unknown soldier' that his funeral might symbolize not only the past sacrifice,

but the funeral of all wars." ¹²⁷¹ Even in 1921, then, the public understood the greater meaning of the Tomb and its role as a connecting thread through all of American history: past, present, and future.



Figure 9.10. Veterans' service organizations joined the procession, along with other civic organizations.

This photo shows members of the American Legion marching in the procession.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

Veterans' organizations from the First World War were highly visible. These included the American Legion, the Military Order of the World War, the Society of World War Veterans, Jewish Veterans of the World War, Colored Veterans of the War, and multiple societies that represented the veterans of specific divisions. The Veterans of Foreign Wars, now filled with many World War I veterans, took a spot toward the front, near the American Legion. 1272

Women's groups played an especially prominent part. These included the National War Mothers (which included Gold Star mothers among its ranks), the (Women's) Overseas Service League (composed of women who served overseas in the war), the American Women's Legion, and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. 1273 Many women who had served in uniform wore these uniforms during the procession to make a statement about the formal nature of their wartime contributions. Overseas nurses were a case in point. 1274 The participation of these

women underscored the importance and deep patriotism of their actions in support of the war effort. Moreover, through the procession, the women claimed a place for themselves among the leaders of the United States' effort to commemorate the war.



Figure 9.11. Nurses played a critical role during World War I and its aftermath, especially during the influenza pandemic. This group of nurses who served overseas marched in the procession as a testament to their service. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Throughout the procession, the crowds reacted to the steady stream of both famous figures and rank-and-file Americans. Some groups elicited deeply felt responses. The *New York Times* noted that "the crowds along the line of march were imbued with the solemnity of the occasion and showed an appreciation of the funeral spirit," but added that "the people cheered as a group of men who had won the Medal of Honor passed. The cheers became a roar when the Gold Star mothers appeared, the women who had lost sons in the war. They, like the men, following the caisson on foot." These two groups—one of service members, one of civilian mothers—appeared to be held in the highest regard by the crowd. This demonstrates the extraordinary respect accorded to the mothers of the war dead.



Figure 9.12. The D.C. Chapter of the American War Mothers organization marched in the procession, demonstrating the nation's perception that mothers of service members contributed to the war effort.

Many Gold Star mothers were members of the American War Mothers.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

By welcoming so many disparate organizations to participate in the procession, the War Department found an effective way to help meet its goal of making the burial of the Unknown Soldier an event aimed at the American people. Taken together, the groups in the procession represented a wide swath of American society. The press picked up on this, as evidenced by the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s observation that "it was hard to distinguish the celebrated from the unknown. They were just a group of men paying tribute to some mother's sacrifice, to a nation's young man. For, of course, the phrase 'unknown soldier' cannot be a true expression.

Unidentified, but someone knew him." Parade-goers might easily see themselves represented in the parade or feel that it included an organization or participant relevant to them, and thereby perhaps feel a sense of kinship toward the Unknown Soldier. With the war a recent and raw memory, the parade served as a democratic moment to bring the nation together while honoring one of their own, an American service member who could have been their brother, father, husband, friend, or neighbor.

After leaving the Capitol, the procession traveled along Pennsylvania Avenue to 15th Street, returned to Pennsylvania Avenue, and moved past the White House. Here, at West Executive Avenue, the procession halted and the civilian dignitaries (including the president, vice president, Supreme Court justices, cabinet, and congressional representatives) broke off, getting into cars that would transport them the rest of the way to Memorial Amphitheater. This motorcade used a separate route on the bridge at 14th Street, before entering the cemetery through the Treasury Gate (located off Porter Avenue near today's Sections 10 and 25). The use of separate routes for the motorcade and the main procession yielded mixed results. While the choice left the main procession uninterrupted, a massive traffic jam that the *New York Times* attributed to a "balky flivver" (a cheap car) delayed the dignitaries. President Harding would have arrived late to the ceremony, had his vehicle not cut across an open field to save time. 1279

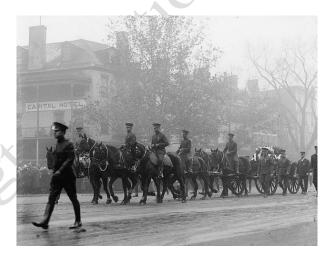


Figure 9.13. The caisson carrying the Unknown Soldier, shown here, remained the main focus of the procession. (*Library of Congress*)

As the motorcars set off for the cemetery, General Pershing continued on foot in his role as chief mourner, leading the rest of the marchers. ¹²⁸⁰ The procession continued onto M Street and then took the Aqueduct Bridge across the Potomac River into Virginia. At the bridge, the

clergy departed to take cars to the cemetery and the U.S. Marine Band replaced the U.S. Army Band. ¹²⁸¹ The procession continued into the cemetery using the Arlington (Fort Myer) Gate (near today's Old Post Chapel Gate), while the cavalry squadron, field artillery battalion (except for one firing battery), and machine gun company of the infantry battalion left to parade on a drill ground near the cemetery. As the U.S. Marine Band played a funeral march, the remaining procession moved through the cemetery to the west entrance of Memorial Amphitheater. It arrived around 11:40 a.m. ¹²⁸²

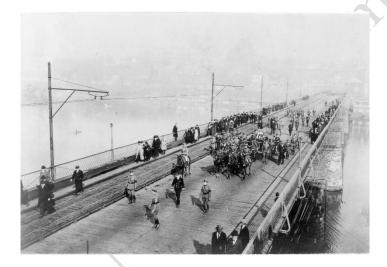


Figure 9.14. While the dignitaries used the Highway Bridge to cross the Potomac, the procession carried the Unknown across the Aqueduct Bridge from Georgetown to Arlington.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

Ultimately, the three-hour procession through the streets of the nation's capital gave the public a grand opportunity to join the national tribute to the Unknown Soldier. Whether participating in the procession or witnessing it on the streets, everyday Americans were central to what was a dramatic display of grief and reverence for this unidentified service member. As the War Department had hoped, the procession evoked the universality of the Unknown Soldier and welcomed Americans of all kinds into the grieving process. Despite their differences and

divisions, the people of the nation were the collective, symbolic family for this fallen soldier. On this one day, all could be equal in grief.

Mourning and Memorialization in Memorial Amphitheater: The Funeral Service

This spirit of national unity and inclusivity continued during the next stage of the ceremonies: the funeral service in Memorial Amphitheater. Each component of this carefully choreographed event required precise planning by the War Department as it accounted for large crowds in the relatively limited space of the amphitheater. One of the first problems, given the intensity of national interest in the funeral, was deciding on the guest list. With five thousand seats available, the War Department had some room to maintain its goal of inclusivity, but it nevertheless had to turn away many people who desired tickets. ¹²⁸³ Even members of Congress were limited to two seats each. ¹²⁸⁴

Distinguished guests topped the list. These included the current president and the two living former presidents, William Howard Taft (then chief justice of the Supreme Court) and Woodrow Wilson; members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, state governors, and other high-ranking government officials; representatives of the Allies, foreign ambassadors and ministers, American and foreign military leaders, and delegates to the Washington Naval Conference. Also included among the distinguished guests were the commissioners of the District of Columbia, the commander of the American Legion, and the Heads of the Red Cross and other welfare organizations. Living holders of the Medal of Honor also received an invitation.

In addition to these distinguished guests, the War Department allotted a significant number of tickets to other Americans with connections to the war to keep the event inclusive of the general public. ¹²⁸⁸ Originally, rank-and-file World War I veterans were supposed to be

chosen through a complex process that had been intended to include one veteran for every 10,000 of the 4,764,071 who had served (or about 476 veterans). In actuality, further limits had to be imposed and these veterans numbered far fewer, as they had to be chosen by the governor of their state or territory, and no governor could have more than three representatives attend. ¹²⁸⁹ The War Department also planned to invite "one officer and one enlisted man from each branch of service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard," though these plans may have eventually been scaled back, or met through the many service members already invited. ¹²⁹⁰

The initial War Department plans from October 1921 allotted 500 tickets to parents of unknown dead service members and another 500 to parents of identified deceased service members. Correspondence from the days immediately after the funeral indicates that a letter offering two amphitheater seats was sent to all relatives of the unknown dead, the names and addresses of which had been taken from lists provided by the Cemeterial Division of the Quartermaster Corps. Many of these letters had been returned as undeliverable, indicating that these ticket allotments may not have been filled as initially planned. A memo from 12 November 1921 stated that about 3,000 letters had been sent and about 250 tickets had been mailed to relatives, a number that indicates that not all of the 500 tickets allotted to the relatives of the unknown dead had been used by this constituency, though relatives of the war dead overall still had a large presence in the amphitheater. ¹²⁹¹



Figure 9.15. Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater could seat up to 5,000 people. The War Department closely allocated tickets for those seats. This view shows the crowd beginning to take their seats prior to the start of the funeral service. (*Library of Congress*)

For the parents of those who remained unidentified, this ceremony would likely be the only funeral they would ever have for their loved one. In a letter intended for the families of the unknown dead, Adjutant Gen. P. C. Harris explained that "the nearest relatives of the unknown dead will without doubt take an exceptional interest in these ceremonies and the Secretary of War desires to accord special privileges to as many as possible of those who can be present." ¹²⁹² But the War Department also acknowledged that all Gold Star parents, including those of the identified dead, would likely have found the funeral service deeply personal, given that the Unknown Soldier had already come to represent all who had died and served. ¹²⁹³ Newspapers picked up on this sense of universal connection. The *New York Tribune* explained that people would be paying "silent tribute not alone to this one man, but to his 2,000,000 fighting comrades, who without thought of personal reward assumed the heavy burden of war in defense of liberty." ¹²⁹⁴ Likewise, in his Pulitzer Prize—winning editorial about the burial, journalist Frank M. O'Brien of the *New York Herald* argued that the Unknown Soldier was a "far more perfect symbol than any man could be whose name and deeds we know. He represents more, really, than

the unidentified dead, for we cannot separate them spiritually from the war heroes whose names are written on their gravestones. He—this spirit whom we honor—stands for the unselfishness of all." ¹²⁹⁵

In order to also include veterans from earlier wars among the attendees, the War Department extended invitations to numerous veterans' organizations, such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. 1296 Many of these groups held influence and political power, and excluding them could have been damaging for the government, in addition to seeming insensitive to these earlier veterans. However, the War Department lacked exact information about many veterans' organizations and therefore needed to publicly solicit applications to secure their participation. In a press release from 5 October, the War Department announced that it "desired to accord representation to the various prominent war veterans' societies throughout the country," but claimed that it was "without information as to many of these organizations." 1297 This press release invited "applications from all such societies which are organized under Federal or State charter and have a reasonably large membership." ¹²⁹⁸ Those groups that applied and were accepted could then "nominate a limited number of individual representatives" for seats at the funeral, in addition to the delegations they could send to march in the parade. All this was to be at their own expense due to government funding limitations. 1299 This approach ensured that the process for distributing tickets remained democratic, yet put much of the financial burden onto the interested organizations themselves.

Despite its efforts to represent a wide swath of society, particularly those who supported the war effort, the War Department nevertheless faced some limited criticism after the burial from individuals and groups who felt left out. For example, J. A. Gregg of Minnesota wrote to secretary of War John W. Weeks on 17 November 1921 to complain that, as far as he could tell,

he had seen "no mention about anybody representing the draft boards" in the newspaper coverage of the burial. ¹³⁰⁰ In his reply, Weeks explained that the War Department had used the "public press" to spread the word about the events and include as many representative Americans as possible, but that it had relied on the governors to select appropriate representatives from their states, such as from draft boards. Weeks believed that some such individuals had in fact been included. ¹³⁰¹ And yet, while Weeks praised the contributions of the draft boards, he also noted that the ceremonies for the Unknown Soldier had been focused on creating "an opportunity for the Nation to befittingly honor its Known and Unknown dead. No attempt was made to reward any living person for service performed, however valorous his deeds may have been. In doing this we were fortunate in receiving the spontaneous and voluntary support of all classes of people throughout the country." ¹³⁰² Weeks thus emphasized that the burial was a national event focused on providing the American people with an outlet for their grief through honoring the unknown war dead. The collective took precedence over the individual in these ceremonies, and the Unknown Soldier was not intended to glorify the living.

Despite the few complaints received later, on the day of the funeral, the *New York Times* noted the diversity of the audience inside the Amphitheater and described its makeup at length. This showcased the success of the War Department's attempt at inclusivity. Highlighting the contrast between the famous leaders and everyday Americans present, the *Times* pointed out that one section included "the crippled and blind men from the Walter Reed General and other hospitals under the care of army nurses, dressed in soft gray gowns with long veils of gray falling from small caps. Some had to be carried in." ¹³⁰³ The article described how

Y. girls [i.e., YMCA girls] and members of the Knights of Columbus, the Salvation Army, the Young Women's Hebrew Association and other auxiliary organizations, which gave service in the war, had no special places reserved for them, but their uniforms were seen here and there in the audience . . . a large group of women who sat in one of the

sections were the mothers who lost their sons in the World War. Most of them were in black. Near by was a smaller group of men, women and girls. To them the services over the body of the Unknown Warrior had a peculiar significance, for they were the fathers, mothers, wives and sisters of the unidentified dead. Some one among them may have been the nearest of kin of the boy who was this day honored by all of America. 1304

By emphasizing these attendees, all of whom had been so deeply affected by the war, the *Times* reiterated the essential purpose of the day: honoring the war dead and providing solace to their families.

Although the War Department organized the funeral quickly, it took pains to coordinate every detail so that nothing would take away from its solemnity. In anticipation of large crowds coming to the cemetery without tickets to the ceremony, the War Department authorized the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) to install a Bell Loud Speaking System in Memorial Amphitheater at no cost to the government and no charge for service. ¹³⁰⁵ The large speakers, which broadcast the funeral to crowds outside the amphitheater, can be seen in photos of Memorial Amphitheater before and during the funeral.

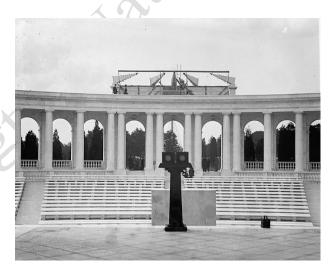


Figure 9.16. The War Department allowed the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) to install a loudspeaker system in Memorial Amphitheater so the crowds outside of the main seating area could hear the ceremony. (Library of Congress)

This system could amplify a speaker's voice throughout large spaces. According to a pamphlet from the Western Electric Company, which developed the loud-speaking telephone with the research laboratories of AT&T, the system "was made possible by virtue of the fundamental knowledge gained in the development of telephonic apparatus and in the construction of vacuum tube amplifiers." Such amplification had also been used earlier in 1921, at the inauguration of President Harding on 4 March. According to the *Washington Post*, the amplifiers were developed for "public use wherever they may be of benefit and not for commercial exploitation." Ensuring the successful operation of this amplification system was a significant concern for the War Department ahead of the funeral.



Figure 9.17. In addition to the loudspeakers, AT&T also installed equipment under the Amphitheater to amplify the microphone placed on the apse of the amphitheater. (*Library of Congress*)

To this end, on 20 October, the secretary of War directed that "no aircraft be permitted to fly in the vicinity of the Memorial Amphitheater, Arlington National Cemetery," on 11 November between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., "due to the fact that the noise of aeroplanes ruins the affect [sic] of the Bell Loud Speaker which is to be used as a voice amplifier during the

ceremonies." ¹³⁰⁹ In the days leading up to the ceremony, tests were conducted to ensure that the system would work flawlessly. AT&T staff even checked technology that would enable the service to be broadcast into Madison Square Garden and its surrounding park in New York

City—a test broadcast that reportedly startled the New Yorkers within earshot. ¹³¹⁰

The amplification system turned out to be a useful tool, as large crowds did show up at the cemetery to try to hear the ceremonies. ¹³¹¹ The Western Electric Company estimated that an audience of one hundred thousand people gathered in the cemetery to hear Harding's funeral oration via the amplifier system. ¹³¹² The *New York Times*, reporting the same crowd size, surmised that

never before, perhaps, has there been such a gathering assembled on the hills of the national cemetery. . . . While only a small portion who came to do honor to the Unknown could be accommodated within the enclosure where the leaders of this and other nations bowed before the bier of the unnamed hero, the vast multitude without, including exservice men and many war mothers, followed the memorial ceremonies by means of the telephone amplifier . . . the many thousands within the cemetery heard every detail of the exercises . . . upon every side of the immense amphitheatre the people massed. ¹³¹³

The amplifier system expanded the audience at the funeral far beyond those seated within the colonnaded boundaries of the amphitheater, readily allowing those without tickets to participate.

More than that, however, this technology enabled Americans far beyond the cemetery to follow the events at Memorial Amphitheater as they were happening. The system transmitted a live broadcast over long-distance telephone lines to both Madison Square Garden and San Francisco's Civic Auditorium, again at no cost to the government. ¹³¹⁴ The Western Electric Company wrote that over 55,000 people in these cities heard the broadcast, permitting them to "join the same emotions as those in the vicinity of the speaker." ¹³¹⁵ Photos of these venues show the crowds spilling out onto the streets, where amplifiers were attached to buildings. The Associated Press reported that Madison Square Garden was "packed far beyond its seating

capacity of 15,000, and the crowd outside filled every available inch of Madison Square park." ¹³¹⁶ Civic Auditorium was said to have accommodated 15,000 people inside, as well as additional crowds gathered outside. 1317 An article printed in the Parsons Daily Republican in Kansas claimed that 25,000 people in New York heard the broadcast, including 1,000 Gold Star mothers in Madison Square Garden. It described the telephone amplifiers as having performed "a miracle." ¹³¹⁸ A program for the New York event—which included local addresses and musical segments, in addition to the broadcast from Arlington—identified it as being held "under the auspices of the American Legion and New York Patriotic and Civic Societies." ¹³¹⁹ The program noted at which point the Arlington ceremonies would begin and provided instructions as to when the local audience could participate by standing, sitting, singing along with hymns, and so forth. Furthermore, it detailed when hymns would be played locally, which portions of the Arlington ceremony would not be broadcast, and when an announcer at Arlington would narrate the action at the funeral. ¹³²⁰ As indicated by this program, the events in New York, and likely also in San Francisco, adopted a hybrid format that connected these disparate geographic areas and audiences.



Figure 9.18. In addition to the loudspeakers at Arlington, the AT&T equipment also broadcast the audio to New York City and San Francisco. This crowd filled Madison Square Garden in New York City to hear the ceremonies. (Courtesy of the AT&T Archives and History Center)

At Arlington, the War Department provided strict instructions to attendees in an effort to maintain some semblance of order and logistical control amid the thick crowds. Everyone except for President Harding and First Lady Florence Harding was instructed to be in place inside Memorial Amphitheater before the ceremony began at the planned time of 11:56 a.m., with the playing of the national anthem. ¹³²¹ A War Department press release directed those with reserved amphitheater tickets to be seated no later than 11:15 a.m., with some given instructions to arrive even earlier. ¹³²² Participants in the procession who had tickets to the amphitheater ceremony entered and took their seats after the casket had been moved into the apse. The limited number of seats inside the amphitheater meant that only selected representatives of the many organizations that took part in the procession received tickets, while the rest stood outside in areas reserved for them alongside the massive crowd. ¹³²³



Figure 9.19. This image was taken from the top of the amphitheater's apse looking down at the stage. The Unknown's casket and podium are visible, as is the crowd sitting in the amphitheater. The front and sides of the stage are filled with floral tributes. (*Library of Congress*)

Inside Memorial Amphitheater, a sea of people filled every inch of the structure, from its seats and boxes to its rooftop. The grand marble amphitheater seemed to overflow with wreaths, and photos show floral tributes stacked several rows deep in front of the stage and lined up along

the railings of the seating boxes. ¹³²⁴ The *New York Times* described how "in front of the stage were deep banks of flowers—tributes from Governments, organizations and individuals to the unknown warrior. Every allied country was represented by some device. Divisions of the American Army had contributed designs representing their insignia—red, white, blue, orange, purple, scarlet—all the colors of the rainbow." ¹³²⁵ Around the balcony, the *Times* reported, "wreaths of the States and territories of the union" had been hung atop the columns; in the middle of each wreath hung a shield decorated with a blue star that itself contained a gold star in its center to memorialize the war dead. ¹³²⁶ Included among the wreaths on display were some of the gifts previously presented to the Unknown, such as the Victory statue that had been placed by the casket in the Capitol, suggesting that the wreaths, too, were likely taken from the Rotunda to Arlington and arranged ahead of the funeral. ¹³²⁷



Figure 9.20. This image was taken from the rear of the amphitheater looking toward the stage. President Harding can be seen at the podium. The sheer number of floral tributes is evident.

(Courtesy of the AT&T Archives and History Center)

Pomp and circumstance reigned in the moments surrounding the formal entrance of the casket into the amphitheater. Just before its arrival, a male choir from Epiphany Church in

Washington, D.C., cloaked in white robes, sang "The Son of God Goes Forth to War" as they made their way to the top balcony. ¹³²⁸ The caisson arrived at the west entrance at around 11:40 a.m., by which time most of the amphitheater audience was in position. The military escort accompanying the caisson held a salute while the body bearers carefully carried the casket into the apse of the amphitheater and placed it on a black-draped catafalque on the stage. The U.S. Marine Band played as the casket was taken onto the stage, and then the band entered the amphitheater through the south entrance. ¹³²⁹ As the casket processed into the amphitheater, the audience stood with their hats off, having received such instructions inside the program given to all attendees. ¹³³⁰ General Pershing and his officers walked with the pallbearers into the amphitheater and took their positions in the apse, after which the rest of the ticket-holders from the procession entered, guided by ushers. ¹³³¹ The artillery battery repositioned itself north of the amphitheater in preparation for gun salutes. The rest of the caisson's military escort re-formed so that it would be in place for the procession out of the cemetery after the departure of President Harding, at the conclusion of the events. ¹³³²

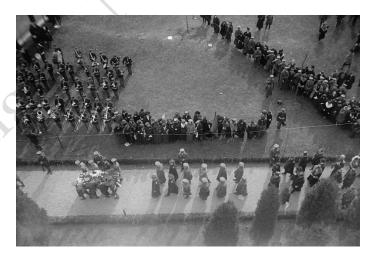


Figure 9.21. After arriving at Arlington National Cemetery, the Unknown Soldier was carried around the south side of Memorial Amphitheater, up the south steps, and placed on the apse for the funeral service.

(Library of Congress)

The tension in the amphitheater as the crowd waited for the casket to arrive must have been palpable. Those in attendance seemed attuned to every element of the atmosphere, particularly the weather—and yet later reports were inconsistent here, suggesting the vagaries of memory. One recollection claimed that just after the Unknown arrived, and before the president and First Lady entered, "the sun, which had been appearing intermittently, came out in all its glory, separating the fleecy clouds which had gathered in the sky; an omen, as if the heavens had opened to admit the spirit of the dead whose mortal remains were about to be committed to the earth." Several newspaper articles, in contrast, pinpointed the sun as coming out as the president started his speech, breaking through the haze that had hung in the sky all morning, while yet another article claimed that the clouds had parted just as the cortege reached the open tomb itself. Their inconsistencies aside, these reports provide a sense of the scene inside the amphitheater and the deep reflection that people undertook that day, finding symbolism in every aspect of the experience.

After the president and First Lady arrived around 11:55 a.m., the U.S. Marine Band officially started the ceremony by playing the national anthem. Next, Army chief of chaplains John T. Axton delivered the invocation. ¹³³⁵ He asked God to bless and "help us fittingly to honor our unknown soldiers who gave their all in laying sure foundations of international commweal. Help us to keep clear the obligation we have toward all worthy soldiers, living and dead, that their sacrifices and their valor fade not from our memory. Temper our sorrow." ¹³³⁶ By opening his invocation with a plea to honor all unknown dead alongside all service members, living and deceased, Axton added to the interpretation that the burial of the Unknown Soldier went beyond just the one body being interred that day. He defined the Tomb as a place with a larger significance, applicable to all aspects of American military memorialization. He also referenced

the arms limitation conference starting the next day, asking God to accord "exceptional judgment, foresight and tactfulness of approach to those who seek to bring about a better understanding among men and nations, to the end that discord, which provokes war, may disappear and that there may be world tranquility." ¹³³⁷ Axton, like many others, viewed the funeral as the prologue to the conference, a somber start to an effort many hoped would prevent a future war like the one that brought the crowds to Arlington that day.

At twelve noon, the bugler sounded attention three times, signaling the audience to rise and observe the two minutes of silence happening across the country. ¹³³⁸ This national moment of silence held great significance. It united the nation in honoring the Unknown Soldier and all Americans who had sacrificed in some way during World War I. While planning for the ceremony, the War Department noted that "every one in the cemetery and vicinity must be informed of the beginning of the two minutes' silence and there must be absolute silence in the whole cemetery during this period." ¹³³⁹ These efforts to ensure silence worked. The Associated Press observed that "there was absolute silence, a hush as if the world had stopped." ¹³⁴⁰ The *New York Times* described how "not a single noise broke this silence, while one looked about and saw many a woman in black weeping." ¹³⁴¹

The silence stretched across the nation. Men on board the USS *Olympia*, still moored at the Washington Navy Yard, observed this "period of silent prayer" and recorded it in their logbook. ¹³⁴² Vaudeville theaters in the Keith-Albee circuit (which extended across several eastern and midwestern states) hosted memorial services on the day of the funeral and likely included the silence in their programming. ¹³⁴³

New York City took the call to silence very seriously. One newspaper reported that "all traffic, telephones and telegraphs were brought to a standstill for two minutes at noon in honour

of America's Unknown Soldier. Church Bells tolled for fifteen minutes." ¹³⁴⁴ Another newspaper reported that in Brooklyn, "little business was transacted," and those offices that stayed open observed the silence, at which point "every car had stopped, all hats were doffed and nearly everyone came to a halt . . . surface, elevated, and subway traffic halted for two minutes at the stroke of noon. The telephone exchanges ceased operation at the same moment." ¹³⁴⁵ Firehouses and police stations in the New York area received orders to pause for the prayer, and the entire retail trade ceased operations for the day. The moment of silence was likely also observed by the various organizations and houses of worship that held their own Armistice Day services, such as those at the 106th Infantry Armory, chaired by Gen. George Wingate, who had led the effort for an unknown soldier to be buried in the planned Victory Hall building in New York. 1346 In fact, so many religious services were held that day that the New York Times exclaimed that "it was as if the churchgoers of the city had made of Armistice Day a holy day of obligation." ¹³⁴⁷ All of New York seemed to be in mourning: "flags at half mast flew throughout the city. Public buildings, ports, visiting ships in the harbor—ships that bear the flags of nearly all the nations of the world, not excepting Germany—displayed their colors mourning." ¹³⁴⁸

The nationwide moment of silence ended at 12:02 p.m. At Arlington, two blasts from the bugler signaled its conclusion and the start of the next segment of the funeral ceremony.

Immediately after, the crowd sang "America" as the band played along, rousing the audience from the reflective silence. ¹³⁴⁹ With the somber, patriotic mood set, it had come time for the speeches.

The master of ceremonies, Secretary Weeks, introduced the keynote speaker, President Harding. ¹³⁵⁰ In his introduction, Weeks emphasized the grassroots nature of the day's event, reminding the audience that "we are gathered, not to mourn the passing of a great general or

other conspicuous person, but an unknown soldier of the Republic, who fought to sustain a great cause for which he gave his life." Weeks emphasized that the Unknown Soldier represented all Americans. "Whether he came from the North, the South, the East, or the West, we do not know," he said, "neither do we know his name, his lineage or any other fact relating to his life or death, but we do know that he was a typical American who responded to his country's call and that he now sleeps with the heroes." Speaking directly to the audience, Weeks encouraged them to realize that "we, who are gathered here in such numbers, are simply representative of all the people of the United States who are here in spirit and whose sentiments have been more deeply stirred by this event than any in the life of our Country." By proclaiming the audience to be representatives of the people, invited to attend on behalf of the whole nation, Weeks reminded his listeners that their attendance should not be interpreted as a sign of personal prestige. Rather, each attendee stood in for others who could not come, and all focus should remain on the Unknown Soldier.

Following Weeks's introduction, President Harding began his address, which continued with the theme of inclusivity. Rich with symbolism and aimed at uniting the nation, Harding's speech verbalized the sentiments that had inspired the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and that would define its meaning and legacy for future generations. ¹³⁵⁴ He began with an emotional summary of the essence of the ceremonies: the Unknown himself. "We are met today to pay the impersonal tribute," he proclaimed. "The name of him whose body lies before us took flight with his imperishable soul. We know not whence he came, but only that his death marks him with the everlasting glory of an American dying for his country." ¹³⁵⁵ Speaking to a diverse and often divided nation, he implored citizens to realize that with his identity forever

masked, they should consider the Unknown Soldier to be part of their own kindred, son to any one of their mothers.

This sentiment formed a central theme in Harding's speech. He explained that the Unknown "might have come from any one of millions of American homes. Some mother gave him in her love and tenderness, and with him her most cherished hopes. Hundreds of mothers are wondering to-day, finding a touch of solace and possibility that the Nation bows in grief over the body of one she bore to live and die, if need be, for the Republic." Mentioning American mothers in this way held great meaning in 1921, in the wake of a war in which they had been glorified for raising sons to become warriors. Here, early in his speech, Harding acknowledged mothers' deep investment in the Tomb, which would give them and other relatives of fallen soldiers (particularly those without a known grave) a sacred place to grieve. The set the stage for the Tomb to become a universal grave for all American service members, a site where anyone could mourn and memorialize a fallen American soldier and perhaps find some comfort in the process.

In keeping with the War Department's intention that the Tomb serve as an inclusive site, Harding emphasized that the Unknown could have been from any walk of life. During a time when the government and many segments of the population had grown increasingly fearful of high rates of immigration, Harding spoke of America's immigrant population with pride. He told the crowd that the Unknown "may have been a native or an adopted son; that matters little, because they glorified the same loyalty, they sacrificed alike." 1358 Just months before, in May 1921, Harding himself had signed the Emergency Quota Act into law, limiting immigrants based on their nationality. Yet he made no mention of this fact—just as he made no mention this day of the poverty-ridden tenements of many immigrants or the racially segregated existence

imposed on people of color. Harding's version of the United States glossed over the lived reality of many Americans. Harding presented a vision of America that was aspirational. He evoked the Tomb as a place of honor in an America that still dreamed of a better nation for all.

Reaching across demographic divides and prejudices that pervaded the populace, Harding embraced all Americans as represented in the Unknown Soldier, proclaiming that "we do not know his station in life, because from every station came the patriotic response of the five millions." He went on to say that although "we do not know the eminence of his birth . . . we do know the glory of his death. He died for his country, and greater devotion no man has than this." With these strong words, Harding seemed to plead with Americans to cross the barriers that separated them in order to honor this Unknown American, who was deserving of praise no matter his origins, just as all who had served in the war had earned the nation's gratitude. By emphasizing these sentiments in his speech, Harding helped promote the government's vision of the Tomb as a place of universal honor, uniquely available for all Americans to call their own. From the initial planning for the Tomb to the ceremonies in the Capitol Rotunda and the procession, this idea had been paramount. ¹³⁶¹ By so prominently supporting it in his speech, the rhetorical highlight of the day, Harding lent it even more credence and paved the way for it to be further embraced over the years.

Harding—who wore a red poppy on his breast, a symbol of remembrance—did acknowledge the tragedy of the war that cost this soldier his life and identity. ¹³⁶² Loss loomed large in people's minds on Armistice Day. Harding explained that to him, gratitude to the Unknown Soldier and all Americans who sacrificed for their nation meant a commitment to improving the nation they died to defend. "On such an occasion as this," he said, "amid such a scene, our thoughts alternate between defenders living and defenders dead. A grateful Republic

will be worthy of them both. Our part is to atone for the losses of the heroic dead by making a better Republic for the living." ¹³⁶³ To make a better republic, Harding argued that the United States must try to prevent further wars. He believed that "the loftiest tribute we can bestow to-day" would be to "put mankind on a little higher plane, exulting and exalting, with war's distressing and depressing tragedies barred from the stage of righteous civilization." ¹³⁶⁴ He used his speech to argue for a "commanding voice of a conscious civilization against armed warfare," and expressed the hope that "this Armistice Day shall mark the beginning of a new and lasting era of peace on earth, good will among men." ¹³⁶⁵ This antiwar stance aligned with the strong antiwar sentiment felt by many Americans in the aftermath of World War I, a war that brought previously unimaginable devastation and death. The Unknown himself symbolized the horror of this conflict, as it had stripped him of his very identity. By using this funeral service to press for peace the day before the arms limitation conference began, Harding touched on the political and emotional core of the moment. He used the sadness of this national day of mourning to point toward a more peaceful future.

In his speech, Harding touched on the significance of placing the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery and on the question of what the Tomb might come to mean for the nation. He recognized that "sleeping in these hallowed grounds are thousands of Americans who have given their blood for the baptism of freedom and its maintenance, armed exponents of the Nation's conscience. It is better and nobler for their deeds. Burial here is rather more than a sign of the Government's favor, it is a suggestion of a tomb in the heart of the Nation, sorrowing for its noble dead." ¹³⁶⁶ With this language, Harding acknowledged the special meaning of Arlington as a sacred burial place for the war dead, although it had only been in existence for fifty-seven years. The Unknown's burial at Arlington sanctified the Tomb in a

unique way, Harding suggested, enshrining it in this pantheon of American military memory. It conveyed respect and honor on this anonymous soldier, who would be immortalized in a "tomb in the heart of the nation," a grave owned by the American people, who poured out their grief for the Unknown Soldier and the other American war dead on that sorrowful day. Harding's words foreshadowed the deep sentiment that the American public and foreign visitors would attach to the Tomb over the years, and set the stage for the Tomb's evolution into one of the most sacred spaces in the nation, one that would further elevate the status of Arlington National Cemetery. ¹³⁶⁷

Overall, Harding used the power of his presidential address to sanctify the new Tomb, vesting it with meaning. He paid tribute to the Unknown Soldier and all the war dead, even as he contextualized the day's events within the realities of the postwar moment and the enduring hope for peace. He closed his speech by asking the audience to join him in reciting the Lord's Prayer, during which he kept his right hand uplifted, a gesture that the *New York Times* described as "a touch that emphasized the solemnity and force of the moment." ¹³⁶⁸

The amplification of Harding's speech to the crowds at Arlington and audiences in New York and San Francisco brought additional weight and meaning to his words. Harding, members of the War Department, and the press all commented on how the seemingly miraculous amplification system made the ceremony accessible in real time to so many Americans.

Newspapers reacted with wonder to scenes of listeners in New York hearing the ceremony live, so many miles from Arlington. ¹³⁶⁹ The Associated Press exclaimed that the audience in New York "was in spirit with the vast concourse at Arlington. Every word that was spoken, every hymn that was sung . . . so securely was the throng held in the spirit of the services that when President Harding closing his oration, began the recitation of the Lord's prayer, its myriad voices

blended in a thunderous murmur." ¹³⁷⁰ In a later pamphlet about the amplification system, the Western Electric Company reflected on this technology and its implications, exclaiming that "this is an age of wonders. An age when whispers may be made to carry across continents. An age when the vague dreams of scientists and inventors are being realized and are bringing the distant parts of the nation closer and closer together making us more nearly one great magnificent state." ¹³⁷¹

Harding himself found the experience of using the amplifier system during the funeral to be a wonder. After the funeral, he wrote a letter of appreciation to AT&T's president, Harry B. Thayer. ¹³⁷² In discussing the "wonderful sound-amplifying device" installed in the amphitheater, Harding told Thayer that he had not

been able quite to realize yet the marvel of having spoken on this occasion to vast audiences in New York and San Francisco, as well as to the great concourse which was before me. The wonder of it has been magnified in my own mind by the reports which have come from those cities describing the attitude of the people; or how they followed the exercises in every detail, even to joining in the singing and in the words of prayer at the conclusion of the address. ¹³⁷³

Harding went on to exclaim that "all this is calculated to rank the experience as among those things so wonderful that we would know they were not true, but for the fact that we know they happened." ¹³⁷⁴ He found it an "equal marvel" that he was able to talk easily to and be "understood by, an audience so vast that although, gathered about me, I could not see nearly all of the people." "Yet," he exclaimed, "they heard clearly and with satisfaction. The experiment, both in enlarging the possibilities of the speaker's immediate audience, and in giving his voice to other audiences at vast distances, was undoubtedly an unqualified success." ¹³⁷⁵ Harding's letter attests to the massive size of the crowd at Arlington and the technological sensation created by the amplification equipment's ability to truly make the funeral national in scope.

The War Department seemed equally pleased with the results of the amplification system and its ability to expand access to the event. After the funeral, Secretary Weeks sent Thayer a letter of appreciation for AT&T's services with the system. Weeks told Thayer how the War Department had been "anxious that as large an audience as possible at Arlington should participate in the ceremonies and should hear what was going on. . . . As a result of the amplifiers operated by your Company, it was possible for thousands, who could not get into the Amphitheater, to feel that they were really included in the tribute being rendered to the unknown soldier." ¹³⁷⁶ He praised AT&T for the "elaborate preparations and precautions" that had made it "possible to reach a far larger audience and to associate closely with the services in New York and San Francisco. This has helped to give the ceremony the national scope, at which the War Department had aimed." ¹³⁷⁷ The amplification system thus played a key part in helping the War Department achieve its goal of making the ceremonies accessible to the American public at a national level. Like Harding, Weeks grasped the groundbreaking implications of this new system. Its use at the funeral marked a milestone in the development of sound technology. ¹³⁷⁸



Figure 9.22. Crowds in and outside of San Franscico's Civic Auditorium listened to the ceremonies being broadcast from Memorial Amphitheater.

After Harding concluded his speech, the ceremony returned to the rituals and prayers of the memorial service. Accompanied by the U.S. Marine Band, a quartet of prominent singers from the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York sang the hymn "The Supreme Sacrifice." ¹³⁷⁹ The president then formally presented the Unknown Soldier with the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross, respectively the highest and second highest U.S. military decorations. ¹³⁸⁰

Following President Harding, a series of foreign dignitaries presented the Unknown Soldier with honors from their own countries. Each had received specific instructions that detailed every aspect of their participation in the events, so as to keep the ceremony moving seamlessly and respectfully. 1381 The dignitaries who presented foreign awards to the Unknown Soldier included: Lt. Gen. Baron Jules Jacques de Dixmude of Belgium, who decorated the Unknown with the Croix de guerre; British admiral of the fleet David Beatty, 1st Earl Beatty, accompanied by Field Marshal Frederick Rudolph Lambart, 10th Earl of Cavan, who presented the Victoria Cross; Marshal Ferdinand Foch, who presented the Médaille militaire and the Croix de Guerre on behalf of the French government, as well as a wreath of silver palms with the inscription "To the Unknown Soldier of the American Army"; Gen. Armando Diaz, who presented the Gold Medal for Bravery on behalf of the Italian government; Romanian minister Prince Antoine Bibesco, who presented the Virtutea Militară; the Czechoslovak minister Dr. Bedrich Stepanek, who presented the Czechoslovak War Cross; and Polish minister Prince Zdzisław Lubomirski, who presented the Virtuti Militari. ¹³⁸² The dignitaries pinned their decorations onto a cushion placed on the casket. Prior to the pinning, they read any accompanying citation for the decoration, if they had one, or gave a few brief words, but they did not make formal speeches. ¹³⁸³ The presentation of these medals by each of these nations bestowed further honor on the Unknown Soldier, all American service members from the war, and the United States. It situated the United States among the victorious nations of World War I and demonstrated the gratitude of these governments to the American military for its role in turning the tide of the war and contributing to the Allied victory.

After the decoration of the Unknown Soldier with these many medals, the Metropolitan Opera quartet led the audience in singing the hymn "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," with accompaniment by the band. Chaplain Lazaron, the rabbi, led the reading of Psalm 23, after which Miss Rosa Ponselle of the Metropolitan Opera quartet sang "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth." The participation of a rabbi preceding the singing of a decidedly Christian song added a sense of religious diversity to the overwhelmingly Christian service. To conclude the funeral, Chaplain Frazier gave a scripture lesson from Revelation 7:9–17, before the quartet and band led the audience in the singing of one more hymn, "Nearer My God to Thee." With the program in Memorial Amphitheater at its end, the time had come for the climactic moment of the day: the burial.

At Peace, At Last: The Committal Service

The four chaplains led the way out of the bowl of the amphitheater to its east front, where the temporary Tomb had been constructed. The U.S. Marine Band moved to a position near the Tomb as it played "The Honored Dead," the deep, somber notes of John Philip Sousa's dramatic march punctuating the start of the procession to the grave. ¹³⁸⁶ Following the chaplains and accompanied by the honorary pallbearers, the body bearers carried the casket as crowds watched from all angles, including from the roof of the amphitheater and the slope below the Tomb. ¹³⁸⁷ Upon reaching the Tomb, the body bearers placed the Unknown's coffin inside, readying it for

its descent into the crypt. ¹³⁸⁸ Footage shows that after the body bearers placed the casket into the crypt, it was lowered part of the way down. The honorary pallbearers surrounded the crypt and rendered salutes as it descended. ¹³⁸⁹



Figure 9.23. Large crowds viewed the Unknown Soldier's casket being lowered into the crypt during the burial service. Floral tributes and gifts from allied nations are visible in front of the Tomb. This photo also shows someone—possibly Pershing—sprinkling dirt from Suresnes American Cemetery into the crypt and the American and British War Mothers standing together to the right of the Tomb. Chief Plenty Coups stands to the left of the Tomb. (*Library of Congress*)

A select group of attendees followed the casket to the Tomb plaza in a predetermined order, forming a funeral cortege on foot. These included President Harding and the First Lady; Vice President Calvin Coolidge and his wife, Grace Coolidge; the chief foreign delegates to the peace conference; the secretaries of State, War, and the Navy; the foreign ministers and other honored guests who had just presented decorations to the Unknown; General Pershing and his staff; a British war mother and an American war mother; members of Congress and their wives; and others seated in the boxes. ¹³⁹⁰ Everyone else seated in the amphitheater, except for the people in the gallery, filed out of the seating area for positions closer to the committal ceremony,

as the band played "Lead, Kindly Light," likely softening the mood from the more robust Sousa march. 1391

With the casket in place, Chaplain Brent led the committal ceremony. ¹³⁹² He invoked God and then prayed: "For as much as this, our brother, unknown and yet well-known, has poured out his life for freedom's cause at his country's call, we therefore commend his soul to God, and commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of his resurrection until eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ." ¹³⁹³ Decidedly Christian despite the earlier attempt at religious inclusivity, these words, coming so close to the conclusion of the funeral, seemed to imply that the Unknown Soldier surely had to have been of the Christian faith. Brent's prayer reveals the limits of the attempted inclusivity of the ceremony, even as a Jewish chaplain stood nearby. Nonetheless, it also gave the scene a sense of finality just before the Unknown's burial began, bringing his long journey to a close.

With no known family to stand at his grave, special guests stood in instead, laying wreaths by the Tomb. Rep. Hamilton Fish Jr. laid the first wreath. As the originator of the concept for the American Tomb, he had taken the Tomb from inception to creation and could now honor this unidentified comrade at his eternal grave, providing a symbolic conclusion to the events with his wreath. Fish played two roles at this critical moment: a member of Congress and a representative of the veteran community. One newspaper even reported that as Fish placed his wreath, he proclaimed that he did so "in the name of the ex–service men of the world war." 1394

Following Fish, two war mothers stepped up to lay wreaths. Mrs. R. Emmett (Mabel)

Digney, a Gold Star mother and president of the American War Mothers, laid a wreath of pink,
white, and purple chrysanthemums. Mrs. Julia McCudden, a British war mother, laid a wreath
that contained flowers from all parts of the British Empire, including yellow, white, and purple

immortelles studded with crimson roses, all topped by a purple crown. ¹³⁹⁵ Together, these two women stood in for the Unknown Soldier's own mother. They represented the grieving mothers who had no grave to visit and no body to bury. Their prominent role in the committal ceremony testified to how deeply the War Department—and the nation—valued mothers, particularly Gold Star mothers, in commemorative culture. The inclusion of a British war mother alongside an American one also signaled the transnational nature of the burial ceremony and its origins in Britain and France. It demonstrated that the U.S. government recognized the global scale of grief that followed the war and that this Tomb was intended to help assuage. This British mother acted much like an ambassador or dignitary, and she was given an even more central role in the burial ceremony than her male counterparts.

After the war mothers, Chief Plenty Coups of the Apsáalooke (Crow) tribe of the Great Plains laid the final tribute on the Tomb. Instead of a wreath, he presented his war bonnet, coup stick, and lance, objects with great meaning in his culture. 1396 Plenty Coups had already played an important role in the day's ceremonies. He sat on the stage during the funeral service and, according to instructions from Brig. Gen. William Lassiter, served as "the representative of the Indians of the United States," leading an envoy of six leaders from multiple tribes intended to publicly include American Indians in the day's events. 1397 While these instructions explained that the program provided for no speeches or addresses except that of the president, some questions remain about whether Plenty Coups made remarks during his moment at the Tomb during the interment ceremony. 1398 Plenty Coups' presence in the day's events makes it clear that despite the continued ill treatment of many Indigenous people in the United States, the U.S. government still acknowledged that the Unknown Soldier could have been a Native American.

(For more on Plenty Coups, see sidebar 09c "Chief Plenty Coups and the American Indian Tribute to the Unknown."



Figure 9.24. The tributes presented by Chief Plenty Coups were documented in this photo taken after the funeral. These items remain in the collection of Arlington National Cemetery.

(National Archives and Records Administration)

After Chief Plenty Coups' tribute, three salvos of artillery fired as the casket descended into the crypt. 1399 Sgt. Frank Witchey, a bugler with the 3d Cavalry Regiment, sounded Taps, and the artillery battery fired twenty-one guns as the final, national salute to the Unknown Soldier. 1400 (For more on Witchey, see sidebar 09d. "Frank Witchey: The Maestro of the Trumpet.") With that, the Unknown Soldier had, at long last, reached his final resting place. He would be enshrined forevermore in this honored Tomb high on the hilltop at Arlington. The power of this moment could not have been lost on the crowd of thousands who had gathered to witness his burial. Indeed, according to the *Washington Post*, Mrs. Harding herself stood with "bowed head . . . weeping softly." Her tears, and the tears likely shed by many others that day, stood in for those of the family that had been severed from the Unknown Soldier when he lost his identity. Now, his freshly dug grave, crowned by the temporary Tomb, would serve as the symbolic grave of so many other unaccounted-for service members. Generation after

generation would visit and shed their own tears at this very spot. With the ceremony over, the president, his party, and the distinguished guests left the cemetery. The bands played as they marched out and the crowds started to disperse. 1402



Figure 9.25. This photograph of the interment ceremony shows a different view of the burial from the plaza in front of Memorial Amphitheater. (*Library of Congress*)

Inside the crypt, soil taken from Suresnes American Cemetery, on the outskirts of Paris, would connect the Unknown Soldier with France. ¹⁴⁰³ It remains unclear when exactly this soil was added to the crypt or by whom. Brought to the United States aboard the USS *Olympia*, this soil forged a tangible, organic link between France and the United States. This soil symbolically linked the Unknown Soldier to the graves of his comrades who remained buried overseas.

The conclusion of the formal interment ceremony did not include the closing of the crypt. Calvin Bailey served as a member of the honor guard during the interment. He was assigned to Company L, 12th Infantry, at Fort Meade, but was placed on a temporary duty detail for the ceremonies. In 1971, the fiftieth anniversary of the Tomb's creation, he recalled how his job that day had included protecting the crypt, still open after the interment. He explained that "there were six or eight of us around the Tomb that day . . . and we had our Springfield rifles." He

remembered a chain being set up around the Tomb; after it was removed, people rushed toward the Tomb, and a squad of Marines helped his detachment control the crowd. "Our company continued guard duty that night," he said, "until the top was placed upon the Tomb the following day." ¹⁴⁰⁶

Despite the pageantry of the past several days, the Tomb still remained incomplete. What was present represented a temporary measure to facilitate the swiftly planned and executed interment. The completion of the Tomb in its final form would take eleven more years. This involved sustained efforts indicative of the Tomb's growing symbolic power and place in the American psyche. On 11 November 1921, no elaborately sculpted sarcophagus or intricate artwork sanctified the Tomb. The words of dignitaries, the wreaths left by comrades, and the cries of bereft mothers had done that instead.

The Media Reacts: Unpacking the Meaning of the Tomb for the Public

The symbolic power of the Tomb and its meanings in American culture became evident in the days surrounding the burial. The events were widely covered by the media and inspired an outpouring of reflections in the press, many of which commented on the symbolism of the ceremonies. ¹⁴⁰⁷ The extensive commentary demonstrated the War Department's success in broadcasting key messages. Essential themes, clearly understood and shared by the media, became the foundation for the Tomb's meanings to the American people well into the future. For the most part, this outlook remains in place today.

This one Unknown Soldier would symbolically represent all the American dead from the First World War—known and unknown. The nation would be united in a moment and place of mourning, enabled by the eternal anonymity of the Unknown. Without a specific identity, he could represent every demographic that served in the war. The *New York Times* emphasized this

point in an article published the day of the funeral. "In winning all this honor," the *Times* wrote of the Unknown Soldier, "he has lost not only his life but also his identity. He has stripped himself of everything that identifies his mortality putting on immortality." The *Times* further argued:

by sacrificing his identity not only has he shared it with every American who lies in France, and indeed with every American who perished on land or sea in the great war, but he has let every American at home find his or her hero in the casket of the Unknown. If one could but see the character of man who rises in each person's thought in the moments of silence today, one would be able to see in the composite the ideal living American evoked from the unknown dead. ¹⁴⁰⁹

With this statement, the *New York Times* evoked for readership an interpretation of the Unknown Soldier as a representative of diverse Americans, and the Tomb as a national shrine with meaning for all. The article especially emphasized the universality of the Unknown, explaining that "his coming had made universal the sense of exaltation, gratitude and pride which kinsmen and fellow-townsmen have in honoring their known dead." ¹⁴¹⁰ It was this universality that enabled the "whole nation" to put aside its differences and mourn, as the *Times* claimed, "in solemn and united recognition of a sacrifice which it has shared with other nations, through those whom this Unknown Soldier represents." ¹⁴¹¹

Another unifying element of the ceremonies highlighted by the press involved the interpretation of the events, and the Tomb itself, as a form of civic religion. Disconnected from any specific denomination (albeit showing Christian overtones), this civic religion included spirituality and religious practice steeped in nationalism. This phenomenon gained such a foothold in cultural memory that many years later the scholar Benedict Anderson would refer to tombs of Unknown Soldiers as a key site of "national imaginings" in his foundational book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Anderson

employed these tombs to help explain the modern culture of nationalism, his concept of the nation as an imagined community, and the religious underpinnings of these theories. 1412

Many newspapers framed the funeral as a civic religious event. The *New York Times*, for example, explained that "surrounded by the world's great, with none of them too great to bow in homage, this dead boy's funeral was still no pageant, no spectacular drama, no worldly show. It was more a benediction, a spiritual something whose very realities were less apparent than the thoughts they conjured." ¹⁴¹³ In the *Washington Post*, George Rothwell Brown proclaimed that "the funeral of the unknown soldier has become something so deeply spiritual and symbolical that it has been lifted to a plane of exhaulted [*sic*] nationalism, of a tremendous emotionalism that has stirred a whole nation to its depths, that it has set in motion spiritual forces the vast significance of which the imagination can only faintly perceive." ¹⁴¹⁴

Other journalists agreed, promulgating among their readers the idea of the funeral as a religious event, and the Tomb as sacred spiritual site. In the *New York Herald*, Frank M. O'Brien described the funeral as a "great religious ceremony" that would "not be possible except for Belief," by which he implied a belief in some sort of afterlife. 1415 "Where were Duty and Honor," O'Brien asked, and "the well springs of Victory, if mankind feared that death drew a black curtain behind which lay nothing but the dark? So all in whom the spark of hope has not died can well believe that we, to whom the Soldier is a mystery, are not a mystery to him. They can believe that the watchers at Arlington today are not merely a few thousands of the living but the countless battalions of the departed." 1416 O'Brien then quoted from the New Testament and, taking a decidedly Christian interpretation of the religious nature of the events, stated: "Though he were dead, yet he shall, live'—there is the promise to which men hold when everything of this earth has slipped away." 1417 O'Brien continued to hammer home his point that there must be

some afterlife for the Unknown Soldier and the other war dead. For, he insisted, "all the impressive ritual of today would be a mockery if we did not believe that, out in an infinity which astronomers cannot chart or mathematicians bound, the Unknown Soldier and all the glorious dead whom we honor in his dust are looking down upon this little spinning ball, conscious of our reverence." Though O'Brien focused more on a Christian understanding of death and the afterlife, his insight nonetheless demonstrates the spiritual power of the ceremonies and the sense that the burial had awoken some sort of spirituality in many of those who attended, especially those who sought comfort in the funeral and yearned for closure.

For some people, this urge for closure also involved a desire to return to the perceived patriotic idealism of the war years, a time when the nation had supposedly united in common cause for the war effort. That idealism, in reality, had been contested from the start. In the years before the United States entered the First World War, a varied coalition of peace activists, including many women, had worked to keep the nation out of the war. Even President Wilson had campaigned for reelection on such a platform in 1916. 1419 While most (although not all) Americans eventually put aside their differences to support the war effort, after the Armistice a sense of dissolution and backlash against the war gained traction. Internal strife rocked the nation in the immediate aftermath of the war. Given the race riots of the Red Summer of 1919, the Red Scare and Palmer Raids against suspected communists and anarchists in 1919–1920, large-scale labor strikes in these same years, and the United States' decision not to join the League of Nations—Wilson's signature effort to prevent future wars—popular sentiment began to turn against the now-ended war. Some Americans interpreted the war as a deadly mistake, a conflict that the United States should never have entered. These sentiments would increase in strength throughout the 1920s and 1930s. 1420

To some Americans, the burial of the Unknown Soldier seemed like a moment that could redeem the nation from this gloomy outlook and restore wartime patriotism. John Glessner, a United News correspondent, asserted that at the funeral there "was a re-birth of something of the idealism, the patriotism, and the glory that the country knew during the war." ¹⁴²¹ To Glessner, this meant "a feeling that perhaps, after all, the war was not a huge mistake; that, maybe, sacrifices weren't in vain, and a pride in victory that has found little expression in high places." ¹⁴²² "The bitterness and recrimination, the accusations of politicians," he argued, "the flouting and sneering at the things everybody believed during the war, were for the first time forgotten." ¹⁴²³ Glessner believed that "they were replaced—for this one day at least—by the spirit that enabled America to win the war." He hoped that the funeral would help dispel the feelings that had

stirred agony in the hearts of plain Americans as they have watched, during the past three years, the denial of the things they believe when the country was at war, and heard the cheers and politicians' speeches that made a victory a thing of little consequence and tore the hearts of those who have tried to believe the war was not a grand deception and who have tried to save, in the wreckage of hate and jealousies [sic], a few illusions. 1424

While Glessner admitted that "tomorrow or next Saturday, the whole thing will be forgotten, and the spirit that showed itself will retire," he emphasized to readers that "the spirit was there, and it will reveal itself again." Glessner's perspective certainly did not represent that of all Americans, but his commentary reveals a hope among some of the population that the funeral and new Tomb would help heal postwar strife and enable those who had lost loved ones to feel that their sacrifices had not been in vain. The Tomb offered Americans an opportunity to revisit the war not through politics, but through the universal experience of grief. It facilitated the memorializing of the fallen in a way that attempted to be apolitical, focused on the war's

survivors and the respect accorded to the common fighting man, who did not choose the war's aims or outcomes.

Situating the Tomb at Arlington helped bolster this mission, and numerous newspapers commented on the appropriateness of Arlington as the Tomb's ultimate location. Despite some initial doubts, the day of the funeral seemed to prove the wisdom of this choice. George Rothwell Brown exclaimed that it was "impossible to describe the scene at Arlington without superlatives, it may be said that never, even in the history of that spot sacred to the memory of thousands already sleeping there the last long sleep, had so deeply touching an event transpired there as that, which marked the burial of the unknown dead from overseas." ¹⁴²⁶ Brown felt that Arlington already held a sacred stature that deepened the meaning of the new Tomb, even as the Tomb changed the course of Arlington's history. He went on to comment that the "amphitheater, reared in memory of the men who have made this republic great," formed a setting of "beauty not to be forgotten. . . . The white marble walls, spotless in their purity, were a fitting background to the vast bank of floral tributes." 1427 Adding to the hallowed nature of the Tomb's position near Memorial Amphitheater was its view down to Washington, D.C. As Brown eloquently put it, "the scarred body, torn by shot and shell," would find his "last abode on the hills across the Potomac, whence the spirit can look down during the ages upon the capital of his country." 1428

Underscoring the sentiment that Arlington formed the ideal place for the Tomb, the *New York Times* went so far as to call Arlington "the nation's military Valhalla," a site whose stature would be further bolstered by the new addition. This "marble sarcophagus," the *Times* wrote, was "designed to be a national shrine like that under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, where an unknown poilu's body rests, and Westminster Abbey, where Britain's Unknown lies." This comparison was especially striking coming as it did from the *New York Times*, whose editors had

so vehemently argued in favor of the Capitol as the Tomb's location. Like the *Times*, other media outlets reiterated two key points in the aftermath of the funeral: first, that Arlington was a suitable location for the Tomb; and second, that the American Tomb merited comparisons with the British and French Tombs that had inspired it.

The media commentary about the funeral frequently emphasized the connections between the new American Tomb and the British and French Tombs, positioning the Arlington Tomb as part of a growing network of shrines to unknown soldiers. Kirke Larue Simpson reminded his readers that "far across the seas, other unknown dead, hallowed in memory by their countrymen, as this American soldier is enshrined in the heart of America, sleep their last. He, in whose veins ran the blood of British forebears, lies beneath a great stone in ancient Westminster Abbey; he of France, beneath the Arc de Triomphe, and he of Italy under the altar of the Fatherland in Rome." 1430 For, Simpson explained, "it seemed today that they, too, must be here among the Potomac hills to greet an American comrade come to join their glorious company, to testify their approval of the high words of hope spoken by America's President." ¹⁴³¹ To Simpson, the American Tomb represented an appropriate companion to the tombs in France and England, connected in spirit and intention and demonstrative of similar sentiments. His analysis had a basis in reality. When conceptualizing various parts of the ceremonies, the War Department had openly referred to the British and French examples. For example, Col. W. M. Cruikshank of the General Staff had provided Chaplain Brent with news clippings about those funerals to consult as he planned the religious components of the funeral. 1432

Yet, other journalists, especially those from Great Britain, took a different perspective, finding the American ceremonies to be of a different temperament than their European counterparts. The British war correspondent Lt. Col. Charles à Court Repington, writing in a

dispatch for the *London Daily Telegraph* reprinted in the *New York Times*, commented on the uniquely American nature of the ceremonies. ¹⁴³³ "The strongest motive of the Americans," he observed, "is not business but sentiment. They are almost Roman in their veneration of deeds of valor and in patriotic acknowledgment of the service of those who have nobly died in the country's cause." ¹⁴³⁴ Remington had picked up on the distinctive form of patriotic nationalism expressed in the United States and exhibited during the ceremonies for the Tomb, a type quite different than that of Great Britain and France. Yet, he still understood the sentiment underpinning the nationalism. The English writer H. G. Wells, on the other hand, did not place as much emphasis on this sentiment in his own analysis of the funeral, just as he had differed in his opinion of the crowds at the Capitol Rotunda the day before.

Wells argued that "there were many points of contrast between the ceremony" he had "just witnessed in the graceful marble Amphitheater in the beautiful Virginia open country, and the burials that have taken place in the very hearts of London, Paris and Rome. In the face of a common identity of idea, they mark an essential difference in the nature of the occasion." ¹⁴³⁵ To Wells, that difference had to do with America's shorter involvement in the war and lower fatality numbers. He argued that "the remote distances of America forbade any such concentration of sorrow" as had been seen in England during the burial of the Unknown Warrior. ¹⁴³⁶ Wells guessed that "there may have been the relations and friends of a thousand men, at most, upon the scene at Arlington." ¹⁴³⁷ "The loss of the District of Columbia itself was less than 600 killed," he noted, and he commented that "a group of wounded men in the Amphitheater struck the most intimate tone. The rest of the gathering at Arlington shared a less personal grief. They were sympathizers rather than sufferers." ¹⁴³⁸ In Wells's opinion, "because of this emotional difference, the Arlington ceremony presented itself primarily as a ceremony. For most there it

was a holiday," he remarked, "a fine and noble holiday, but a holiday." ¹⁴³⁹ He believed that during the funeral,

America did not so much mourn the tragedy of the war as seek to arouse itself to that tragedy. Everywhere the Stars and Stripes, the most decorative and exhilarating of national flags, waved and fluttered, and an irresistible expression of America's private life and buoyant well-being mingled in the proceedings. For most of the gathering that coffin under the great flag held nothing they had ever touched personally; it was not America's lost treasure of youth, but rather a warning of the fate that may yet overtake the youth of America if war is not to end. 1440

Wells misunderstood the patriotic fervor of the Americans at Arlington on the day of the funeral. He did not acknowledge the intertwined nature in which American military commemoration expressed itself: grandeur combined with grief, nationalism mixed with extraordinary sadness. He assumed that the smaller scale of America's wartime losses necessarily meant a weaker sense of national grief and personal involvement. He failed to notice how geography contributed to the differing composition of the audience at Arlington: while numerous Britons could access London by train, the United States stretched across a vast continent. Getting to Arlington was not a viable option for many families of the war dead.

Other correspondents observed similar elements of a celebratory mood, but many read through that facade and, unlike Wells, expressed an appreciation for the emotional underpinnings of the funeral. John Glessner observed that there "was much about the display that was tawdry. Vendors of toy balloons were on the streets. Some of the vast throngs were in holiday spirit, and watched the procession down Pennsylvania Avenue as they would have watched a circus parade . . . there was pomp and martial display, prepared speeches were made. Guns roared salutes, the flag waved." ¹⁴⁴¹ He went on to say, however, that "all that was manufactured; it was all written down, and arranged, and run-off according to schedule. The things that were in the minds and hearts of thousands who witnessed the ceremonies no one could have arranged. It

couldn't have been manufactured." ¹⁴⁴² Glessner understood that despite some tasteless activities beyond the War Department's control, the majority in the crowds on that Armistice Day felt deeply connected to the Unknown Soldier and were emotionally stirred by his funeral. He described the feeling that day as a "spirit," one that "revealed itself when there was needed that which made America a mighty force—the things that uncounted thousands know—the uncounted thousands who for the most part are little heard from." ¹⁴⁴³ These "uncounted thousands" were the Americans whom Wells had discounted in his analysis of the events.

Though silent or absent from the ceremonies, dispersed, perhaps, across the nation, countless Americans valued the Unknown Soldier and likely took solace from his burial. Their voices may be less prominent in the historical record, but the Tomb was theirs, too.

The People's Soldier?

Many of those silent Americans invested in the Tomb came from minority communities that had a smaller, yet still significant, presence at the Washington area events. As a grave and memorial that belonged to all Americans, the Tomb was to be representative and inclusive of the diverse people who populated the nation during World War I. For the Tomb to succeed as a universal grave, it could not be assumed that the Unknown Soldier was a White, native-born, Christian man, or even a citizen. The War Department and government officials—including President Harding—understood this and attempted to publicly portray the Unknown Soldier as someone representative of the nation's diversity, a soldier who belonged to all and transcended the boundaries of race, class, religion, socioeconomic status, and other attributes. By and large they succeeded, yet debate continued as to just how inclusive the Tomb could really be in a segregated and divided nation.

Newspaper accounts and editorials about the ceremonies indicate that the War Department's messaging on this topic came across clearly, broadcasting the idea that the Unknown Soldier could have been any type of AEF serviceman. In describing the Unknown Soldier, the *New York Times* explained that he came "home without name or age, without birthplace, East or West or North or South, without a place in all the continent that can call him its own . . . without ancestry, without posterity, without rank or office." 1444 Frank M. O'Brien, writing in the *New York Herald*, speculated more specifically on who the Unknown Soldier might have been. He named numerous possibilities that referenced stock American types. Was he an "orchardist from the Pacific coast?" O'Brien asked, "A well driller from Texas? A machinist from Connecticut? A lad who left his hoe to rust among the Missouri corn? A longshoreman from Hell's Kitchen? Perhaps some youth from the tobacco fields resting again in his own Virginia." His inclusion of a youth from the tobacco fields of Virginia was a nod to the possibility that the Unknown Soldier might have been a person of color.

Even at the earliest stages of brainstorming for the Tomb, the War Department had insisted that the Unknown must represent all types of Americans. In February 1921, secretary of War Newton D. Baker said as much to Francis Holley, a councillor for American Indians who wanted the remains of an unidentified American Indian service member repatriated and buried on a reservation. ¹⁴⁴⁶ At that time, legislation for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier had not yet passed, but Baker nonetheless told Holley that if the Tomb became a reality, "the American Indians would have a right to consider that their services and the services of their unknown comrades whose remains were buried in Europe, are equally honored with those of any other of the many classes of our population comprising the American Expeditionary Forces." ¹⁴⁴⁷ The War Department followed through with this sentiment in its conception of the Tomb and

planning of the events surrounding it. Harding's speech at the funeral further underscored that intention.

For some communities, the War Department's messaging about the potential diversity of the Unknown Soldier came through loud and clear. The American Israelite, an English-language Jewish newspaper based out of Cincinnati, Ohio, featured an editorial on the topic titled "The Unknown Soldier" by Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, a prominent Reform Judaism leader. 1448 Rabbi Wise began by highlighting and lauding the diverse composition of the victorious American military during the war, which he believed disproved assertions that "immigration lowers our standards." 1449 He then explained, in words that almost echoed Harding's speech, how the Unknown Soldier "may have been one of a hundred races," and he argued that immigration made the Army stronger and more efficient "in the most cruelly exacting test—that of war." ¹⁴⁵⁰ To Wise, the Unknown Soldier demonstrated that "no truer democracy has ever been conceived than the one which takes the children of every race and makes them members of a community with an individuality broad enough and deep enough to engulf them so completely as to shut out and obliterate their differences." ¹⁴⁵¹ Writing in a Jewish newspaper for a Jewish audience, this prominent rabbi shared his agreement with the War Department's messaging around the funeral. He demonstrated the effectiveness of the effort to encourage diverse residents of the United States to feel a sense of kinship toward the Unknown Soldier.

What Rabbi Wise likely could not have known about, however, were the internal debates within the War Department that had preceded the events and exposed some hesitancy to truly embrace religious inclusivity. Initially, the War Department had focused on including as assistants for the ceremonies clergy from "among the chaplains of the Army and Navy," as General Lassiter instructed Bishop Brent in early September 1921. 1452 Religious diversity did

not, at that time, seem to be a major concern of the War Department. However, by the end of that month, this issue had started to generate some attention. Lassiter wrote to Brent about the details of the funeral program and mentioned that a "member of the Committee which has this matter in charge has suggested that it might be advisable to have a Rabbi participate in the ceremony as one of the assistants." ¹⁴⁵³ The committee in question was most likely the War Department committee tasked with the planning the ceremonies, although he did not specify. At some point, Rabbi Elkan Voorsanger was suggested as the rabbi who should participate. ¹⁴⁵⁴

Voorsanger, who was known during the war as "the Fighting Rabbi," had enlisted in the Army into a hospital unit. After Congress approved the appointment of Jewish chaplains, he became the first rabbi to receive a wartime commission, and he had made a name for himself by supporting his men from the trenches. ¹⁴⁵⁵ Unfortunately, Voorsanger was in Russia in late 1921 and thus could not attend the ceremonies. ¹⁴⁵⁶ In early October, Lassiter asked Brent for other suggestions of rabbis, insisting that "some one must be selected to take his place," although, Lassiter clarified, "it would not be necessary for him to take any active part in the ceremonies, as you have suggested." ¹⁴⁵⁷ Though eager to include a Jewish chaplain, then, Lassiter did not seem to think that this person needed to be an equal, active participant in the ceremonies.

By 10 October, another rabbi had been found and formally invited to be one of Bishop Brent's "associates" in the ceremonies. ¹⁴⁵⁸ Rabbi Morris Lazaron had served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve during the war and had published a book of prayers and meditations for the troops. ¹⁴⁵⁹ After the invitation went out, Brent noted in his other correspondence that Lazaron's "cordial note" made him "hope that no ill will will result from making him attendant chaplain rather than an officiating one." Brent thought the situation would be helped if Paul Dwight

Moody, a Congregational Christian chaplain who had served as an AEF chaplain during the war, was also asked to be an attendant chaplain. 1460

However, Rabbi Lazaron does appear to have possibly taken some offense at the invitation. In a letter from Bishop Brent to Rabbi Lazaron dated 1 November, just ten days before the funeral, Brent took pains to clarify that he meant "nothing cryptic" in his delayed response, but said that his "problem has been this—those who have been asked to take part in the service on Armistice Day were asked by virtue of their official position without regard to their religious affiliation. As a matter of fact, I do not know to what Church Chaplain Axton and Chaplain Frazier belong." ¹⁴⁶¹ He went on to explain that "in order to avoid obvious difficulties and complications," a choice had been made to limit the number of clergy participating and to prioritize including chaplains who would represent the Army and the Navy. 1462 "At this it seemed we ought to stop," Brent wrote, for "the moment any other persons were asked by reasons of religious affiliation or otherwise complications would arise. It seemed to me best, therefore, to ask such others as might be in the invited group to act as Attending Chaplains rather than participating Chaplains. It was with this in mind that your name was proposed." 1463 However, Brent continued, "at the suggestion of both Chaplain Axton and General Lassiter I am running what risks there may be of criticism of myself in asking you to read the 23rd Psalm in the service, an outline of which I herewith enclose. Of course the words you doubtless could repeat without a book. The service will be printed in full and is substantially what was used at the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster Abbey." ¹⁴⁶⁴

The defensive tone of Brent's letter indicates that Lazaron may have chafed at the role presented to him. Yet Brent's excuses that the choices were not based on religion, and that he did not even know the churches to which the other chaplains belonged, demonstrate the bias, perhaps

unintentional, inherent in the selection process for the chaplains. An assumption seems to have been made by Brent that those chaplains belonged to a Christian church and not another religion, and diversity seems to have been limited to denominations of Christianity, although the adjutant general later insisted that the burial was "not conducted in accordance with any particular religious belief." ¹⁴⁶⁵ Brent may perhaps have been persuaded by Lassiter and Axton as to the benefits of giving the rabbi a more active role. Brent made it clear to Lazaron that he did so against his better judgment and at risk of criticism, though he did not specify why that might be so. This insight into the planning for the ceremonies reveals limits in the inclusivity of these events. Diverse for the time, they could not fully break down barriers between Americans or fully represent all the religious convictions involved.

Nowhere were these limitations more evident than with the issue of race and racial segregation. Clouding over discussions about the inclusiveness of the Unknown Soldier's anonymous identity, everyman characteristics, and ability to represent all Americans was the question of race. Whoever he was, the Unknown Soldier had fought in a racially segregated military for a nation that allowed segregation and oppressed many of its citizens because of the color of their skin. While not as frequently or as overtly mentioned as the possibility that the Unknown Soldier could have been an immigrant or someone from a poor family, the possibility existed that the Unknown was in fact a Black American. This mostly unspoken prospect created a complex situation, as the War Department sought to include Black Americans in the Washington area ceremonies while not emphasizing that the Unknown might have been Black.

Black Americans did have some representation at the events surrounding the Unknown Soldier. The Colored Ministerial Alliance left a wreath at the Capitol Rotunda, and two organizations of Black World War I veterans were included on the lists of veterans'

organizations given tickets to the amphitheater service and invited to march in the procession: the Colored Veterans of the World War and the Grand Army of Americans. ¹⁴⁶⁶ Two tickets to the ceremony at Memorial Amphitheater were also sent to Emmett J. Scott, a prominent Black writer and leader who had served as a special assistant to the secretary of War on issues related to African Americans during the war. ¹⁴⁶⁷ When a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church wrote to the War Department with the suggestion that the ceremonies include "fitting recognition of the participation of the patriotism and heroism displayed by thousands of the Negro soldiers in the World War," General Lassiter replied that not only had these groups and individuals been invited, but the War Department actively wanted them included. ¹⁴⁶⁸ He explained that "it has been the wish of the War Department to have all elements in American life take part in this national ceremony and you may be assured that the War Department would have welcomed participation by representatives of the colored people of the United States." ¹⁴⁶⁹

Other African Americans likely also have participated. One such group was the Committee of Seven, an organization that described itself as representing the "Colored citizens of the United States." ¹⁴⁷⁰ The president of the Committee of Seven, E. D. W. Jones, who also served as the minister at Union Wesley AME Zion Church in Washington, D.C., wrote to Secretary Weeks on the day of the burial to praise the War Department for its treatment of his organization. ¹⁴⁷¹ Jones expressed his thanks "for the courteous treatment and consideration given our race group in honoring our Unknown dead soldier." ¹⁴⁷² He explained that his group had submitted its applications to lay a wreath in the Rotunda and march in the procession belatedly, after the lists of participating organizations had been finalized, but both requests had been granted by the War Department anyway. ¹⁴⁷³ Jones noted that despite the inconvenience to them, "the officers were kind, obliging and impartial. While we know our rights as American citizens,

yet because of the above named circumstance we were apprehensive of the consideration that might be given our group." ¹⁴⁷⁴ Jones then personally thanked several officers, including General Bandholtz, and commented that the service members on duty at the Capitol "were also true to those polite civil amenities that makes the American soldier the idol of his country." ¹⁴⁷⁵ "It is this sort of civility," Jones continued, "and this spirit of fairness on the part of men who rank high in our army and the councils of our Nation that demands on our part that loyalty and devotion which have ever characterized the Negro in times of war and that he never fails to appreciate in the days of Peace." ¹⁴⁷⁶ In reply, Secretary Weeks thanked Jones and told him that "we expect the public to be treated that way by our officers and our soldiers and it is a pleasure to have your confirmation that it was done on that occasion." ¹⁴⁷⁷

While some Black Americans, like Jones, saw the burial as an example of America's inclusivity, others saw it as an opportunity for the nation to make amends and attempt to resolve its racial problems. An editorial from the Associated Negro Press published in the *Philadelphia Tribune* took this perspective. It urged readers to hope "that Armistice Day, November 11th 1921, will mark a new birth of national consciousness." The author connected the burial to the arms limitation conference happening after, and asserted that "if the people of the nation are not quickened to their senses of human justice, and softened in their prolonged siege of human hatred, then the marked tribute to the 'Unknown Soldier' becomes a sham and a mockery." 1479

Continuing this line of thought, the editorial argued that "if there is born in the consciousness of the national life a thought that the World Conference on Limitation of Armament, must also be a World Conference on Limitation of Prejudice, then we will get somewhere." Echoing a familiar refrain, the author reminded readers that no one knew the Unknown Soldier's identity. "He may be 'colored,' but withal," the editorial argued, "and best,

he is American. So, the heart beats of 15,000,000 colored Americans will be quickened by the solemn tribute to the departed, the 400,000 brave boys of the race will wonder whether or not he may be one of their 'buddies.' Thoughts of the ingratitude of some Americans will flash through our minds on this occasion, but we will thank God, after all, that we too are Americans." ¹⁴⁸¹

To this writer, the burial offered an opportunity both to address racism and to honor Black Americans' contributions to the nation. Not doing so would be a sorely missed opportunity and would stain the meaning of the entire effort to honor the Unknown Soldier, for he could have been a Black service member. Treated unfairly in life, fighting in an army plagued by officially sanctioned segregation, he should, the editorial implied, at least be treated equally in death and be used to inaugurate a new attempt at equality within the nation. As the editorial's author and its readers would soon see, though, no such racial reckoning was to happen. The burial did little to change race relations or improve the situation of African Americans. The status quo remained in place, and would continue so for decades longer.

This editorial writer was not alone in sensing an element of hypocrisy in the supposed equality of the Unknown Soldier and all he stood for. James Weldon Johnson, a civil rights activist, diplomat, and Harlem Renaissance writer, wrote a searing poem that imagined the response if Americans were to discover that the Unknown Soldier had been Black. At the time of the Unknown's funeral, Johnson worked as the NAACP's executive secretary, leading the fight against segregation and lynching. It was only later, in 1930, that he wrote the poem "Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day," doing so in anger upon learning that the Gold Star pilgrimages that had begun in the early 1930s—government-funded trips to the overseas military cemeteries for Gold Star mothers and widows—had been segregated. In the poem, which takes place on the biblical resurrection day, a group of Americans goes to the Tomb

of the Unknown Soldier to help him ascend to heaven. In Johnson's rendering of this scene, intended to showcase hypocrisy in American democratic ideals, the group includes:

The G.A.R., the D.A.R., the Legion, Veterans of wars—Mexican, Spanish, Haitian— Trustees of the patriotism of the nation;

Key Men, Watchmen, shunning circumlocution, The Sons of the This and That and of the Revolution; Not to forget, there gathered every man Of the Confederate Veterans and the Ku-Klux Klan. 1484

When they unearth the Unknown Soldier from the Tomb and discover that he is Black, "All of them felt that somehow they'd been cheated," and chaos ensues. ¹⁴⁸⁵ The poem ends with the "Tall, black soldier-angel marching alone" into heaven as he defiantly sings, "Deep river, my home is over Jordan." ¹⁴⁸⁶ Written nine years after the funeral, Johnson's poem demonstrates the continued hold the Tomb maintained on the American psyche and the bitterness within some parts of the Black community concerning racial segregation in the military, which even touched on the Gold Star mothers and widows. Despite efforts to make the 1921 funeral events inclusive, many Black Americans perceived the stark limits of that inclusivity. At Arlington, for example, Black service members were buried in segregated sections (this practice would not change until 1948, when President Harry Truman desegregated the military). Given the racial segregation of the Gold Star pilgrimages, Johnson saw Black bodies and Black mourners being exploited for patriotic and nationalistic purposes, while America's Black population as a whole was treated as second-class citizens. ¹⁴⁸⁷

Yet the possibility remained that the Unknown Soldier could have been Black—or Jewish, Catholic, Hispanic, American Indian, immigrant, or belonging to any other of the many populations that served in the AEF. Prejudice and segregation did not change that fact, even if some Americans did not want to publicize it and others did not live up to the democratic ideals

that justified the war. That the War Department openly promoted the possibility that the Unknown Soldier could have come from a disadvantaged minority and tried to make the ceremonies reflect the demographics of the AEF seems remarkable given the context of the United States in 1921. Aspirational though they may have been, ideals of inclusivity underpinned the nation's vision for the Tomb. These infused the character of the funeral ceremonies and presented the possibility that later generations would make these ideals more of a reality.

Preservation, Interpretation, and Gratitude: Drawing the Ceremonies to a Close

In the days after the funeral, the War Department dealt with the aftermath of that day's events and the new, internationally significant memorial site now under its stewardship at Arlington National Cemetery. One of its first tasks involved the disposition of the many items left in tribute to the Unknown Soldier throughout his journey from France to his final resting place. 1488 General Lassiter recommended, in a memorandum of 15 November, that all decorations conferred on the Unknown Soldier by the United States and foreign nations, "together with the silken flag with which the casket was covered during the ceremonies of November 11th, be suitably encased and placed in the Museum of the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington, Virginia." Located inside Memorial Amphitheater at the top of the steps on the east side, this "museum" remains in use today as the Display Room (also alternatively called the Trophy Room). Lassiter's memo demonstrates the Army's early intentions, just days after the funeral, to utilize this space as a museum focused on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Lassiter went on to note that since sufficient funds remained unobligated from Congress's appropriation for the funeral events, some of that money could be used to construct "suitable cases for these historic trophies." ¹⁴⁹⁰ He further recommended that in addition to the military decorations, "all plaques together with ribbons and decorations presented by patriotic societies

and others, and all other donations of a *non-perishable character* be also suitably encased and placed on exhibit in the Museum." ¹⁴⁹¹ These items did not include the "bunting flag, with which the casket was covered during its journey from France." According to Lassiter, that had been buried with the remains in the Tomb. ¹⁴⁹²

Lassiter's proposal, which was approved by order of the chief of staff of the Army on 18 November, demonstrated the Army's understanding of the historic nature of the ceremonies and its obligation to preserve and interpret this history for the public. 1493 The artifacts associated with the ceremonies for the Unknown Soldier became sacred to the Army and the nation, and were treated with reverence and care. As an Army account written by an unattributed author recalled, the items bestowed on the Unknown Soldier were "works of artistry wrought by loving and skillful hands, everlasting emblems of kindly thoughts." ¹⁴⁹⁴ The Army would preserve them "for all time in specially prepared glass cases" and then place them "under guard in the Museum of the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery, another shrine to lure those who daily make pilgrimage to the Nation's Capitol and historic places surrounding." ¹⁴⁹⁵ In this way, the Memorial Amphitheater Display Room became part of the pilgrimage route associated with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and helped establish the tradition among visitors of honoring the Unknown Soldier with gifts. By utilizing the museum space within Memorial Amphitheater in this way, the Army began a tradition of interpretating the Tomb that continues today as a part of the mission of Arlington National Cemetery. 1496

Lassiter issued a second memorandum relating to the Unknown Soldier on 10 January 1922. 1497 Per the secretary of War's direction, Lassiter instructed that records related to the "selection, receipt, lying in state and burial" of the Unknown Soldier be preserved. 1498 He explained that "it is considered essentially important that the basic and detailed plans, and all

letters involving the expenditures of funds, concerning honors and tributes bestowed, reports of the public press should be preserved." ¹⁴⁹⁹ The War Department had the foresight to understand that proper management of the Tomb would involve more than overseeing its completion and maintenance; it would require safeguarding the Tomb's meaning. In a time before the existence of the National Archives and Records Administration (founded in 1934), the War Department proactively planned for and ensured the preservation of these records. ¹⁵⁰⁰ That it did so at such an early date demonstrates its understanding of the Tomb's historical significance.

As part of the effort to bring events related to the Tomb's inauguration to a close, the War Department set about thanking all the dignitaries who had paid tribute to the Unknown Soldier. General Lassiter warned that this must be done "in view of the fact that enquiries are being made by the press." Thank-you notes were sent to state governors and foreign dignitaries—both those who came to the United States and those who supported the ceremonies in France. The process had been a high-visibility endeavor that also encompassed a diplomatic mission. Maintaining high standards of protocol and expressing proper gratitude helped foster good relations with America's allies.

An elaborate light display in Washington, D.C., served as a conclusion to Armistice Day and optimistically signaled the start of the naval conference, which many hoped would help prevent another war. Organized by W. D. A. Ryan, the illuminating engineer of the General Electric Company, the display began on the evening of 11 November and continued the next night. A vibrant technological wonder celebratory in nature, this spectacle symbolically transitioned the city from mourning to merriment.

This light festival centered on a magnificent jeweled arch decorated with eagle, flags, and burning incense. In what was referred to as a "necklace" by the *Evening Star*, thirty-seven

thousand colored glass jewels called "Novagems" hung from the arch, sparkling in beams of light. ¹⁵⁰⁴ A similar installation called a "Tower of Jewels"—designed by Thomas Hastings, architect of Memorial Amphitheater—had been constructed for the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. ¹⁵⁰⁵ Embedded in the center of the Armistice Day arch was a sunburst emblem, flanked by coats of arms from Belgium, China, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal, the countries attending the naval conference. ¹⁵⁰⁶ The arch thus served as a glittering gateway to the Washington Naval Conference, welcoming its participants to the nation's capital in style.

The installation also included searchlights that illuminated some of the city's iconic structures, including Arlington's Memorial Amphitheater. ¹⁵⁰⁷ Featuring the amphitheater among the highlighted sites kept the city's attention on the Tomb, and the primary motivation for the naval conference: hopes of peace. Mimi Felt, who had visited the Unknown Soldier as he lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda, was one of many who witnessed the light display. She described the awe-inspiring effect of the arch in a letter to her family, declaring that "the arch was something that you cannot conceive of man making, somehow. It seemed almost superhuman." ¹⁵⁰⁸ This joyous installation of lights and colored crystals helped take the city from the solemnity of the funeral to the renewed sense of hope offered by the Washington Naval Conference. It visually and symbolically connected the burial of the Unknown Soldier to the effort to promote peace and ensure that the war in which he had lost his life and identity truly was "The War to End All Wars."

Conclusion

After months of debate, planning, and negotiations spanning two continents, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier had become a reality. Three years after the Armistice, this anonymous warrior would finally rest in peace, undisturbed and honored as a hero of the nation. Surrounded by one hundred thousand mourners, his funeral formed a climactic conclusion to America's participation in the Great War. Amid all the pomp and circumstance, visits from dignitaries foreign and domestic, and formal ceremonies, the American people remained the central audience of the day. The Unknown Soldier belonged to them—to the mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, wives, children, and comrades. He stood in for all those who had been loved and lost during the war, a universal symbol intended to ease the pain and heal the hearts of the war's survivors.

The newly constructed crypt became a receptacle for many unfulfilled iterations of the American Dream. The Tomb represented the nation that so many wished it could be, even while it fell drastically short. The Unknown Soldier became a representative of all the diversity of the American people, yet full inclusiveness remained far from the truth of many Americans' lived experiences. Nevertheless, here, at the Tomb, they could feel themselves represented. They saw their community included in the nation's imagination, referenced, even if obliquely, in the speeches and sentiments of the president and others. Forged out of death and destruction, the Tomb became a beacon of hope, a symbol of an as yet imperfect democratic promised land still in the making. It was also a reminder of the steep cost paid for freedom and liberty. Situated at Arlington National Cemetery, a landscape shaped and scarred by the nation's costliest attempt to fulfill the promise of its founding documents, the Tomb took its place in the pantheon of American memory.

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Conclusion: A Tomb for the Past, Present, and Future

When dawn broke over the newly consecrated Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on 12 November 1921, its story had just begun. The previous day's events had brought to a close only the first chapter in the Tomb's history. The temporary Tomb was in place and functioning as a sacred site for collective mourning. Visitors from around the world could come to the Tomb to grieve, reflect, and witness America's solemn tribute to its war dead. Even without the final structure in place, the Tomb could successfully carry out its mission. No elaborate sculpture or towering monument was yet needed for its essential purpose.



Figure 10.1. This poignant 1922 photograph of an unnamed woman kneeling at the Tomb, shows that even while the Tomb remained unfinished, it had already become a national place of mourning and reflection. (*Library of Congress*)

In the years immediately after that special Armistice Day, the Tomb's symbolic power became clear. The Tomb became a pilgrimage site that drew ordinary Americans, dignitaries both foreign and domestic, and veterans alike. One photo from 1922 encapsulates the profound power of the Tomb as a place of pilgrimage. It shows an unidentified woman, elegantly bundled up, kneeling at one end of the Tomb, her hands placed on top of it in prayer. Who was she? A

widow wondering whether she knelt on the grave of her missing husband? A sister praying for her lost brother? A daughter missing her soldier father? While the details of her story are lost to history, the emotionality of her posture makes clear the depths of the Tomb's power. In many ways, this photo captures the essence of the Tomb's early years. With the Tomb still incomplete, visitors could approach and even touch it, a stark difference from the situation on the Tomb Plaza in modern times. The nation had not yet figured out exactly what to do with the Tomb, and raw feelings led the way during those initial years.

Even with the permanent Tomb not yet in place, the War Department had fulfilled the mission it had set out to do when tasked by Congress with the Tomb's creation. Building on traditions of military mortuary affairs that began during the Civil War, the War Department had succeeded in developing a new ritual for honoring America's missing and unidentified military dead. Forged out of the treacherous fighting conditions of the First World War, which stripped so many fallen men of their identities, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier marked the start of a new era of military commemoration in the United States. Central to the concept of the Tomb was the eternal anonymity of the man buried inside it, and thus his ability to represent the diverse composition of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). While inclusivity could only be imperfectly achieved in the racially segregated and demographically divided nation at that time, the mere attempt held profound significance.

Directly inspired by the British and French tombs, the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier linked the United States to an emerging global network of World War I pilgrimage sites. Throughout the months-long process to obtain congressional approval for the American Tomb, debate by politicians and military officials revealed their understanding of how significant this site would be. Nothing less than perfection would do for the American Tomb. The same

mentality guided the actions of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps as it led the selection process in France. Extreme caution was taken to ensure that the man selected as the Unknown Soldier truly was forever unidentifiable. A sense of the Tomb's power and hold on the public quickly emerged during the selection and departure ceremonies, as the French people came out in droves to bid goodbye to this unknown doughboy. Diplomacy and grief combined as the Unknown Soldier departed France, and challenges arose across the Atlantic as the Navy and Marine Corps guarded the Unknown Soldier over tumultuous seas.

When the Unknown Soldier arrived in Washington aboard the USS *Olympia*, little doubt remained about whether the American public would embrace this new commemorative ritual. At each stage of the Unknown's journey in the Washington, D.C., area, he was met by crowds of people eager to honor a soldier whom they likely never knew. Every effort was made to foster a reverential atmosphere as the nation bestowed its greatest honors on the Unknown Soldier. From the Capitol Rotunda to the procession to Arlington and the climactic funeral at Memorial Amphitheater, these events united the nation and provided it with solace. After a war that had transformed American society—and the turbulent years that had followed the Armistice—the War Department hoped that the nation could come together for this one day to create a new centerpiece for military mourning at Arlington.



Figure 10.2. This sketch by political cartoonist Clifford Berryman, published on 9 November 1921, depicts Uncle Sam surrounded by floral tributes as the *USS Olympia* travels up the Potomac River, with the Washington Monument and U.S. Capitol in the distance. This cartoon conveys how deeply the Unknown's funeral moved the nation. (National Archives and Records Administration)

By most accounts, it succeeded. The messages the War Department tried to broadcast during these events came across loud and clear, as the plethora of media reports demonstrate. Journalists immediately picked up on the intention for the Unknown Soldier to be an American everyman, and they transmitted this idea to their readers. In the *Washington Post*, George Rothwell Brown explained that the Unknown Soldier's death "typified the deaths of all Americans who gave their lives in the cause of liberty, of all the men of all the wars, and of all ages, who had died in that cause." ¹⁵⁰⁹ While the Tomb was initially envisioned as a memorial to World War I dead, even in its earliest years its meaning began to encompass all the military dead of the nation, past, present, and future. This idea would further evolve in the coming decades. It would be reinforced as well by the Tomb's location on a direct axis with the mast of the USS *Maine* Memorial, perfectly framed by Memorial Amphitheater's entrance, connecting this key site of Spanish-American War memory with the First World War dead.

The Tomb's hoped-for permanence, too, came across in the surrounding media coverage, furthering the War Department's goal to make the Tomb a lasting part of American

commemorative culture. Writing in the *New York Herald*, Frank M. O'Brien—one of two journalists who won the 1922 Pulitzer Prize for reporting on the Tomb—touched on this idea with clarity. ¹⁵¹⁰ "This, of all monuments to the dead, is lasting and immutable," he wrote. "So long as men revere the finer things of life the tomb of the nameless hero will remain a shrine." O'Brien continued, "nor with the shifts of time and mind, can there be a changing of values. No historian shall rise to modify the virtues or faults of the Soldier. He has an immunity for which kings may pray. The years may bring erosion to the granite but not to the memory of the Unknown." O'Brien turned out to be right in ways that he and the War Department never could have expected. Not only did the Tomb remain a shrine, but it evolved to include the graves of Unknown Soldiers from America's subsequent major twentieth-century wars.

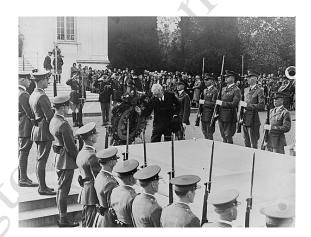


Figure 10.3. Throughout its first decade, even in its unfinished state, the Tomb served as a focal point for national and international acts of remembrance. British Prime Minister J. Ramsay MacDonald is shown here placing a wreath at the Tomb on 9 October 1929. Ceremonies like honored the shared sacrifices of World War I and strengthened the bonds between nations. (Library of Congress)

After the funeral, the War Department devoted the next eleven years to selecting a final design for the Tomb and completing the site, transforming it into a larger cultural landscape of its own within Arlington National Cemetery. This process was complex and, at times, fraught

with tension. Initially, architect Thomas Hastings, who designed Memorial Amphitheater and the temporary Tomb installed in 1921, led the design process. He envisioned the permanent Tomb as the final piece needed to complete his vision for Memorial Amphitheater. His designs proposed a tall, elaborately sculpted monument to go over the Tomb. While he had the support of the Commission of Fine Arts, the War Department did not care for his ornate plans. He lost the project. ¹⁵¹²



Figure 10.4. Thomas Hastings' photographic model for his proposed design for the permanent Tomb design envisioned a tall and elaborate monument. In this photo, the model was placed directly on top of the Tomb. His concept was ultimately rejected. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

In 1926, Congress authorized an open design competition for the completion of the Tomb. It eventually awarded the project to architect Lorimer Rich and sculptor Thomas Hudson Jones. ¹⁵¹³ Both World War I veterans themselves, they took a much simpler yet still deeply symbolic approach to the final Tomb design. They created a flat, rectangular marble sarcophagus to be placed over the Tomb. Sculpted with neoclassical figures, wreaths, and the inscription "Here Rests in Honored Glory, An American Soldier Known But to God," this sarcophagus, completed in 1932, formed the centerpiece of the Tomb site. The site itself they redesigned almost in its entirety. In reimagining the larger setting of the Tomb, Rich created a more

cohesive pilgrimage space that accounted for the Tomb's ever-rising stature. The newly redesigned Tomb and plaza area better accommodated the many ceremonies that had become customary at the Tomb. ¹⁵¹⁴



Figure 10.5. Lorimer Rich and Thomas Hudson Jones proposed a simpler, more restrained Tomb design, while also calling for a redesign of the front of Memorial Amphitheater to accommodate larger ceremonies and greater numbers of visitors. (National Archives and Records Administration)

These ceremonies further distinguished the Tomb from other sites at Arlington National Cemetery and formalized the aspects of pilgrimage associated with the Tomb. Building from the events of November 1921, the Tomb became a venue for ceremonies related to diplomacy, patriotism, and mourning. Foreign visitors came to the Tomb to reinforce the ties between their nations and the United States. Presidents and other dignitaries paid tribute at the Tomb on the anniversary of Armistice Day and on Memorial Day. Veterans' organizations and other associations and citizens' groups came to honor the Unknown Soldier. ¹⁵¹⁵ The American War Mothers organization, for example, hosted its annual Mother's Day ceremony at the Tomb throughout the 1920s and 1930s, continuing its members' commitment to honoring the war dead. ¹⁵¹⁶ Eventually, to secure the sanctity of the space as it rose in popularity, guards were added to protect the Tomb and ensure that visitors behaved properly. After a series of changes

over the years, these guards evolved into the iconic Tomb Guards, who now maintain an eternal watch over their unknown comrade. 1517



Figure 10.6. Wreath-laying ceremonies at the Tomb became central to the annual Memorial Day and Armistice Day (now Veterans Day) observances held at Memorial Amphitheater. In this photograph from 11 November 1939, the President Franklin Delano Roosevelt participates in a wreath ceremony at the Tomb. (Library of Congress)

With the onset of the Second World War, it became clear that the Unknown Soldier of World War I would not be the last such unidentifiable American wartime fatality. The Unknown Soldier's war would not be the "War to End All Wars" after all, despite the efforts of the Washington Naval Conference and other attempts at maintaining global peace during the 1920s and 1930s. During the Second World War, pilgrimages to the Tomb and ceremonies there took on new meaning as another generation of American service members fought in the new global conflict. World War II resulted in even more missing and unidentified American service members than had the First World War. According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), as of 2024, over seventy-two thousand American service members still remain missing or unidentified from World War II, including many lost at sea. ¹⁵¹⁸ It is no surprise that with numbers this high even eighty years after the war, Americans who lived through World War

II quickly committed to interring an unidentified service member from that conflict at the Tomb. Doing so would mean recognizing those fatalities alongside the World War I Unknown and would hopefully provide solace to the families of those unaccounted for from World War II. In 1946 Congress passed legislation authorizing the burial of an unidentified service member from World War II in the Tomb, but the start of the Korean War in June 1950 delayed those plans. ¹⁵¹⁹ With additional Americans unaccounted for after that Cold War conflict, on 30 May 1958 a dual funeral interred one unidentified service member from World War II and one from the Korean War in crypts installed on the Tomb Plaza, just in front of the sarcophagus holding the remains of the World War I Unknown Soldier. ¹⁵²⁰ Now, Unknowns from World War I, World War II, and the Korean War lay at rest together at the Tomb, in what had become a multigenerational site of mourning. In this choice to commingle wars at the Tomb, the United States stood in contrast to Britain, France, Italy, and seemingly most other countries with memorial tombs for the unknown. ¹⁵²¹



Figure 10.7. On 30 May 1958, during the joint funeral for the World War II and Korean War Unknowns, President Dwight D. Eisenhower took part in the ceremony held on the apse of Memorial Amphitheater. This event underscored the continued commitment of the United States to honoring all who served and sacrificed. (National Archives and Records Administration)

In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the question arose of whether the United States should inter an unidentified service member from that war at the Tomb. By this time, however, recovery and casualty identification techniques had improved, leaving fewer sets of unidentifiable remains and making it more challenging to select truly unidentifiable remains. 1522 As a stopgap measure, on 11 November 1978, President Jimmy Carter dedicated a plaque at the Tomb in honor of those still missing and unidentified from the Vietnam War. Its inscription reads: "The People of the United States of America Pay Tribute to those Members of its Armed Forces who served honorably in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Conflict," and it remains in the Memorial Amphitheater Display Room to this day. 1523 However, for many that plaque was not enough. On 28 May 1984—Memorial Day—the nation buried one unidentified service member from the Vietnam War at the Tomb. 1524 And yet, as identification techniques improved in the years after the burial, doubt remained about whether that Unknown truly was unidentifiable. On 14 May 1998, the Vietnam Unknown was disinterred from the Tomb. DNA testing revealed the remains to be those of U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Michael J. Blassie, and, at the request of his family, he was reinterred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, in St. Louis, Missouri. 1525



FIGURE 10.8. On 11 November 1978, a bronze plaque was dedicated to honor all missing and unidentified American service members from the Vietnam War. Here, President Jimmy Carter and Vietnam veteran Max Cleland, the Administrator of the Veterans Administration, unveil the plaque at Memorial Amphitheater. This plaque remains on exhibit today in Memorial Amphitheater's Display Room. (National Archives and Records Administration)



Figure 10.9 On 28 May 1984, the United States held the interment ceremony for the Vietnam Unknown. A new crypt had been constructed on the plaza between the World War II and Korean War Unknowns, symbolizing the continuity of sacrifice across generations of service members. President Ronald Reagan participated in the burial service. (National Archives and Records Administration)

After Blassie's disinterment, three unidentified service members remained at the Tomb: the Unknown Soldiers from World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. In 1999 the cover of the Vietnam crypt was reinscribed with the following statement as a way to honor and remember those Americans from the Vietnam War who remained unaccounted for: "Honoring and keeping faith with America's missing servicemen 1958–1975." In this way, the Tomb

still memorializes the unknown and missing service members from the four major twentiethcentury wars, even without the presence of the body of a Vietnam War service member.



Figure 10.10. The Vietnam Unknown's story is unique among those interred at the Tomb. After advances in forensic technology led to his identification, he was reinterred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. In this photograph, his mother Jean Blassie and brother George Blassie visit his gravesite, demonstrating the personal loss behind the man who had served as a national symbol of grief after the Vietnam War. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The disinterment and positive identification of the Vietnam Unknown signaled that the era of interring unidentified service members at the Tomb had likely come to a close. With continuing advances in recovery techniques and DNA technology, it is unlikely that the military will ever again be confronted with service members whose remains are truly impossible to identify. ¹⁵²⁷ Nonetheless, the Tomb has not lost its emotional appeal for the public. Fascination with the Tomb remains as strong as ever. Visitors still swarm the Tomb site each day, crowding on the stairs above the plaza to watch the changing of the guard ceremony. In a 2023 visitor survey, the Tomb was the most visited site at Arlington National Cemetery, with 87 percent of visitors to the cemetery going to the Tomb. ¹⁵²⁸ In 2023, more than two million people visited the

Tomb, and some 3,500 ceremonies took place there. Most of these included official wreath-laying ceremonies, including seven by visiting heads of state and over 2,000 by school groups. ¹⁵²⁹ Dignitaries of all kinds from across the globe continue to visit, including prime ministers and defense chiefs. The president of the United States or another high-level American government representative comes to the Tomb each year on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, maintaining the Tomb as the central stage for America's military commemorative rituals.



Figure 10.11. To this day, the Tomb continues to serve as a place of remembrance not only for Americans, but for leaders and visitors from around the world. Visits to the Tomb serve an important diplomatic function, such as when Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy conducted a wreath-laying ceremony there on 1 September 2021. (U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

The Tomb's prominence has not diminished over the years. As a participatory site of memory, it offers Americans what is for many a rare opportunity to interact with the military and witness the rigor with which the U.S. Army conducts its memorial rituals. As an antidote to a potentially growing civil-military divide in the United States, the Tomb provides an accessible space where ordinary Americans can connect with the military. School groups in particular benefit from this pilgrimage experience. Many students from across the nation visit Arlington National Cemetery when they come to Washington, D.C., on field trips, and most visit the Tomb. There, they see the pageantry of the changing of the guard ceremony, performed by young men

and women who are just a little older than them and yet carry themselves with the confidence of seasoned soldiers. In the faces of the students, it is easy to see the impression the guard change makes on them as they learn about the nation's dedication to its fallen service members.

For those who are more closely connected to or part of the veteran community, visiting the Tomb can be a homecoming of sorts, an opportunity to stand erect and honor a fallen comrade. In the spring and fall months in particular, a certain group of veterans stands out from the crowd when they visit the Tomb: Honor Flight veterans. Established in 2005, the nonprofit Honor Flight Network organizes all-expenses-paid trips for veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit selected memorials and Arlington National Cemetery. ¹⁵³¹ These pilgrimages honor veterans by taking them to sites that commemorate their service, allowing them to participate once again in military rituals of remembrance.



Figure 10.12. On 25 September 2024, veterans traveling with the Heartland Honor Flight visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. More than 140 veterans took part in the trip, including four helicopter medevac crew members who served during the Vietnam War.

(U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

In their matching T-shirts, Honor Flight veterans are easy to identify as they arrive at the Tomb for a climactic part of their trip. Wheelchairs fill the viewing areas around the Tomb as

veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and other eras prepare to honor the Unknowns. ¹⁵³² Sometimes, the Tomb Guards will even render a special honor to veterans such as these by scraping or bumping their metal shoe plates together to subtly recognize them for their service. ¹⁵³³ Once the Honor Flight veterans begin to leave the quiet area around the Tomb, they are often surrounded by children and other visitors who thank them for their service, request that they pose for photos, and ask them questions about their military experiences. The Honor Flights have added a new layer of meaning to the Tomb. The trips function as living memorials created to honor veterans, and the Tomb serves as a stage on which that memorialization occurs.

Another group of veterans with an indelible connection to the Tomb has forged a new way to honor the Unknowns. In 1998, a group of former Tomb Guards founded the Society of the Honor Guard Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (SHGTUS). A nonprofit organization whose membership primarily comprises current and former Tomb Guards, the society works to preserve the Tomb, honor the Unknowns, educate the public about the Tomb, and safeguard the "welfare and image" of Tomb Guards past and present. ¹⁵³⁴ The society has become a leading advocate for the Tomb and its history, memory, and continued evolution. Richard Azzaro, one of the society's founders, summed up the society's mission as a commitment "to continue our service to the mission of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which is to honor the memory and protect the remains of the Unknown Soldier." To Azzaro, the society's mission is simple: it is "to continue to serve," he says, and to continue "to bring Americans together." ¹⁵³⁵

Describing the impetus to create the society, Azzaro emphasized the educational aspects of its mission. This includes teaching the public about the Tomb, something that many former Tomb Guards were doing even before the society's creation. The society also helps mentor

current Tomb Guards for the next steps of their careers, even after their Army service. Azzaro himself received critical mentorship during his time at the Tomb. He recalled that he was stationed at the Tomb "right out of high school," and when he "got there . . . things changed immediately, and I had some really incredible people that were there . . . that were a few years older, but they had been to college and they literally took me under their wing and got me started in getting into college and studying more, and so I wanted to offer that in some way . . . to the young Tomb Guards." ¹⁵³⁶ This educational mission of the society functions in a way as a living memorial to the Unknowns, whom the Tomb Guards protect during their assignment. As part of the society's dedication to the memory of their unknown comrades, they have created something positive and useful that improves the lives of the Tomb Guards in the name of commemorating the Unknowns. In line with the utilitarian and intangible memorials of the interwar period, this aspect of the society's work continues a long tradition of honoring the war dead through deeds of service. ¹⁵³⁷

The society played a major part in a recent milestone in the Tomb's history: the 2021 centennial commemoration of the Tomb's creation. Around eight years before this anniversary, the society began work on a plan to ensure that it would be appropriately commemorated at a national level. It started a number of initiatives, meeting with organizations and leaders in the United States and Europe to discuss how to recognize the centennial. Eventually, these efforts made it to Congress, resulting in fiscal year 2017 legislation that officially authorized the secretary of Defense to "conduct a program to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier." ¹⁵³⁸

As the home of the Tomb, Arlington National Cemetery took the lead in organizing and executing the centennial on behalf of the Department of Defense, working with the society and

other organizations, many of which also planned their own independent programs. ¹⁵³⁹ The result was a robust year of commemorative activities that honored the Tomb and educated the public about its many meanings. Throughout 2021, the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) History Office produced a series of monthly educational events focused on the Tomb and its history. The restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic ended up enriching these programs, which were released virtually as webinars and videos, enabling them to reach more people across the country and around the globe. Partnerships with other organizations proved invaluable here as well, leading to webinars with the National WWI Museum and Memorial, the National WWII Museum, the National Archives and Records Administration, the American Battle Monuments Commission, and others. ¹⁵⁴⁰ As part of the ANC Education Program, an education module about the Tomb provided materials such as lesson plans and walking tours aimed at students of all ages, teachers, and lifelong learners. ¹⁵⁴¹

The ANC History Office created two new museum exhibits in honor of the centennial.

The exhibit inside the ANC Welcome Center, where most tourists begin their cemetery visit, explored how the creation of the Tomb transformed the cemetery and American commemorative culture. The Display Room exhibit inside Memorial Amphitheater, just up the steps facing the Tomb, delved into the meaning and symbolism of the Tomb to better equip visitors to understand the site. Together, these exhibits immersed visitors in the history and rituals of the Tomb, enhancing their understanding during and beyond the centennial period. 1542 Additionally, blog posts, social media posts, media interviews, and other content spread the story of the Tomb far and wide. 1543

A richly illustrated commemorative publication released by Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Army Center of Military History provided yet another educational resource. Titled

A Century of Honor: A Commemorative Guide to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, this compact, coffee-table-style guidebook was made available for free online and in limited hard copies. ¹⁵⁴⁴ This book, which adapted materials from the two exhibits, broadened access to the research compiled by the ANC History Office. Simultaneously with its creation, work continued on this larger book, A Tomb in the Heart of the Nation, which began as a centennial project and forms the final, concluding project of the centennial period, released just in time for the nationwide commemoration of the 250th birthday of the United States.



Figure 10.13. In 2021, for the first time in many decades, visitors were invited onto the plaza at the Tomb during the centennial commemoration. More than 20,000 people took part in the Flower Ceremony on 9 and 10 November 2021. In this photograph, Richard Azzaro (right), one of the founders of the Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, salutes the Unknowns with an Air Force veteran (left) after placing flowers at the Tomb. (U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

The climactic moments of the centennial commemoration took place during the week of 11 November 2021. On 9 and 10 November, the hundredth anniversary of the days that the World War I Unknown lay in state within the Capitol Rotunda, Arlington National Cemetery hosted a flower ceremony during which the public got the rare opportunity to walk across the Tomb Plaza and lay a flower in honor of the Unknowns. Over twenty thousand people participated. ¹⁵⁴⁵ Across those two days, the ANC History Office organized a series of fourteen

interpretive talks that featured ANC staff and other federal historians. These talks were recorded and later released on YouTube as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemoration Lecture Series so that people anywhere in the world can listen to them. ¹⁵⁴⁶ On Veterans Day itself, Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Army Military District of Washington organized a ceremonial military procession designed to evoke elements of the procession that transported the World War I Unknown from the Capitol Rotunda to the cemetery in 1921. The procession included a flyover; military musicians and service members dressed in historical uniforms; as an ANC historian, I had the honor of serving as narrator for the event. It was capped off with a ceremonial flyover. This procession provided a visually stunning and emotionally stirring conclusion to the yearlong centennial. ¹⁵⁴⁷



Figure 10.14. As part of the centennial commemoration of the Tomb in 2021, service members from all five branches of the U.S. armed forces, some in period uniforms, joined The U.S. Army Band, a Joint Armed Forces Color Guard, and foreign defense attachés in a Joint Procession through Arlington National Cemetery to the Tomb. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Charlotte Carulli)

After the conclusion of the centennial, interest in the Tomb remained high, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic eased and more people could resume normal travel and visit Arlington National Cemetery. Due to the popularity of the centennial flower ceremony, the cemetery decided to institute a new tradition that would allow the public a similar opportunity to lay

flowers on the Tomb Plaza on a more regular basis; to this end, it inaugurated Flowers of Remembrance Day in 2022. Memorial Day weekend was selected as the date of this new iteration of the flower ceremony in order to more closely connect the event to the Civil War origins of the cemetery: the placing of flowers at the Tomb during this observance overtly harked back to the practice of decorating the graves of the war dead with flowers during the early years of Decoration Day (now Memorial Day). ¹⁵⁴⁸ So, too, would the flowers evoke the important role of floral tributes during the 1921 ceremonies related to the selection and burial of the World War I Unknown Soldier. With this new flower ritual, the American public would have an opportunity to step onto the Tomb Plaza and continue the traditions of Decoration Day and the 1921 Tomb ceremonies in a new way. Deeply connected to history yet created for the present day, Flowers of Remembrance Day is intended to more closely link the public with the history of military commemoration and the Tomb. As of the publication of this book, Flowers of Remembrance Day has become an annual event at Arlington National Cemetery. It occurred in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, and there are plans to continue it into the future.

With Flowers of Remembrance Day, yet another new tradition has emerged at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. More than a century after its creation, the Tomb maintains its hold on the American psyche and remains a critical part of the memorialization rituals, patriotic exercises, and national practices of the United States. Even without new generations of unidentified service members, Americans continue to be emotionally captivated by and committed to commemorating the Americans of the past who lost their lives and identities in military service. Is such a fate even more tragic now, to recent generations who have not faced such a likelihood? What is it that so deeply touches the public about the Tomb? What keeps bringing so many thousands of visitors who have no connection to the men within the Tomb to

this hilltop shrine? There are no definite answers to these questions. Each person, with their unique life and background, will have a different reason for visiting the Tomb and will take away different meanings from it. What remains indisputable, though, is that the Tomb continues to evolve while still fulfilling the original purposes set out for it in 1921.



Figure 10.15. Flowers of Remembrance Day, first held on Memorial Day weekend in 2022, invites visitors to lay flowers at the Tomb just as they did during the centennial commemorations. This photograph was taken during the inaugural observance in 2022.

(U.S. Army Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

Some of the main players in the 1921 events sensed the Tomb's future significance even in its early years. On 11 November 1931, the tenth anniversary of the Tomb's installation, Harry F. Rethers gave a broadcast from San Francisco in honor of this anniversary. Rethers, a general at that time, had served as the chief of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) during the selection ceremony. Speaking in 1931, he reflected on the lasting legacy and future of the Tomb, proclaiming that "time may bring erosion to the marble of his sepulcher, but not to the memory of the unknown soldier." How right Rethers turned out to be.

Only time will tell what the future will bring for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. What is certain is that Arlington National Cemetery remains committed to preserving, interpreting, and

sharing the Tomb and its many meanings with the American people and a global public. While we live in a world far different than that of 1921, the Tomb still stands strong, symbolic of the struggles and triumphs of the nation and representative of our proudest moments while reminding us of the tragedies and mistakes of our past. Each American, past, present, and future, whether they know it or not, has a connection to the Tomb. So long as the marble edifice stands, whom it repres so long as its memory lives on and visitors make their pilgrimage up the hill, the Tomb will retain its power, and the lives of the many Americans whom it represents will not be forgotten.

Appendix: Sidebars

The following sidebars correspond with a chapter in the main narrative. They are intended to provide more information and context about relevant topics discussed in each chapter.

Silence and Respect: Guarding the Tomb

Introduction Sidebar 00a

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 00a.1. A sentinel stands watch over the unfinished Tomb in 1931. The crane in the background may have been positioned as part of the process to place the permanent marble sarcophagus designed by Lorimer Rich and Thomas Hudson Jones. (*Library of Congress*)

Each year, millions of visitors experience the changing of the guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. With their immaculate uniforms and precise movements, the Tomb Guards of the Army's 3d Infantry Regiment (the Old Guard)—known as "Sentinels" after they complete their training—are iconic and even mythologized figures. The Tomb Guards honor the Unknowns through the precision and perfection of their rituals. Yet the Old Guard did not always watch over the Tomb. In fact, during its first four years, the Tomb was not guarded at all, except by civilian guards tasked with keeping watch over Memorial Amphitheater more generally.

Formal requests to place a military guard at the Tomb began shortly after the World War I Unknown's 1921 burial. Despite appeals by both Army officials and members of the public, Brig. Gen. H. H. Bandholtz, commanding general of the District of Washington, argued in 1922

that an armed sentry "would not lend dignity to the shrine" and that this duty would cause hardship to soldiers, creating a "feeling of irritation" that would detract from "respect and veneration" of the Tomb. ¹⁵⁵⁰ But momentum continued to build. On 17 November 1925, according to cemetery records, the Army ordered a civilian guard to begin patrolling the area around the Tomb during daylight hours. ¹⁵⁵¹ Finally, in early 1926, Congress took up a bill to require a military guard. President Calvin Coolidge soon directed the War Department to take action, and on 25 March 1926, upon order of the secretary of war, an armed military guard was placed at the Tomb, to stand guard while the cemetery was open to the public. ¹⁵⁵²

During the Tomb's first two decades, as the number of visitors continued to grow (to an estimated one million people annually as of 1932, when Memorial Bridge was completed, and twice that many by the end of the 1930s), the composition of the guard changed several times. ¹⁵⁵³ Cavalry personnel from Fort Myer, engineer personnel from Fort Humphreys (now Fort Belvoir), and infantry personnel from Fort Washington rotated responsibility to guard the Tomb during cemetery hours. ¹⁵⁵⁴ On 1 July 1937, the Washington provisional brigade commander ordered that effective immediately, "a sentinel will be posted at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at all times"; he also increased the strength of the guard from eight to twelve soldiers for the twenty-four-hour duty. ¹⁵⁵⁵

It was not until 1948 that guarding the Tomb was assigned to the Old Guard, becoming a part of the 3d Infantry Regiment's official mission. This regiment, which was first organized in 1784, is the oldest active-duty infantry unit in the nation. It had been inactivated in 1946 following the conclusion of World War II, but was reactivated by the Army on 6 April 1948 for the purpose of handling ceremonial duties in the Washington, D.C., area. ¹⁵⁵⁶ Under the Old Guard, the men and later women who served as Tomb Guards gained public visibility and

prominence, particularly as World War II repatriations brought a new generation of families to Arlington to remember their fallen loved ones. ¹⁵⁵⁷ In this context, the Tomb Guards became revered and iconic figures, lauded in American culture as the finest examples of honorable military traditions.

Over time, the duty of guarding the Tomb became a distinguished and sought-after assignment. On 7 February 1958, Maj. Gen. John G. Van Houten, commanding general of the Military District of Washington, presented the newly created Tomb Guard Identification Badge to the Sentinels who stood guard over the Tomb. ¹⁵⁵⁸ One of the Army's least-awarded badges, it can be earned only after a strict selection process and intensive training. As of September 2025, 735 Tomb Guard badges have been awarded. ¹⁵⁵⁹

What was once viewed by Army leaders as an unnecessary and potentially irritating post for soldiers is now a prestigious position for the few selected to guard the Tomb. Sentinels are the first to say that their service is not about themselves; it is about the three unknown service members from World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, those who remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam War, and all missing and unrecoverable American service members around the globe. The Sentinels strive for perfection in all they do in order to honor those who lost both their lives and their identities in military service. They play an integral role in the rituals of remembrance at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Unknown Burials in National Cemeteries

Introduction Sidebar 00b

Sara Amy Leach, Senior Historian (retired), National Cemetery Administration



Figure 01a.1.View of the graves of unidentified service members marked with marble blocks at the Mound City National Cemetery in Illinois (*National Cemetery Administration*)

Beginning with the Civil War (1861–1865), the federal government has offered all eligible U.S. veterans a marked gravesite at a national cemetery. The national cemetery system, initiated by President Abraham Lincoln in response to the unexpected volume of Civil War dead, was administered by the U.S. Army until the predecessor of the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, was established in 1973. 1560 NCA's continued mission is to honor the nation's war dead, though no American conflict since the Civil War has generated as many unknown burials.

In the United States, as in other nations, unknown burials were common during the nineteenth century. In the aftermath of the Civil War, 46 percent of the 300,000 federal soldiers and sailors buried in seventy-four national cemeteries were unknowns. ¹⁵⁶¹ Only about one third of the remains of U.S. Colored Troops (the U.S. Army's official name for its segregated Black

Civil War regiments) were identified. Nonetheless, the federal government endeavored to mark the graves of all who gave their lives while serving. 1562

During and immediately after the Civil War, the U.S. Army's Office of the Quartermaster General was responsible for locating, gathering, and (whenever possible) identifying the remains of fallen U.S. troops. Local communities provided information about many of these interim and often hasty burials. Once these graves were discovered and the remains recovered, the Army kept meticulous records. If the decedent was reburied in a national cemetery, information was recorded in a permanent ledger, and the grave was marked with a temporary headboard. ¹⁵⁶³ Yet rotting wooden headboards and Southern antipathy toward enemy graves erased the names of innumerable soldiers. The ledgers eventually contributed to the federal government's publication *Roll of Honor*, aimed at informing families and friends of burial locations.

One important figure in these early efforts was Capt. Edmund B. Whitman, who served as the assistant quartermaster in charge of cemeteries and mortuary records in the Military Division of the Tennessee. A scrupulous record-keeper, Whitman consolidated more than 100,000 U.S. remains in new national cemeteries from more than 6,283 locations, from Kentucky to Georgia by May 1869. 1564 Still, Whitman predicted, "When all has been done that human care and industry can accomplish, it is evident that the sad information 'Unknown' will meet many an anxious, inquiring eye." 1565

Civil War unknowns reburied in individual graves between 1873 and 1903 were marked with a "granite or marble block six inches square and two-and-a-half feet long." Beginning in November 1903, the block was superseded by a standard upright marble "General-style" headstone inscribed with "U.S. Soldier" or "Unknown U.S. Soldier." Today, NCA-managed

national cemeteries that contain many individually buried unknowns include Jefferson Barracks in Missouri, Mound City in Illinois, and Winchester in Virginia. 1568

Where individual Civil War remains could not be isolated and identified, the federal government typically installed a single monument near shared gravesites or trenches. At Cold Harbor National Cemetery in Virginia, for example, two burial trenches contain 889 unknown U.S. soldiers who perished in area battles in June 1864. Between the trenches, a nearly five-foottall Vermont marble monument, erected in 1877, honors these dead. 1569

Prisoner of war (POW) camps on both sides of the war resulted in many unknown burials. In some cases, Army records preserve the names of soldiers but not their individual gravesite locations. The U.S. government began memorializing its POW dead shortly after the war. Men who had died and been buried at Salisbury Prison in North Carolina, for instance, were reinterred at Salisbury National Cemetery in more than a dozen trenches. Congress authorized a monument in 1873, and it was installed there in 1876. The 50-foot-tall obelisk was carved with classical iconography and inscribed with "11,700" dead, although contemporary research estimates the actual number of remains to be between 3,000 and 4,000. ¹⁵⁷⁰ Florence National Cemetery in South Carolina, located at the site of another former Confederate prison, contains one of the largest burials of unknown U.S. dead: more than 2,800 remains in sixteen trenches. This area was marked by 2,167 marble "unknown" type headstones until 1955, when they were replaced by thirty-two upright marble headstones set at the ends of the trenches. ¹⁵⁷¹ In the early twentieth century, the government also began marking the graves of Confederates who died in Northern prisons.

National cemeteries also contain group burials of unknown American dead from pre– Civil War nineteenth-century conflicts who were buried in what, at the time, were post cemeteries. At St. Augustine National Cemetery, three coquina pyramids erected in 1842 mark the collective reinterment of more than a hundred soldiers killed in the Indian Wars (1835–1842). ¹⁵⁷² Individuals buried as unknowns at Western frontier posts were relocated to national cemeteries as the Army closed facilities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. ¹⁵⁷³

In the twentieth century, the introduction of identification discs (later known as dog tags) during World War I, advances in DNA identification technology, and the rapid evacuation of casualties from battlefields all exponentially helped preserve fallen American service members' identities. ¹⁵⁷⁴ In the twenty-first century, the U.S. government launched a systematic effort to identify World War II and Korean War remains buried as unknowns at NCA's National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawai'i. The Defense POW/MIA (Missing in Action) Accounting Agency first pursued the identities of more than 390 unidentified dead of the USS *Oklahoma*, sunk during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. ¹⁵⁷⁵ As these sailors and marines have been identified, some have been reinterred in NCA cemeteries.

In 1973, Public Law No. 93–43 transferred responsibility for eighty-two national cemeteries and thirty-three associated soldiers' lots, as well as responsibility for the provision of headstones and markers, from the U.S. Army to what became NCA. 1576 The NCA now manages 155 national cemeteries and provides thousands of veteran headstones annually. Unlike the Civil War years, today burying an unknown is a rarity. Still, the sacrifices made by the unknown dead is remembered in perpetuity at Department of Veterans Affairs cemeteries—as it is at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which honors all unknowns no matter where their final resting place may be.

The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns: Arlington's First Tomb

Chapter 1 Sidebar 01b

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 01b.1. The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, photographed sometime between 1866 and 1900. Note the Rodman guns and cannonballs that adorned the monument at that time of the photograph. (*Library of Congress*)

About a half mile from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, near Arlington House, stands Arlington National Cemetery's first tomb dedicated to unknown service members. Created in 1866, just two years after the cemetery's establishment, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns honors those who lost their lives and their identities during the Civil War. 1577 As a site of mourning, ceremony, and cultural symbolism, it served as an important precedent for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier later constructed in 1921.

By the end of the Civil War, some unknown soldiers had already been buried at the newly established national cemetery in Arlington. They were laid to rest in individual plots later marked with small numbered marble blocks or "unknown" headstones. ¹⁵⁷⁸ The idea for creating a collective and symbolic tomb for unknown soldiers is credited to Army Quartermaster General

Montgomery C. Meigs. In 1866, he contemplated bringing the remains reported to be in Virginia battlefields to Arlington, to be deposited in stone vaults over which cairns or pyramids would be erected. ¹⁵⁷⁹ According to military reports from these battlefields, graves with minimal covering had been left open; in the words of one newspaper article, "the bones of our patriot dead lay bleaching in the fields" or "sold to the bone grinders." ¹⁵⁸⁰

On 20 April 1866, Chief Quartermaster, Department of Washington, Col. M. I.

Ludington, placed a request in the *Evening Star* and other newspapers for proposals to construct an underground vault, divided into compartments, to be built on the grounds of the National Cemetery at Arlington. A bid by Jones and Collins for \$2,175 was accepted; Richard Middleton won the bid for the above-ground portion of the memorial for \$1,000; and General Meigs himself designed the cenotaph. Soon, the underground burial vault near Arlington House and its rose garden was complete; this would become the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns.

After the war, Army teams gathered unknown remains from within an approximate 25-mile radius of Washington, D.C. They brought 2,111 unidentified remains back to Arlington to be placed in the vault. Nearly 1,800 of these remains came from Bull Run in Manassas, Virginia, alone. ¹⁵⁸³ One newspaper described the "terrible spectacle" of filling the vault with remains, calling it a "gloomy receptacle" where "there were piled together skulls in one division, legs in another, arms in another, and ribs in another." ¹⁵⁸⁴

According to cemetery reports, the vault was dedicated, locked, and sealed on 20 September 1866, but the final design of the tomb evolved over time. September 1866 General Meigs had envisioned an "altar tomb of granite . . . of plain but good classic severe . . . design" placed above the vault, with a small locked granite door on the side (perhaps to facilitate the inspection

or addition of remains). ¹⁵⁸⁶ In October 1866, he submitted a sketch of the granite covering to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and requested authority to erect it over the vault. ¹⁵⁸⁷ One month later, in early November, the Quartermaster's Office published "Proposals for Granite and Granite Work" to construct a granite tomb over the vault "with the material furnished." ¹⁵⁸⁸ A 10 June 1867 report to Secretary Stanton indicates that construction of the tomb was still underway: "Over [the vault's] center is a tomb of massive granite slabs, which when finished, will contain a proper inscription." ¹⁵⁸⁹ The finalized inscription reads:

Beneath this stone repose the bones of two thousand one hundred and eleven unknown soldiers gathered after the war from the fields of Bull Run, and the route to the Rappahannock. Their remains could not be identified, but their names and deaths are recorded in the archives of their country: and its grateful citizens honor them as of their noble army of martyrs. May they rest in peace! September. A. D. 1866. 1590

Originally, four Rodman guns were mounted on top of the monument at each corner, with a pyramid of cannonballs in the center; but these were moved at some point when the original tomb topper was replaced by a more ornate granite top. ¹⁵⁹¹ The cannons were then placed half-buried in the ground at each corner, though eventually they were removed altogether. ¹⁵⁹² The overall look of the tomb was "significantly altered sometime between 1876 and 1886 to reflect the more exuberant architectural styles of the era" and corresponding with a period of general improvement to Arlington Cemetery. ¹⁵⁹³

For several decades, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns was the locus of collective national grief after a traumatizing war. On the first official Decoration Day held at Arlington on 15 May 1868, veterans and families gathered at the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns to pay their respects to their comrades below. The Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns established a precedent for the United States to honor the unknown dead as a distinct group—and for such tombs to be located at Arlington National Cemetery. Today, it does not attract the large crowds

that gather at its twentieth-century counterpart, but the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns remains an iconic feature of the cemetery's memorial landscape, ensuring that those who

The Great War: An Overview

Chapter 2 Sidebar 02a

Allison S. Finkelstein, Senior Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 02a.1. President Woodrow Wilson had won re-election in 1916 largely owing to his promise to keep America out of the war. By the spring of 1917, Wilson stood before Congress asking for a declaration of war against Germany. (*Library of Congress*)

What began as a war among European powers with complicated alliances eventually wrought immense destruction across Europe, the Middle East, and much of Africa. The war changed national borders around the world and cost millions of lives. Sparked by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the war began in the summer of 1914. Although alliances changed several times, the war, in essence, pitted Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and later Bulgaria—known as the Central Powers—against Great Britain, France, Russia, and several smaller European nations—known as the Allied Powers. Italy at first allied with Germany and Austria but later switched to the Allied Powers. Japan joined the Allied Powers within weeks of the war's commencement. The United States initially remained neutral, consistent with its longstanding antipathy to involvement in European wars.

As World War I dragged on, reasons emerged for the United States to join the conflict. On 7 May 1915, Germany sank the British passenger liner RMS *Lusitania*, killing 128

Americans and increasing anti-German sentiment in the United States. 1596 Afterward, Germany temporarily agreed to cease their attacks on passenger liners without providing warning or safeguarding the lives of passengers. 1597 However, on 31 January 1917, Germany announced that it would resume unrestricted submarine warfare; its U-boats would again try to sink any ships traveling to French or British ports, including passenger and commercial vessels. 1598 In the months that followed, the sinking of American-flagged merchant ships and the subsequent loss of American lives at sea caused even more Americans to favor declaring war on Germany. 1599

The public release of what became known as the Zimmerman Telegram on 1 March 1917 had already further stoked American anger against Germany. ¹⁶⁰⁰ Intercepted and decoded by the British, this telegram from Germany to Mexico proposed an alliance between the two nations if the United States entered the war. Further, Germany encouraged Mexico to retake the land it had lost to the United States during the Mexican War (1846–1848). ¹⁶⁰¹ Amidst the Mexican Revolution and its challenges to U.S. political and economic interests in Mexico, relations between the United States and Mexico were already strained. President T. Woodrow Wilson had sent the U.S. military into Mexico twice in 1916: the U.S. Navy occupied the Port of Veracruz, and the U.S. Army conducted a punitive expedition against revolutionary leader and cross-border insurgent Pancho Villa. The Zimmerman Telegram exacerbated the diplomatic crisis. ¹⁶⁰² On 2 April 1917, Wilson finally did what he had avoided doing since 1914: he asked a joint session of Congress to declare war on Germany. Congress did so on 6 April 1917, bringing the United States into a war so horrific it has been dubbed "the war to end all wars." ¹⁶⁰³

Lest We Forget: The National WWI Museum and Memorial

Chapter 2 Sidebar 02b

Lora Vogt, Jonathan Casey, and Haley Sheriff National WWI Museum and Memorial



Figure 02b.1. In Kansas City, Missouri, a crowd of more than 100,000 attended the dedication of the site of the future Liberty Memorial on 1 November 1921. This ceremony functioned like a precursor to the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as many Allied leaders attended both.

(National WWI Museum and Memorial)

On 11 November 1918, the armistice agreement signed in France silenced World War I on the Western Front. As a new era began, millions worldwide endeavored to create a peace after the "war to end all wars," while honoring the sacrifices of those lost. 1604

Across the United States, commemorations of the world war began locally.

Neighborhoods, schools, and cities commissioned various types of memorials—such as plaques, statues, and paintings—to the fallen soldiers and veterans in their communities. Emboldened by the reverent spirit sweeping the states, civic leaders in Kansas City, Missouri, organized the Liberty Memorial Association in 1918. They began a citywide fundraising campaign to finance the construction of a national memorial that, according to the association's president, Robert Alexander Long, would be "a living expression for all time of the gratitude of a grateful people." The first subscription given to the association for the campaign came from Belle

Naish, widow of Theodore Naish, a passenger on the RMS *Lusitania*, which had been sunk by a German submarine on 7 May 1915. From business owners and Gold Star families to wartime volunteers and children, Kansas Citians of all backgrounds mobilized for and contributed to the effort. ¹⁶⁰⁶ The Liberty Memorial Association used volunteers—3,000 to 4,000 women—to canvass neighborhoods, and, by hosting special programs and sponsoring clubs in schools, the association recruited many of the city's 60,000 schoolchildren to help collect donations. ¹⁶⁰⁷ By the end of the initial ten-day campaign, more than 83,000 contributors had raised \$2.5 million. ¹⁶⁰⁸

Kansas City's determination quickly garnered international attention, bearing results in 1921 when five of the Allied Powers' military leaders gathered in this Midwestern city for the first time. On 1 November 1921, while attending the American Legion's third national convention, General Alfonse Jacques of Belgium, General Armando Diaz of Italy, Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France, General John J. Pershing of the United States, and Admiral David Beatty of Great Britain dedicated Memorial Hill in Kansas City, Missouri, as the future site of the Liberty Memorial. A crowd of over 100,000 spectators watched the ceremony, with nearly half estimated to be veterans (Figure 02b.1). ¹⁶⁰⁹ Spectators also included such notable figures as Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune, Maj. George C. Marshall, and American fighter ace Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, as well as future presidents Calvin Coolidge and Harry S. Truman.

After dedicating the site, the Allied leaders traveled to the nation's capital to honor and witness the entombment of an unknown American soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on 11 November 1921. Although a thousand miles and ten days separated the ceremonies in Kansas City and Arlington, distance and time did not diminish the connection between these two sites of remembrance. In the words of a *Kansas City Star* article, "Many a mother throughout the broad

land is wondering if the mutilated body that today finds its last resting place in Arlington National Cemetery, while a whole nation does it homage, is her son. Many a Kansas mother is wondering the same thing, for there are Kansans among the 'missing' of the world war who are believed to have found sanctuary in an 'unknown' grave." ¹⁶¹⁰

Like the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Liberty Memorial, which opened in 1926, offered a physical space to commemorate those who had sacrificed their lives in World War I. The Liberty Memorial exemplified a new type of memorial, the "living memorial," which fused commemoration with civic utility. The monumental complex, nestled into 47 acres of park grounds in the heart of Kansas City, includes a limestone-clad, art nouveau tower that soars 217 feet above a courtyard that connects two Egyptian-revival halls. Memory Hall, on the east, was constructed as a community gathering and international meeting space; Exhibit Hall, on the west, serves as a gallery space for the museum collection. Beyond terraced gardens to the north of the tower, a Great Frieze, sculpted in 1935 by Great War veteran Edmond Amateis, represents the progression of mankind from war to peace. The inscription still reads:

These have dared bear the torches of sacrifice and service: Their bodies return to dust, but their work liveth for evermore. Let us strive on to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

In the decades following its creation, the Liberty Memorial proved to be a beloved addition to Kansas City's cultural landscape. Facing Kansas City's Union Station, one of the busiest railroad stations in the world at the time, the words of the Great Frieze and the memorial greeted the significant number of military personnel heading to or back home from World War II. Former presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and Harry S. Truman celebrated Veterans Day at the location in 1961, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the dedication ceremony and the role the memorial plays as a beacon "to humanity's hope for a tranquil world." ¹⁶¹¹

Though the tower remained a prominent fixture of the Kansas City skyline, the structure's gradual physical deterioration forced a closure of the building complex in 1994. Kansas Citians once again voiced their support for the memorial, passing a limited-run sales tax to fund its revitalization and create an expansion of the museum to better showcase its global World War I collection. In 2004, Congress designated the Liberty Memorial as the site of the nation's official World War I museum, and construction of the new, 80,000 square foot facility began. ¹⁶¹² Built into Memorial Hill, under the existing historic structures, new galleries, meeting spaces, and a research center were added. A few months before the National WWI Museum opened in December 2006, the Liberty Memorial was designated as a National Historic Landmark. ¹⁶¹³ The expansion and restoration enriched the original commitment to commemorate the courage, honor, patriotism, and sacrifice of "those who served in the World War in defense of liberty and our country" and enlivened the opportunities for the space to be both an active community gathering space and a living memorial. ¹⁶¹⁴

In 2014, President Barack H. Obama signed congressional legislation that recognized the memorial and the museum as one entity, renaming them the National WWI Museum and Memorial. ¹⁶¹⁵ Today, the National WWI Museum and Memorial operates as a nonprofit organization dedicated to remembering, interpreting, and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. Ever connected to Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, these two memorials recognize the sacrifices of America's World War I generation.

"Time Will Not Dim the Glory of their Deeds": Honoring the Missing at American Battle Monuments Commission Cemeteries

Chapter 3 Sidebar 03a

Benjamin Brands, Historian, American Battle Monuments Commission



Figure 03a.1. The Walls of the Missing at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery at sunset. The panels of the memorial chapel are engraved with the names of 954 U.S. service members whose remains were never recovered or identified. (American Battle Monuments Commission photograph by Warrick Page)

In 1923, Congress created the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to oversee memorials to the American Expeditionary Forces across the battlegrounds of World War I, including U.S. military cemeteries in Europe. ¹⁶¹⁶ Following World War I, the War Department offered families the choice to either repatriate the bodies of their loved ones or leave them overseas, where they would be interred in permanent military cemeteries kept in perpetuity by the U.S. government. Approximately 40 percent of families chose the latter option, resulting in the creation of eight permanent World War I cemeteries. ¹⁶¹⁷ The cemeteries and the ABMC embodied the commitment of the American government and people to forever honor those Americans who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country.

In 1946, Congress extended the commission's mandate to cover fourteen new cemeteries created to honor the nation's World War II dead. ¹⁶¹⁸ As of 2021, the ABMC administers, operates, and maintains twenty-six cemeteries and thirty-one memorials, monuments, and markers spread across seventeen countries, continuing its mission to honor and remember the sacrifices of the armed forces.

While the iconic image of ABMC cemeteries depicts rows upon rows of white marble crosses and Stars of David, these cemeteries serve as memorials for more than just those buried under the headstones. They also contain battle maps and artwork that amplify the story and sacrifice of all American service members from the world wars. Additionally, each cemetery contains "Walls of the Missing," engraved with the names of service members whose remains were never recovered or identified during the campaigns the cemetery serves. In total, the Walls of the Missing honor 4,453 missing Americans from World War I and 78,917 from World War II. These include the more than 1,600 World War I and almost 8,500 World War II unknowns, buried under headstones marked with the same inscription as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier: "HERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD." (The World War II headstones replaced "AMERICAN SOLDIER" with "COMRADE IN ARMS.") 1619 For World War II, additional names are memorialized on the East Coast and West Coast memorials in the United States, which honor the missing who lost their lives in American coastal waters. The 8,201 missing of the Korean War and the 2,504 of the Vietnam War are honored in the Courts of the Missing at the ABMC's Honolulu Memorial, alongside their comrades from the Pacific Theater of World War II. 1620 The names of those missing whose remains have been recovered and identified are marked by a bronze rosette. As of 2021, more than 2,770 names have received rosettes. 1621

The Walls of the Missing ensure that these men and women will never be forgotten, while the unknown headstones—much like the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—have come to symbolize not just the remains over which they stand, but also all those service members who have yet to come home. While the names of the three Unknowns buried at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier will never be known, they are listed among all of the other unknowns, somewhere, on the walls, memorials, and courts of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

No More Unknowns: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency

Chapter 3 Sidebar 03b

Allison S. Finkelstein, Senior Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries

Kevin M. Hymel, Contract History Technical Writer, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 03b.1. At team from the Defense POW/MIA (Prisoner of War/Missing in Action) Accounting Agency (DPAA) conducts an investigation for fallen American service members in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 2024. (*U.S. Army*)

When the Unknown Soldier from World War I was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on 11 November 1921, the United States did not have the ability to identify all of its unknown fallen. Today, the Defense POW/MIA [Prisoner of War/Missing in Action] Accounting Agency (DPAA) works within the Department of Defense to ensure that all who wear an American uniform are identified and brought back to their families. DPAA's diligent work has made unidentified combat fatalities increasingly rare. Still, a century after the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, DPAA's ongoing mission underscores that the Unknowns who rest in the Tomb are just three of many American service members who remain unidentified. 1622

DPAA has had numerous predecessor agencies. During the early twentieth century, the U.S. military established several branches to coordinate the identification and repatriation of fallen service members. After the Spanish-American War, the Army created the Quartermaster Burial Corps to remove American dead as quickly as possible from battlefields in Cuba. ¹⁶²³ During the Philippine-American War, the Army established the Morgue and Office of Identification in Manila for the same purpose. ¹⁶²⁴ In 1917, with the United States' entrance into World War I, the Army created the Graves Registration Service (GRS) to identify, exhume, register, and consolidate American burials. ¹⁶²⁵

The GRS resumed its mission during World War II—this time on a truly global scale, spanning theaters of operation in Europe, North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific. ¹⁶²⁶
After the war, between 1945 and 1951, GRS laboratories facilitated the identification of more than 280,000 American service members. ¹⁶²⁷ The GRS also identified thousands of remains during and after the Korean War, but by 1956, more than 840 were still unidentified. ¹⁶²⁸
Meanwhile, the U.S. Army Mortuary system, under the direction of the Quartermaster General, also responded to discoveries of remains. ¹⁶²⁹ In 1976, the U.S. Army Central Identification
Laboratory in Hawai'i took up the task of recovering and identifying remains. ¹⁶³⁰ In 2003, the laboratory merged with the Joint Task Force–Full Accounting Command (which had been created in 1992 to work with Southeast Asian countries to identify remains from the Vietnam War) to become the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. ¹⁶³¹ In 2015, the Accounting Command merged with the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, which since 1993 had overseen and managed all efforts to identify POW/MIA service members. This merger created DPAA. ¹⁶³²

Today, DPAA works to provide families and the nation with the fullest possible accounting for missing American personnel. ¹⁶³³ Almost 82,000 Americans remain unaccounted for, from World War II through the recent conflicts in Iraq (from which only six are missing). However, many of the older losses occurred on ships that sank too deep for the agency to recover any remains. ¹⁶³⁴ DPAA's mission focuses on the approximately 39,000 who remain missing and are likely located either on land or in water less than 150 feet deep. ¹⁶³⁵ The agency's investigations span the globe, from Asia and the Pacific to Europe and even the United States.

To bring home the fallen, DPAA personnel first seek to learn as much as possible about a missing individual, through archival research and oral histories obtained from the host government. 1636 Once they acquire sufficient information, a research and investigation team conducts a search in the places where remains are likely to be located. 1637 The team also interviews local residents for possible clues. 1638 If remains or other indicators of a missing service member are located, a recovery team is sent to remove them. This team typically consists of a team leader and sergeant, forensic anthropologist, linguist, medic, life support technician, communications technician, forensic photographer, explosive ordnance disposal technician, and mortuary affairs specialist. The recovery team uses standard field archeology methods in the excavation, as directed by the onsite archaeologist or anthropologist. The team then brings the remains back to DPAA laboratories at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawai'i, or Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, for identification. ¹⁶³⁹ These are among the largest skeletal identification laboratories in the world, staffed with forensic anthropologists, archaeologists, and odontologists (who study the structure and diseases of teeth). ¹⁶⁴⁰ However, not all investigations take place on foreign battlefields. DPAA also disinters unknown soldiers from cemeteries in the United States,

as well as American cemeteries in Europe and the Philippines, if it has enough information to identify the remains. 1641

In addition to conducting investigations and research, DPAA officials hold formal meetings with the family members of unaccounted-for personnel. They provide information, answer questions, and let families know that their loved ones have not been forgotten. For World War II unknowns in particular, the next of kin are sometimes unaware that DPAA is working to bring their relatives home. 1642

Remains from the World War I era are a special case. Although DPAA's mandate does not include the recovery of World War I remains, one of its predecessor agencies, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, examined several World War I cases that had been brought to them. When metal hunters discovered human remains with World War I artifacts in a wooded area south of Metz, France, in 2006, the command was able to identify Pvt. Thomas D. Costello, who had served with the 5th Infantry Division and died of shrapnel wounds. DPAA contacted Private Costello's next of kin, and he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. However, because DPAA does not accept World War I remains for identification, such discoveries are rare, with only 5 of the 3,000 missing soldiers from the Great War identified since 2006. 1643

Most of DPAA's recoveries are World War II casualties; that war, among all others in the twentieth century, resulted in the greatest number of American losses. Yet DPAA also actively works to recover and identify remains from the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Teams made numerous trips to North Korea to excavate remains, until 2005, when the U.S. government decided that conditions in that country were no longer conducive to American recovery efforts. ¹⁶⁴⁴ Vietnam presents its own set of challenges. Investigators have to work around the monsoon seasons, racing against time in some places to recover remains before the acidic soil

dissolves them. In the early 1980s, DPAA's recovery teams found that many Vietnamese people were surprised that Americans would spend time and money to recover their dead, but in more recent years, the Vietnamese, including many war veterans, have assisted DPAA in recovering remains. ¹⁶⁴⁵

A DPAA predecessor organization played a major role in selecting and identifying the Vietnam War Unknown interred in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. 1646 In the 1980s, when Reagan administration officials wanted to bury an unknown service member from the Vietnam War at the Tomb, Johnie Webb, then the commander of the Army's Central Identification Laboratory, initially resisted the idea, believing that the remains of service members from the conflict eventually could be identified. 1647 When the Army selected a single set of remains to send to Arlington, Webb wrote a memo to his superiors expressing his concern that the remains closely matched two unaccounted-for personnel. They took no action, however, so Webb certified that the unknown remains could not be identified given current scientific methods. This cleared the way for them to represent the Vietnam War Unknown Soldier. 1648 Webb and his staff prepared the remains for shipment, but Webb, still concerned that the remains could be identified someday, ensured that physical evidence—the pilot's life raft and parachute fragments—was placed inside the casket. 1649 On Memorial Day, 28 May 1984, President Ronald W. Reagan oversaw the interment of the remains in the Tomb during a nationally televised ceremony. ¹⁶⁵⁰ Fourteen years later, the remains were exhumed and, with the help of Webb's evidence and DNA testing, they were identified as Air Force Lt. Michael J. Blassie. 1651

The Unknowns buried in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier represent thousands of other unidentified and missing American service members located around the world. A century after the Tomb's dedication, DPAA works in the hope that no more Americans will join the three

Unknowns still buried there. As the United States honors the one hundredth anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 2021, DPAA continues to honor unknowns each day. With DPAA's help, there may never be another unknown American service member. ¹⁶⁵²

An Exchange of Honors: Bestowing the Medal of Honor on Foreign Unknowns

Chapter 4 Sidebar 04a

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 4a.1 General John J. Pershing bestows the Medal of Honor on France's Unknown Soldier on 2 October 1921. (*Bibliothèque nationale de France*)

At the funeral ceremony for the Unknown Soldier on 11 November 1921, dignitaries representing the Allies of World War I honored the American Unknown by bestowing on him their nations' highest military decorations. In doing so, they echoed the United States' decision, earlier that year, to award the Medal of Honor to the Unknowns entombed by Great Britain and France. By 1923, the United States would award the Medal of Honor to three additional European unknowns. In doing so, it helped create a transnational culture of military commemoration.

On 4 March 1921, four months after the dual Armistice Day entombments of the British and French Unknowns, U.S. Congress responded. In addition to passing legislation authorizing the U.S. Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Congress also approved the awarding of the Medal of Honor, the United States' highest military decoration, to the British and French Unknowns. ¹⁶⁵³

These conferrals would both take place in October 1921, in the weeks leading up to the U.S. Unknown Soldier's burial.

On 2 October, Gen. John J. Pershing proceeded to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and laid the Medal of Honor on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. In attendance were ten thousand French troops, five hundred American troops, and countless French citizens. 1654 Next, Pershing traveled to England, where, on 17 October, he arrived at Westminster Abbey to pay tribute to Great Britain's Unknown Warrior. 1655 In an elaborate ceremony attended by the prime minister, various diplomats, a representative of King George V, a guard of honor from the USS Olympia, and an American battalion stationed on the Rhine, General Pershing declared: "And now, in this holy sanctuary, in the name of the President and the people of the United States, I place upon his tomb the Medal of Honor conferred upon him by special act of the American Congress in commemoration of the sacrifices of our British comrade and his fellow-countrymen, and as a slight token of our gratitude and affection toward this people." ¹⁶⁵⁶ Later that day, the king sent a message to President Warren G. Harding expressing his appreciation for this honor and his desire to award the American Unknown the Victoria Cross the following month. The king noted that the Victoria Cross "has never yet been bestowed upon the subject of another State." ¹⁶⁵⁷ The Medal of Honor remained on the British Tomb for the next month, after which the dean of Westminster directed that it be perpetually displayed on a pillar near the Tomb, in a frame made from oak timbers taken from the Abbey. 1658

By October 1921, the United States had also begun taking steps to honor three other Allied Unknowns. A joint congressional resolution of 12 October authorized the conferral of the Medal of Honor on the Italian Unknown ahead of his burial on 4 November at the National Monument to Victor Emmanuel II in Rome. ¹⁶⁵⁹ U.S. ambassador Richard Washburn Child,

along with military attachés, represented the United States at the burial ceremony. ¹⁶⁶⁰ In his memoirs, Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen noted that he laid the Medal of Honor at the Italian Tomb himself on 18 January 1922, in the presence of Italian king Victor Emmanuel III. ¹⁶⁶¹

Allen once again represented the United States on Armistice Day 1922, at the funeral of the Belgian Unknown Soldier in Brussels. ¹⁶⁶² On 5 November, a telegram to Allen (who had only days earlier been directed to attend the funeral) noted that "by the direction of the President, the Medal of Honor has been awarded to the Belgian Unknown Soldier." ¹⁶⁶³ Time was short, however, and so Allen was to "secure the loan of a Medal of Honor for this occasion"; the secretary of state would forward the official medal and citation to the Belgian government at a later date. ¹⁶⁶⁴ Allen later noted that the substitute medal, made in Paris, was too hastily made to be of "reasonably good production," but he concluded that it would be buried with the Unknown "under the Leopold Monument and may never be seen again." ¹⁶⁶⁵

Then, on 17 May 1923, the American minister in Romania presented the Medal of Honor to the Romanian Unknown Soldier at his burial in Bucharest. ¹⁶⁶⁶ In language that echoed the presidential order honoring the Belgian Unknown, the presidential order declared that the Medal of Honor was being bestowed "in a desire to add all that is possible to the imperishable glory won by the soldiers of Rumania who fought as comrades of the American soldiers during the World War." ¹⁶⁶⁷

The United States' decision to bestow the Medal of Honor on the Unknown Soldiers of Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, and Romania affirmed its continuing diplomatic ties to its wartime allies and exemplifies the emergence of an interconnected, international, postwar commemorative culture. These new traditions brought wider significance to the Tomb of the

Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery and linked the American Tomb to a network of sites and shared rituals around the world dedicated to the unknown soldiers of the Great War.



John J. Pershing: Leader in Combat and Commemoration

Chapter 5 Sidebar 05a

Kevin M. Hymel, Contract History Technical Writer, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 05a.1. General John J. Pershing photographed at Arlington National Cemetery in May 1925. Twenty-three years later, Pershing was laid to rest in Section 34 alongside many other World War I veterans—befitting his lifelong dedication to military service.

(Library of Congress)

As commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), Gen. John J. Pershing was perhaps the most prominent advocate for a single unknown soldier to represent the American dead from World War I. Pershing had dedicated his life to serving his country, and he deeply understood the importance of honoring and remembering the shared sacrifices of the Americans he led in battle. Thus, on 1 February 1921, when Pershing implored Congress to support the resolution to create a tomb, Congress listened. ¹⁶⁶⁸ Pershing's steadfast support for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—from idea to realization—proved enormously consequential. Building on his military leadership in World War I and previous conflicts, Pershing devoted his later career to honoring the memory of those who served with him.

Born in Missouri on 13 September 1860, Pershing attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and graduated in 1886 as first captain, the school's highest rank. He began his long military career by serving in the American West with the 6th Cavalry Regiment and then the 10th Cavalry Regiment, one of the segregated Buffalo Soldier units of African American soldiers commanded by white officers. ¹⁶⁶⁹

After the United States declared war against Spain on 25 April 1898, Pershing returned to the 10th Cavalry Regiment and participated in its famous charge up Kettle and San Juan Hills in July 1898. ¹⁶⁷⁰ During the ensuing Philippine-American War, he was deployed to the island of Mindanao from 1899 until 1903. U.S. military and government leaders widely commended his achievements in the Philippines; President Theodore Roosevelt promoted him directly from captain to brigadier general, bypassing the ranks in between. ¹⁶⁷¹ Pershing returned to the Philippines twice more, the last time serving as the governor of Moro Province from 1909 to 1913. ¹⁶⁷² It was not an entirely peaceful command. When some of the Moros refused a government order to disarm, Pershing personally led a bloody attack against the resisters on a mountain peak on 11 June 1913. ¹⁶⁷³

During the Mexican Revolution, after revolutionaries under the command of Gen.

Francisco "Pancho" Villa raided the town of Columbus, New Mexico, on 9 March 1916,

President Woodrow Wilson authorized the Army to conduct an expedition into Mexico to find and capture him. Led by Pershing and known as the "Punitive Expedition," the endeavor proved unsuccessful in finding Villa, but it did test the peacetime Army in the field, under warlike conditions. 1674

When the United States entered World War I on 6 April 1917, President Wilson chose General Pershing to lead the AEF. Upon his arrival in Europe, Pershing realized that his British and French allies wanted American soldiers to fill their depleted units. Instead, Pershing persistently urged for the Americans to fight as a separate army, for the United States' own national honor, and so that it might have greater influence in peace negotiations. ¹⁶⁷⁵

By early July 1918, Pershing commanded one million American soldiers. He formed them into the First U.S. Army, which, on 12 September 1918, went into combat against German forces at Saint-Mihiel, France; it was victorious in the first and only offensive that the AEF led separately from the Allies. ¹⁶⁷⁶ Just weeks later, on 26 September, Pershing led the AEF during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the last major Allied offensive of the war. The AEF's contributions to the Allied war effort played a key role in prompting the German military to sign an armistice on 11 November 1918. ¹⁶⁷⁷ In September 1919, Congress designated Pershing as general of the armies, the highest rank possible in the United States military and one created especially for him. ¹⁶⁷⁸

In 1921, Pershing advocated for repatriating an American unknown soldier to be entombed at Arlington National Cemetery. Pershing's impassioned support for the Tomb reflected his long-standing commitment to military commemoration. Fittingly, after becoming the Army's chief of staff in July 1921, Pershing was a central and highly visible figure throughout the ceremonies for the Unknown Soldier, from the time the Unknown arrived at the Washington Navy Yard to the burial ceremony on 11 November 1921. 1679

In 1923, Pershing became chair of the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) and oversaw the national effort to commemorate American service members at the sites where they had served and died. ¹⁶⁸⁰ Under Pershing's leadership, the ABMC established eight permanent cemeteries overseas as well as numerous battlefield monuments and memorials. ¹⁶⁸¹ In 1931, he even dedicated his wartime memoir to the Unknown Soldier. ¹⁶⁸²

After Pershing's death on 15 July 1948, his body lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda, just as the Unknown Soldier's had twenty-seven years earlier. Pershing was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, atop a hill in Section 34. After a life dedicated to leadership in both combat and commemoration, Pershing was laid to rest in a modest grave, surrounded by some of the soldiers he led in the AEF. Though his grave is located in the center of a small clearing within the section, and stands out from the rows of surrounding headstones, it is still marked with the same simple, government-issued headstone given to the rank-and-file doughboys buried around at in de him. Pershing's final resting place symbolizes that in death, as in life, he remained committed to

Gold Star Mothers and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Chapter 5 Sidebar 05b

Allison S. Finkelstein, Senior Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 05b.1. A group of Gold Star mothers stands at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with a wreath in the shape of a star on Veterans Day in 1925. (*Library of Congress*)

As American government and military officials planned for the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, one community of noncombatants remained at the forefront of their minds: Gold Star mothers. These women had lost their children due to the war effort and would play a significant and lasting role in the commemorative rituals at the Tomb. Especially for the mothers of those service members who remained missing or unidentified or were lost at sea, the Tomb would serve as the grave that their child would likely never have, and it became a place of pilgrimage where they could express their grief and seek some sense of closure.

The concept of the Gold Star mother (and Gold Star widow) originated in World War I.

In place of traditional black mourning clothes after a close relative died, a Gold Star was adopted to symbolize that loss, often worn on a black armband. The star might also be displayed on a service flag or banner on the home, replacing the blue star that signified active service. 1683

Although all Gold Star family members were recognized for their losses, the sacrifice of the Gold Star mother was considered the most significant.

Cultural norms at the time honored the mothers of service members for their exceptional patriotic service. Many Americans viewed a mother's loss of a child in wartime as the most profound and extreme form of grief. ¹⁶⁸⁴ Gold Star mothers generally agreed with this view and united with other mothers to form organizations that created communities of support and advocated for key issues important to them (foremost among these organizations was the American Gold Star Mothers, founded in 1928, and the American War Mothers, founded in 1918 to unite mothers of service members). ¹⁶⁸⁵ Most notably, they successfully lobbied for the government to organize fully funded pilgrimages to the overseas American cemeteries for the mothers and widows of those service members buried and memorialized there. ¹⁶⁸⁶

Mothers' prominent role in military commemorative culture around the time of the Unknown Soldier's funeral called for special roles for them throughout the events. The War Department recognized that these women were a key constituency for whom the Tomb would be highly meaningful and understood that their support would influence the success of this new undertaking. The American War Mothers was selected to conduct a short ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda as the Unknown Soldier lay in state. They also marched in the 11 November 1921 procession from the Capitol to Arlington National Cemetery. 1687

During the burial service, two war mothers stood among the highest dignitaries present.

Standing just steps away from the Unknown Soldier's crypt, they received the honor of presenting some of the final wreaths. In this role of chief mourners, Mrs. R. Emmett (Mabel)

Digney, a Gold Star mother and president of the American War Mothers, and Mrs. Julia

McCudden, a British war mother, symbolically represented the mother of the Unknown Soldier, ensuring that he would not go to his final resting place without a mother figure by his side. 1688

This experience deeply affected Mrs. Digney, who understood the significance of her role at the funeral for her fellow Gold Star mothers. "Our government does not know what it has done for the thousands of bereaved mothers in the United States," she told the *Washington Post*. 1689 "I know how I felt when I viewed the bier of the man who represented all of America's fallen sons. Every mother whose boy died on the field of battle and whose body was interred in a foreign land must feel that the body interred today is that of her boy and glean comfort from that thought." 1690

In the decades after the burial, American mothers kept their connection to the Tomb. The American War Mothers held annual ceremonies at the Tomb in honor of Mother's Day, and Gold Star mothers often visited the Tomb, both as individuals and in groups. ¹⁶⁹¹ The Tomb became a unique pilgrimage site for bereft mothers, a grave where Gold Star mothers could mourn and memorialize their lost children, especially those mothers with no other grave to visit. In 1932, a memorial tree was dedicated near Memorial Amphitheater to honor of the mother of the World War I Unknown Soldier. ¹⁶⁹² This tree acknowledged the service and sacrifices of Gold Star mothers as equally deserving of commemoration as the military heroes also honored at Arlington.

Today, new generations of Gold Star mothers continue to hold ceremonies at the Tomb and remain dedicated to honoring the memory of the Americans buried there. Each September, on Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day, they journey to Arlington to maintain the pilgrimage rituals started by the Gold Star mothers of the World War I era. ¹⁶⁹³ Though the Unknown

Soldiers now buried at the Tomb may be nameless, they will never be without a mother to visit



A Humble Sergeant: Edward F. Younger

Chapter 6 Sidebar 06a

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 06a.1. On Memorial Day 1930, Edward Younger placed roses on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, harkening back to his selection of the Unknown Solder nine years earlier in Châlons-sur-Marne, France. (Library of Congress)

On 24 October 1921, when Sgt. Edward F. Younger entered City Hall in Châlons-sur-Marne, France, and gazed on the four identical caskets, he embarked on a task that would forever link him to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Born in Chicago in 1898, Younger enlisted in the Army on 23 February 1917, six weeks before the United States entered World War I. He deployed to France and fought in the Troyon and Château-Thierry defensive sectors, the Aisne Defensive, and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. He received his first wound in action at Vaux on 2 July 1918 and his second on 3 October 1918 in the Champagne. After his honorable discharge on 29 October 1919, Younger reenlisted the next day. He was stationed in Coblenz, during the postwar occupation of Germany, when he received the honor of serving as a pallbearer at the selection of the Unknown Soldier. 1696

It was only after Younger arrived in Châlons-sur-Marne that he was selected by Maj. Robert P. Harbold to choose the American Unknown from among the four candidates whose bodies lay waiting inside the Hôtel de Ville. 1697 Major Harbold presumably chose Younger on account of his superior service record. Younger, however, later stated that he thought of himself and his comrades as just "good, average soldiers," and believed that "none of the men had been decorated, nor had performed signal feats." 1698 Indeed, as Younger later described, his receipt of the singular honor of selecting the Unknown Soldier felt somewhat arbitrary. He recalled simply being told, "I guess you're the one, Younger. . . . You select the Unknown." 1699

Younger's subsequent public recollections thus seem to square uneasily with assumptions that he may have been chosen because of his service record. Yet Younger's self-perception was consistent with his deeply felt connection to, and identification with, the Unknown Soldier. By portraying himself as simply a "good, average soldier," Younger emphasized his commonality with the Unknown rather than his individual distinctiveness. He would continue to do so throughout his life, implicitly redirecting the media spotlight away from himself and allowing the Unknown to remain a symbol of all American service members, regardless of duty or rank.

Younger received a second honorable discharge on 29 October 1922. He returned to Chicago, worked as a post office foreman, and joined the American Legion. In 1930, a *Washington Post* reporter tracked him down. Younger told him that no one had ever asked him about his role in the selection, except for one post office colleague. Younger also told the reporter that he had not yet been to Arlington to see the Tomb. He had long wished to visit, but on his salary, a trip to the nation's capital was prohibitively expensive. 1700

On Memorial Day 1930, the *Washington Post* paid for Younger to finally make the pilgrimage to the Tomb. At Arlington, he referenced the selection ceremony by placing roses on

the Tomb. Younger again emphasized his personal connection with the Unknown, noting that he might have "eaten, slept, and fought next to him," and saying that it was "real nice to get a chance to visit him again." ¹⁷⁰¹ In an article titled "Humble Soldier Who Selected Unknown Will Honor Comrade," the newspaper portrayed Younger as a "modest, blond chap just over 30," who had experienced "nine years of obscurity" after the selection ceremony. ¹⁷⁰² Such references to Younger's humility and "obscurity" aligned him with the Unknown, who had sacrificed not only his life but his identity. In newspaper reports and his public recollections, Younger became, like the Unknown himself, one of many: an average soldier who had served honorably and now embodied the collective memory of the war.

Younger also conveyed the intensely emotional aspects of his experience, underscoring his affinity with the Unknown Soldier. Fifteen years after the selection, he authored "I Chose the Unknown Soldier" for *This Week*, a syndicated Sunday magazine supplement carried by more than twenty papers, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Herald*, and *Cincinnati Enquirer*. ¹⁷⁰³ Notably, its editor was Marie M. Meloney, who in 1920 had written to Gen. Peyton C. March, Army chief of staff, to advocate for the creation of an American tomb. ¹⁷⁰⁴ In his 1936 article, Younger remembered feeling "overwhelmed" as he selected the Unknown:

I took the flowers and advanced to the little temporary shrine through a line of French troops. I entered the door . . . and stood alone with the dead. . . . For a moment I hesitated, and said a prayer, inaudible, inarticulate, yet real. Then I looked around. That scene will remain with me forever. Each casket was draped with a beautiful American flag. . . . I began a slow march around the caskets. Which should it be? Thoughts poured like torrents through my mind. Maybe these buddies had once been my pals. Perhaps one of them had fought with me, had befriended me, had possibly shielded me from a bullet that might have put me in his place. Who would even know? 1705

Younger continued: "I was numb. I couldn't choose. . . . Three times I walked around the caskets; then something drew me to the coffin second to my right on entering. . . . I couldn't walk another step. It seemed as if God raised my hand and guided me as I placed the roses on the

casket. This, then, was to be America's Unknown Soldier, and by that simple act I had started him on his road to destiny. I tarried a moment, then remembered my task was done. I saluted the casket, and reported that the order had been fulfilled." ¹⁷⁰⁶

In September 1937, the American War Mothers—a national organization that commemorated and supported World War I veterans—republished "I Chose the Unknown Soldier" in its organizational magazine, the *American War Mother*. ¹⁷⁰⁷ Younger's piece offered a deeply personal perspective on the selection process and the meanings of the Unknown Soldier—one that would have resonated with mothers, widows, and others who experienced the Tomb as a site of personal grief.

Younger passed away on 6 August 1942, and was buried in Section 18 of Arlington National Cemetery. This humble sergeant who did his duty in war and in peace was laid to rest among his comrades from World War I, in the same cemetery that held the remains of the Unknown Soldier he had selected so many years before. 1708

The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery: Forever Linked to the Tomb

Chapter 6 Sidebar 06b

Bruce Malone, Cemetery Superintendent (formerly at Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and currently at Normandy American Cemetery) American Battle Monuments Commission



Figure 06b.1. A view of the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. (Photo by Warrick Page, courtesy of the American Battle Monuments Commission)

In France, in a beautiful valley between the villages of Romagne-sous-Montfaucon and Cunel, lies the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, the largest American cemetery in Europe maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). The valley's southern edge is a large field of white marble headstones arranged in regular rows on the sloping hillside. More than 14,200 Americans who died during World War I rest in these grounds, including more than 450 unknown soldiers. On the crest of the hill sits a memorial chapel with two flanking loggias; the walls of these open-sided galleries are engraved with almost 1,000 names of those missing from throughout the region, as well as from the northern Russia expedition and the Services of Supply, which supported the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in France. ¹⁷⁰⁹

This cemetery, established on 14 October 1918 by the Graves Registration Service, originated as one of many temporary American cemeteries throughout northeastern France. Following World War I, the military closed other temporary cemeteries in the area and transferred the remains to the Argonne Military Cemetery. By 1921, the U.S. Army had interred almost 26,000 remains at this site. On 22 October 1921, one unidentified soldier from this cemetery was disinterred and prepared as one of four candidates to become the United States' Unknown Soldier. That set of remains rested at the cemetery overnight, along with the candidate disinterred from the cemetery at Thiaucourt, today's St. Mihiel American Cemetery. The following morning, both sets of remains were moved by truck to the city hall of Châlons-sur-Marne, where they were placed alongside unidentified remains from two other American cemeteries in France.

Following Sgt. Edward F. Younger's selection of the Unknown Soldier on 24 October, trucks transported the three unselected soldiers' remains back to Romagne-sous-Montfaucon. Cemetery officials assigned new unknown numbers and immediately reburied the remains side by side in Plot G, Row 1, Graves 1, 2, and 3—forever linking the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. 1711

From Manila Bay to Philadelphia: The Life and Service of the USS *Olympia*

Chapter 7 Sidebar 07a

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries

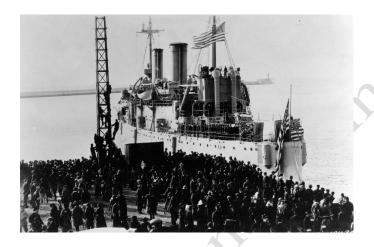


Figure 07a.1. The *USS Olympia* departing the dock at Le Havre to begin its journey to Washington, D.C., on 25 October 1921. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The USS *Olympia* (C-6) is the oldest steel-hulled American warship afloat and one of the most recognizable names in the annals of U.S. Navy history. ¹⁷¹² The *Olympia* was commissioned on 5 November 1892 and assigned to the Asiatic Squadron in 1895, and it would play a decisive role in the Spanish-American War just three years later, becoming emblematic of U.S. military might. It would prove fitting, then, that the distinguished ship's last major mission would be to transport the Unknown Soldier from France to the United States for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Prior to transporting the Unknown, the *Olympia* was best known for its service in the Spanish-American War. On 3 January 1898, Commodore George Dewey assumed command of the *Olympia* as his flagship. Shortly thereafter, on 15 February, the battleship USS *Maine* exploded in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, a Spanish colony; outraged Americans suspected that

Spain had planted a mine in the harbor. After Congress declared war against Spain on 25 April, the secretary of the Navy ordered Dewey to proceed immediately to the Philippines (another Spanish colony) and to use "utmost endeavors" to capture or destroy the Spanish fleet. The *Olympia* engaged Spanish ships and shore batteries with great success. The resulting victory at Manila Bay, on 1 May, strengthened American sea power in Asia and propelled the *Olympia* to worldwide fame. ¹⁷¹³ As the United States expanded its empire abroad at the turn of the twentieth century, the *Olympia* became a source and symbol of national power.

After the Spanish-American War, the *Olympia* returned to the United States to victorious welcome ceremonies and parades. The ship then saw service in the Caribbean and Mediterranean, and served as a training ship for the U.S. Naval Academy, until being placed in reserve in 1909. It was reactivated for World War I but saw limited service during and after the war. ¹⁷¹⁴

The *Olympia* concluded its last major mission of its distinguished military service with appropriate ceremony and symbolism by bringing home the Unknown Soldier of World War I. Even before Congress passed the legislation for the Tomb, secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels offered the *Olympia* to secretary of war Newton Baker to transport the Unknown, because its historical significance would add special meaning to the journey. ¹⁷¹⁵ With this voyage, the *Olympia* not only transported the Unknown's body, but also situated his sacrifice within a longer history of American military engagements, linking the World War I Unknown to America's military past.

The Navy decommissioned the *Olympia* on 9 December 1922, but the famous ship would have a long afterlife. It went on exhibit during the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial International Exposition in 1926. The U.S. Navy designated the ship as an unclassified miscellaneous

auxiliary (IX-40) in 1931; two decades later, in January 1957, it declared the ship unfit for naval service, struck it from the Naval Register, and transferred it to the Cruiser Olympia Association. In 1976, the *Olympia* was designated a National Historic Landmark, and in 1996, the Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia took responsibility for its care. Today, the Olympia serves as a museum ship and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. 1716 The Independence Seaport Museum interprets *Olympia*'s history, and visitors are able to connect to the World War I Unknown by stepping foot on the ship that carried him through stormy seas to his final resting place at Arlington National Cemetery.

"A Solemn Prelude to Action": The Unknown Soldier and the Washington Naval Conference

Chapter 8 Sidebar 08a

Jenifer Van Vleck, Contract Public Affairs Specialist, Army National Military Cemeteries

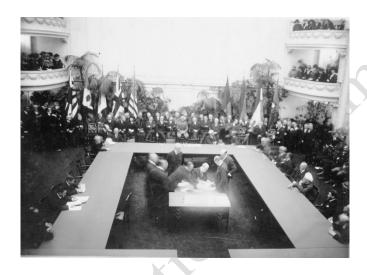


Figure 08a.1. This photo from February of 1922 shows Secretary of state Charles Evans Hughes signing the treaties that resulted from the Washington Naval Conference. *Library of Congress*.

On 12 November 1921, the day after the burial of the Unknown Soldier, the Conference on the Limitation of Armament (Washington Naval Conference) convened at Memorial Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. This international conference, which was aimed at preventing a future world war, was the first major diplomatic conference to take place in the nation's capital, symbolizing expanded U.S. global influence after World War I.

U.S. secretary of state Charles Evans Hughes opened the conference with a dramatic proposal to reduce the forces of the world's leading naval powers: the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France, and Italy. Nearly two months later, on 6 February 1922, those governments signed the Five-Power Treaty, an agreement to scrap over half of their existing or

under-construction warships. ¹⁷¹⁷ This treaty effectively ended, at least briefly, the international naval arms race.

Planners scheduled the Washington Naval Conference to begin the day after the Unknown Soldier's burial so that visiting dignitaries could attend both events. ¹⁷¹⁸ Several prominent conference delegates were invited to the funeral ceremony as honored guests, including French premier Aristide Briand, former British prime minister Arthur Balfour, and Prince Tokugawa Iesato from Japan. ¹⁷¹⁹ Newspapers, too, linked the conference to the Unknown Soldier. In the words of a *Washington Post* editorial: "When the living turn to begin their conference, what will be the lesson they have learned from the dead? It should be the lesson which Lincoln expounded over the ashes of the dead at Gettysburg—that the living should highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain." ¹⁷²⁰ The burial of the Unknown Soldier thus infused the Washington Naval Conference with urgency, serving as a "lesson" from the dead to the living.

If the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier honored the memory of those who died in past wars, the Washington Naval Conference envisioned a future without war. The eminent British writer H. G. Wells, in an opinion piece carried by many U.S. papers, described the Unknown's burial as "a solemn prelude to action, the action of the great Conference which is to seek peace and an enduring peace for all mankind." To remember war, Wells argued, was a necessary prelude to preventing it. The solemn act of mourning the Unknown on 11 November 1921 prepared conference delegates to begin disarmament negotiations the following day, just across the Potomac River from Arlington.

Neither the Washington Naval Conference nor the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier created "a conscious civilization against armed warfare," as President Warren G. Harding had called for

in his keynote address at the funeral ceremony. 1722 Yet the conference recast the Tomb as a symbol and site of international cooperation, where the memory of war became, at least on one

The Body Bearers of the Unknown Soldier

Chapter 9 Sidebar 09a

Kathleen M. Fargey, Historian, U.S. Army Center of Military History

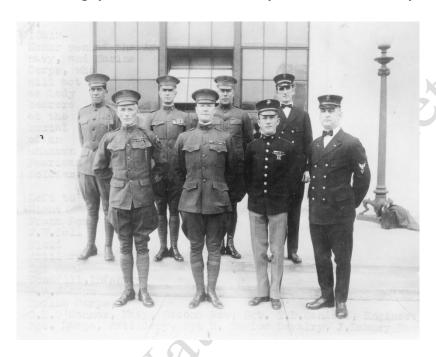


Figure 09a.1. The body bearers for the Unknown Soldier. They played a visible and deeply symbolic role in the procession and funeral. (U.S. Marine Corps Photo)

The eight body bearers who carried the Unknown Soldier's casket on the day of the funeral added another layer of symbolism to the ceremonies and ensured that his remains would be handled with care and respect by his wartime comrades. These men were carefully chosen to be both cohesive as a unit (adhering to strict physical and service criteria established by the War Department) and broadly representational of the nation's military and the American people. The War Department specified that these men were to be warrant or noncommissioned officers who did not "vary by more than one inch from six feet in height measured in stockinged feet" and who presented "the finest military appearance possible." Each man, too, was to have served in combat and have "an exceptional record." 1724

In keeping with the many possible origins of the Unknown Soldier, meanwhile, these specially chosen body bearers represented all branches of the U.S. military and included both an immigrant and an American Indian soldier—though significantly, African Americans were not represented. Army selectees included staff sergeant James W. Dell and sergeants Samuel Woodfill, Harry Taylor, Thomas D. Saunders, and Louis Razga, representing the Field Artillery, Infantry, Cavalry, Engineers, and Coast Artillery branches, respectively. Chief torpedo man James Delaney and chief water tender Charles Leo O'Connor represented the Navy, and U.S. Marine gunnery sergeant Ernest A. Janson represented the Marine Corps. 1725 Each of these men's wartime experiences embodied the valor projected onto the Unknown Soldier, placing him in the arms of some of his most esteemed compatriots.

Samuel Woodfill of Indiana enlisted in the Army in 1901 as an infantry soldier. By the time he went to France in 1918, he had become an officer with the rank of first lieutenant.

Despite being wounded in July 1918, Woodfill returned to battle, and on 12 October 1918, during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, he charged three machine gun nests, killing or capturing several enemy soldiers, for which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Woodfill reenlisted as a recruiting sergeant in November 1919, and he later served in World War II as a major in the training command. He became famous after Gen. John J. Pershing declared him to be one of the greatest heroes of the First World War, and he received an abundance of praise in newspapers. In November 1921, Woodfill was received by President Warren G. Harding at the White House and given a special reception by Congress. He died in 1951 and was buried near Madison, Indiana, but in 1955, his remains were reburied in Section 34 of Arlington National Cemetery, not far from Pershing's grave. 1726

Cavalryman Harry Taylor joined the Army in 1900 and served in the Philippines. During World War I, he participated in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne Offensives, as well as fighting along the Scheldt River in Belgium. He was cited in U.S. Army general orders for gallantry. He reenlisted in 1920 and stayed in the Army until at least 1927. Little is known of his later life. 1727

Thomas D. Saunders of the Cherokee Nation enlisted in the Army as an engineer in 1917. He was wounded in France on 1 July 1918, and he earned a Distinguished Service Cross for actions undertaken on 12 September 1918, when he and another soldier serving as wire cutters were the first to enter the German-occupied town of Jaulny, France, taking sixty-three prisoners. Saunders also earned a Silver Star. The selection of Saunders as a body bearer demonstrated the U.S. government's attempt to bring some American Indians into the patriotic fold and to harness their abilities during World War I, after decades of fighting between the U.S. Army and many American Indian nations. Saunders remained in the Army until about 1930, and after his death in 1947, he was buried in the Golden Gate National Cemetery in California. 1728

Hungarian immigrant Louis Razga joined the Army in 1909 and served in Coast Artillery units. At the time of World War I, nearly a third of U.S. residents were foreign born or had immigrant parents, and nearly 18 percent of the U.S. Army's enlisted men were foreign born; Razga represented these immigrant service members through his role as a body bearer. He was wounded in action during his service in the Toul and St. Mihiel sectors of France. He retired as a master sergeant after thirty years of service, and died in 1959 in Memphis, Tennessee. 1729

James W. Dell of Kentucky joined the Army in October 1897 and served for thirty-two years. He became color sergeant of the 15th Field Artillery in June 1917. Dell was cited for gallantry in action during his wartime service in France, and reenlisted in November 1919. Dell

later became a superintendent of national cemeteries in Nebraska, Texas, and Kentucky. He died in 1968 and was buried in the Saint Augustine National Cemetery in Florida. ¹⁷³⁰

Chief torpedo man James Delaney of Massachusetts had served in the Navy for eighteen years by 1921. He earned the Navy Cross on board the USS *Campana* when he fired on an attacking German U-boat for hours until ammunition ran out. Delaney was taken prisoner after the *Campana* sank, and the War Department noted that he received death threats for refusing to give his German captors information "and for protesting against the theft of prisoners' food by the German guard." He died in 1954 in Beverly, Massachusetts. ¹⁷³¹

Chief water tender Charles Leo O'Connor of Massachusetts had served eight years in the Navy when he was selected as a body bearer. After the USS *Mount Vernon* was torpedoed on 5 September 1918, about two hundred miles off the coast of France, O'Connor earned a Distinguished Service Cross for attempting to shut a watertight door and save his shipmates even though he had been seriously burned. O'Connor died in 1934 in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, and was buried in Section 17 of Arlington National Cemetery. 1732

Gunnery sergeant Ernest A. Janson of Brooklyn, New York, served in the Army for almost ten years before joining the Marines under the name Charles F. Hoffman to avoid having a German-sounding name. While serving in France on 6 June 1918, Janson confronted a hostile force armed with five machine guns. He bayoneted two leaders and forced others to flee. For these actions, he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by both the Army and the Navy. Janson's other awards included the Navy Medal, the French Médaille Militaire, the French Croix de Guerre with Palm, and the Montenegro Silver Medal. Janson continued to serve in the Marines after the war. He died in 1930 in New York City. 1733

During the 11 November 1921 ceremony to inter the Unknown Soldier, these eight enlisted body bearers marched beside the horse-drawn caisson carrying the casket, four of them asisting c

and the contract of the contract o on each side, flanked by twelve honorary pallbearers (six on each side) consisting of major

Faith and Service: Four Military Chaplains, Four Religious Traditions

Chapter 9 Sidebar 09b

Kevin M. Hymel, Contract History Technical Writer, Army National Military Cemeteries



Chaplain John T. Axton (left) and Chaplain Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron (right) returned to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Armistice Day in 1927, continuing their commitment to the Tomb that had begun on the day of its creation. (National Archives and Records Administration)

The four chaplains who officiated the Unknown Soldier's funeral on 11 November 1921 represented not only America's military but also the country's diverse Judeo-Christian denominations. ¹⁷³⁵ Chaplain Charles H. Brent (Episcopal) had served as senior headquarters chaplain to the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in Europe. ¹⁷³⁶ Chaplain John T. Axton (Congregationalist) was the U.S. Army's chief of chaplains, while Chaplain John B. Frazier (Southern Methodist) was the Navy's chief of chaplains. Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron (Jewish) served in the Army Officers' Reserve Corps as a chaplain at large. ¹⁷³⁷ The chaplains' diverse

religious backgrounds mirrored some of the religious diversity within the AEF, reminding Americans that the Unknown could have come from any spiritual tradition.

Each chaplain played a distinct role in the Unknown's funeral service. Chaplain Brent oversaw the religious rites, and he led the chaplains as they marched in the funeral procession. ¹⁷³⁸ Chaplain Axton delivered the invocation: "Help us fittingly to honor our unknown soldiers who gave their all in laying sure foundations of international commonwealth," he prayed. "Help us to keep clear the obligation we have toward all worthy soldiers, living and dead, that their sacrifices and their valor fade not from our memory." Chaplain Lazaron read Psalm 23, and Chaplain Frazier read Revelation 7:9–17, with its imagery of a great multitude "from every nation, tribe, people and language." ¹⁷⁴⁰ Chaplain Brent then read the burial service. ¹⁷⁴¹

The four chaplains' military service had prepared them well for their sacred duties on 11 November. Chaplain Brent, from Ontario, Canada, immigrated to the United States and was ordained a priest in 1887. He worked as a missionary in the Philippines between 1901 and 1917. When the United States entered World War I, Brent was in France working for the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). In April 1918, Gen. John J. Pershing asked him to become the AEF's senior headquarters chaplain; Brent had previously baptized Pershing in the Philippines. Pershing asked Pershing in the U.S. Army, eventually earning the nickname "khaki-colored bishop." After the war, he joined Pershing and President Woodrow Wilson to create Comrades in Service, the first AEF veterans' organization.

Chaplain Axton joined the Army as a chaplain in 1902 and served in the Philippines and at Army posts in the United States, holding the rank of captain. During the war, Axton was

assigned to the port of embarkation in Hoboken, New Jersey, where service members either sailed for Europe or returned home. He oversaw 165 chaplains from various denominations and coordinated the efforts of thirty-two welfare organizations that assisted service members.

Chaplain Axton was appointed as the first Army chief of chaplains in 1920, and also became the first chaplain to hold the rank of colonel. 1745

Chaplain Frazier was commissioned as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy in 1895. During the Spanish-American War, he served on the USS *Olympia*, Commodore George Dewey's flagship, which would later bring the Unknown's body to the United States. In 1917, Frazier became the Navy's first chief of chaplains, at the rank of captain. He molded the seagoing clergy into a cohesive corps, which expanded from twenty-four to eighty-five chaplains during World War I. Frazier also wrote *The Navy Chaplain's Manual* (1918). 1746

Rabbi Lazaron was ordained in 1914. During World War I, he served as a chaplain at Camp Merritt, New Jersey, where he focused on the welfare of Jewish soldiers. He was preparing to head overseas when the war ended on 11 November 1918. Chaplain Lazaron remained in the Army Reserve Corps until 1953, continuing to serve Jewish soldiers and to advocate for interfaith dialogue. 1747

From their different backgrounds and service branches, these four chaplains came together on 11 November 1921 to help Americans mourn and honor the Unknown Soldier and the Americans of all faiths who had been killed in World War I. These men formed the spiritual foundation of the funeral and ensured that the Unknown Soldier would reach his ultimate resting place in the presence of committed clergy, even though his own religious beliefs could never be known.

Chief Plenty Coups and the American Indian Tribute to the Unknown

Chapter 9 Sidebar 09c

Roderick Gainer, Curator, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 09c.1. Chief Plenty Coups stands at the edge of the Unknown Soldier's crypt holding his lance and coup stick during the funeral. He presented his lance, coups stick, and war bonnet as tributes to the Unknown. (Library of Congress)

Chief Plenty Coups, the last traditional chief of the Apsáalooke (Crow) tribe of the Great Plains, was among the distinguished dignitaries at the burial of the World War I Unknown Soldier on 11 November 1921. 1748 Chosen to represent American Indian peoples at the funeral service, he presented several culturally significant gifts to the Unknown: a coup stick, lance, and war bonnet. These items remain in Arlington National Cemetery's artifact collection.

Born in 1848, Plenty Coups was originally named "Buffalo Bull Facing the Wind." ¹⁷⁴⁹ Upon adulthood, his name was changed to Plenty Coups, symbolizing his achievements as a warrior in battles with his people's ancestral enemies, such as the Cheyenne and the Sioux. He became a chief of the Mountain Crow clan in 1876, at age twenty-eight. ¹⁷⁵⁰

During a vision quest, Plenty Coups experienced a vision that portended white encroachment on Indigenous lands. He subsequently advocated for American Indian peoples to work with the U.S. government while preserving their cultures. The Crow Nation had allied itself with the United States during the Plains Wars of the 1850s–1870s, and members of the Crow, including Plenty Coups, had served as scouts for the U.S. Army. ¹⁷⁵¹

By the mid-1880s, the Crow moved to a reservation in Montana's Yellowstone Valley, and Plenty Coups became one of the first members of his formerly nomadic tribe to take up farming. Meanwhile, his public speaking and negotiating skills made him an able ambassador of the Crow Nation. Between 1910 and 1917, Plenty Coups successfully fought congressional legislation that would have opened Crow land to white settlement. Through a trust he established with his wife, Strikes the Iron, his log home is now a National Historic Landmark, located in Chief Plenty Coups State Park.

Because of his high standing as a leader and diplomat, the Army invited Plenty Coups to the funeral of the Unknown Soldier. Joseph K. Dixon, an influential photographer and chronicler of American Indian culture, had initially suggested another Plains warrior, White Man Runs Him, then chief of the Custer scouts. The Army ultimately chose Plenty Coups, although other American Indians also attended the ceremony. 1754

After the ceremony, the seventy-three-year-old chief left his war bonnet, lance, and coup stick on the grave of the Unknown. ¹⁷⁵⁵ The coup stick held special significance to the Great Plains tribes: touching an enemy in combat with a coup stick was considered a great honor. ¹⁷⁵⁶ According to the *New York Times* and the Associated Press, Plenty Coups also gave a speech at the ceremony, although some government sources contradict those reports. ¹⁷⁵⁷

Plenty Coups' presence at the Unknown Soldier's burial was especially meaningful in light of American Indians' military service during World War I. 1758 It is possible that the Unknown himself was an American Indian. Indeed, Dixon stated this explicitly in an October 1921 letter to secretary of war John W. Weeks. "What more fitting than that this race of people . . . should have a place in the ceremony, for doubtless hundreds of unknown Indian graves are scattered from the sea to the Alps?" Dixon wrote. He even suggested that the Indian chief chosen to participate in the ceremony should present what he considered to be the "Indian" equivalent of the Croix de Guerre, for, he argued, "It will give added distinction to the ceremony—the fact that the First American Warrior should lay his tribute on the grave of the Latest Hero of War—an Unknown American Soldier." 1759

Plenty Coups was among the last great American Indian chiefs of the nineteenth century, and his death in 1932 marked the end of an era. Throughout a full life, he served his people well in both war and peace. The artifacts that he presented to the Unknown Soldier honor his legacy and that of other American Indians who served in or with the U.S. military, as well as the service and sacrifice of the Unknown Soldier.

Frank Witchey: The Maestro of the Trumpet

Chapter 9 Sidebar 09d

Timothy Frank, Historian, Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 09d. Staff SGT Frank Witchy stands with his bugle at the newly completed final Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on April 12, 1932. After playing taps at the 1921 funeral, Witchey participated in many ceremonies at the Tomb in the following years. (*National Archives and Records Administration*)

Frank Witchey spent thirty years of his life becoming "the old 'maestro' of the trumpet, the daddy of the bugle and No. 1 windjammer of the Third Cavalry" (in the words of an Army press release). ¹⁷⁶⁰ Born on a farm in Iuka, Kansas, on 11 September 1891, Witchey enlisted in the Army in 1908 and reported to the 3d Cavalry Regiment, where he was assigned to the band and made a band sergeant in 1917. He and his regiment served on the U.S.-Mexico border until they shipped off to France after the United States entered World War I. ¹⁷⁶¹

After nearly two years in France, Witchey returned to the United States and received an assignment with Headquarters Troop, 3d Cavalry, based at Fort Myer, Virginia, near Arlington National Cemetery. There, Witchey began serving as sergeant bugler of the regiment, a post he

held until 1938. ¹⁷⁶² His position afforded him the honor of sounding Taps at many notable ceremonies and funerals. The first such ceremony in a list documented by Col. Jonathan M. Wainwright, commander, 3d Cavalry Regiment, was the burial of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. ¹⁷⁶³

Precisely at noon during the funeral ceremony on Armistice Day, 11 November 1921, Witchey sounded the bugle call to attention three times, after which two minutes of silence were observed at the cemetery and nationwide and then speeches began. ¹⁷⁶⁴ Then, at the conclusion of the subsequent burial ceremony, Witchey stepped forward and sounded Taps, which was followed by a twenty-one-gun salute. ¹⁷⁶⁵ The following day, Witchey purchased his bugle from the Army for \$2.50. On it, he began to engrave the names of important events at which he had sounded Taps, starting with the burial of the Unknown Soldier. The *New York Times* later called Witchey's instrument "the most famous bugle in the United States Army." ¹⁷⁶⁶

Across the next two decades, Witchey sounded Taps at the funerals of President Woodrow Wilson (1924), Lt. Gen. Nelson Miles (1925), Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood (1927), and former president William Howard Taft (1930), to name just a few. Sounding Taps for the last time in uniform, he performed his final official act on 19 May 1938, on the drill field of Fort Myer, in a tribute to the deceased members of the 3d Cavalry Regiment on its ninety-second birthday. Colonel Wainwright wrote to him, "Perhaps you, more than any soldier in the Army, are nationally known as a bugler because of your sounding Taps at so many important funerals. But, to me, your service has been more valuable in training many, many buglers for the regiment, and thus materially aiding in upholding its esprit and traditions. Good buglers, and lots of them, promote these factors in any military organization." 1767

After thirty years in uniform, Witchey retired as a technical sergeant in June 1938. He would have retired as a master sergeant, but a December 1937 War Department general order reorganized rank structure. This affected Witchey's retirement rank: instead of retiring with a pension of \$135 per month, Witchey received only \$94 per month as a technical sergeant. Witchey later described this loss as his only bad break in the Army. Looking back on his career shortly after his retirement, he noted, "I do hate to leave, but retirement of older soldiers helps the younger men who are coming up through the grades. I have always believed in retirement after a man has served 30 years in the Army; to stay on only takes away chances of advancement from younger men." Witchey not only upheld the Army's "esprit and traditions" but also paved the way for younger buglers to make their own mark in history.

Witchey, who would go on to sound Taps at events and funerals after his retirement, also served as the national trumpeter for the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) from 1937 to 1938. 1769

Witchey died on 30 September 1945 and was buried among his World War I comrades in Section 18 of Arlington National Cemetery on 4 October 1945. 1770 His widow, Margaret, died on 5 July 1973 and was buried with him four days later. 1771

America's Tomb Expands: The World War II and Korean War Unknowns

Conclusion Sidebar 10a

Stephen Carney, Command Historian (retired), Army National Military Cemeteries



Figure 10a.1. The World War II and Korean War Unknowns shared a joint state funeral in 1958. Seen here from the top of the Capitol Rotunda, the two caskets rest side by side on matching catafalques, one on the original Lincoln Catafalque, and the other on a replica constructed specifically for this ceremony.

(Architect of the Capitol)

The history of the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier unfolded differently from the histories of tombs created by most other nations after the First World War. While U.S. allies typically created a single tomb to represent all their unidentified dead and did not add to those tombs after subsequent wars, the United States pursued a distinct vision for its national shrine of mourning. Less than a year after World War II ended, public and official interest coalesced around the idea of adding an Unknown from that conflict to the Tomb—an ambition that would take more than a decade to realize and ultimately expand the memorial's scope.

On 30 May 1958, the United States paid solemn tribute to its missing dead of World War II and the Korean War by adding two new sets of remains to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

This elaborate process, from the selections to the joint state funeral and interments, followed

much of the ceremonial template established in 1921, but it represented an even greater logistical feat and a symbolic reaffirmation of national memory. It marked the culmination of a project deferred by war and revived by peace, a sacred mission to honor the sacrifices of American service members who had died nameless on distant battlefields.

The idea of expanding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to include unidentified fallen service member from World War II first gained official sanction in the immediate postwar years. In June 1946, Congress authorized the return and ceremonial interment of an unidentified World War II service member near or beside the remains of the World War I Unknown. The legislation directed the secretary of war to select the remains, coordinate the transport, and oversee the burial. The original plan was for the burial to be conducted on Memorial Day 1951. 1772

However, the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 interrupted planning. As the military reoriented itself toward the new conflict—and as identification procedures for World War II dead advanced—the initiative stalled. Nevertheless, calls for remembrance persisted. In the early 1950s, veterans' organizations lobbied to resume the program, urging that it be expanded to include the Korean conflict. These efforts succeeded. In August 1956, Congress amended the 1946 act, authorizing the secretary of defense to select and inter the remains of an unknown service member from the Korean War alongside the still-to-be-designated World War II Unknown. 1773 Planning resumed in earnest under the direction of the Department of Defense, which designated the Army Quartermaster Corps as lead agency for interment coordination.

To fairly represent the geographic breadth of World War II, the Department of Defense assigned the Army to choose one unknown service member from the transatlantic theater and the Air Force to choose one from the transpacific. For the Korean War, the Army would select the honoree. The Navy was then charged with selecting between the two World War II unknown

service members and transporting the final selections from both wars to Washington, D.C. These efforts required tight coordination among multiple commands and international cemeteries. 1774

In early May 1958, thirteen sets of unidentified American remains were exhumed from cemeteries in Europe and Africa and sent to Epinal American Cemetery in France. On 12 May, Maj. Gen. Edward J. O'Neill, representing U.S. Army Europe, selected one set of remains to represent the European theater. The chosen casket was sent to Naples, Italy, and placed aboard the destroyer USS *Blandy*. Simultaneously, in the Pacific, six sets of unidentified remains—two from Hawaii's National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific and four from Fort McKinley Cemetery (now named Manila American Cemetery) in the Philippines—were assembled at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. The On 16 May, Air Force colonel Glenn T. Eagleston selected the transpacific World War II Unknown. The day prior, M. Sgt. Ned Lyle of the U.S. Army had chosen one of four sets of unidentified Korean War remains from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific to be the Korean War Unknown. These two caskets were flown from Hawaii to Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, where they were loaded onto the missile cruiser USS *Boston*, which rendezvoused with the *Blandy* and the flagship USS *Canberra* off the Virginia Capes.

On 26 May 1958, at sea aboard the *Canberra*, the final World War II Unknown was selected in a ceremony deeply steeped in symbolism. To represent the American people, the Navy had chosen a Korean War Medal of Honor recipient, Hospital Corpsman First Class William R. Charette, to make the final selection. Charette was, at the time, the only living Navy enlisted recipient of the Medal of Honor from the Korean War (and the service's only activeduty Medal of Honor recipient in 1958), awarded for shielding wounded Marines with his body during combat in Korea in 1953. 1778

The Navy placed all three caskets—the two World War II candidates and the already chosen Korean War Unknown—in bronze containers on the deck of the *Canberra*. The Korean War Unknown was centered in front of Charette, with the World War II candidates on either side. In a solemn ritual, Charette marched forward, lifted a floral wreath, and placed it on the casket to his right, thereby selecting the World War II Unknown. The unchosen remains were buried at sea from aboard the *Canberra*, a ceremony accompanied by the firing of volleys and the playing of taps. ¹⁷⁷⁹

The selected remains were transferred to the *Blandy*, which proceeded to Washington, escorted by the USCGC *Ingham*. On 27 May, they arrived at the Washington Navy Yard, then still officially known as the Naval Gun Factory, a name retained from World War II into the late 1950s. The next day, a ceremonial procession brought the two caskets to the U.S. Capitol to lie in state in the rotunda until 30 May. ¹⁷⁸⁰

For those two days, these two Unknown Soldiers lay in state, guarded by an honor cordon drawn from every branch of the armed forces. Dignitaries, veterans, and ordinary Americans filed past in silent tribute. These events in the Capitol Rotunda echoed the vigil held for the World War I Unknown in 1921 and linked these three generations of wartime sacrifices.

Newspapers described a "quiet reverence" in the crowds, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower visited the Rotunda in a private moment of respect. ¹⁷⁸¹

On 30 May—Memorial Day—both caskets were placed on caissons for a military procession from the Capitol across the Potomac River to Arlington National Cemetery. An estimated crowd of one hundred thousand lined the route to Memorial Amphitheater. A flyover of twenty jets and bombers, with one plane missing in the lead formation to symbolize those lost, took place when the caissons entered the cemetery. 1782

The funeral service at Memorial Amphitheater was attended by President Eisenhower, Vice President Richard Nixon, members of Congress, representatives of allied nations, and stakeholders such as Medal of Honor recipients and veterans' groups, with members of the public filling any unoccupied seats. During the service, President Eisenhower awarded the Medal of Honor to each Unknown before the pallbearers transported the caskets to the Tomb Plaza. The graveside committal service included three chaplains who delivered the burial services of their faith (Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish), an artillery battery that fired a twenty-one gun salute, a firing party that delivered a three-volley rifle salute, and a bugler who sounded taps. ¹⁷⁸³

Crucially, the interment rites at the funeral addressed a human absence that no ritual could resolve: the lack of a family to receive the folded flags from atop the two caskets. In a deliberate act of symbolism, the nation supplied the next of kin. For the World War II Unknown, the president of the United States—an esteemed leader from that conflict—served as next of kin; for the Korean War Unknown, the vice president did so. As the ceremony concluded, the body bearers removed the flags, folded them, and presented them accordingly. In that moment, the head of state and his successor stood in the place that could not otherwise be filled by blood relations, acknowledging both the individuality and the universality of the losses gathered into the Tomb. 1784

After the ceremony, the public was given the opportunity to proceed past the caskets and the Tomb. Later that evening, after the crowds had departed, the two caskets were finally lowered into their crypts. ¹⁷⁸⁵ This completed what the Army Quartermaster Corps later described as "the most solemn ceremony of its kind since the Unknown of World War I was buried thirty-seven years earlier." ¹⁷⁸⁶

The interment of the World War II and Korean War Unknowns symbolized not only the sacrifice of two generations, but also the United States' evolving national identity in the Cold War era. While the 1921 ceremony had cemented the nation's emergence as a global power, the 1958 ceremony reaffirmed that commitment amid the uncertainties of nuclear rivalry and ideological struggles. These two new burials expanded this national shrine, establishing a triptych of sacrifice spanning three wars.

The burial of unknown soldiers is a paradox: it gives form to the formless, identity to the unnamed. In 1958, like in 1921, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier transformed individual loss into national unity, revealing the nation's enduring promise to never forget its missing war dead.

Michael Blassie: The Vietnam Unknown

Conclusion Sidebar 10b

Richard A. Hulver, Former Historian, National Cemetery Administration



Figure 10b.1. After the Vietnam Unknown was disinterred and identified as 1st Lieutenant Michael Blassie, he was reinterred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery on 10 July 1998. In this photograph, the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard prepares to fold the flag that had draped his casket, to be presented to his family. (National Archives and Records Administration)

A casket containing six bones of 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie was interred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, in his hometown of Saint Louis, Missouri, on 11 July 1998. ¹⁷⁸⁷ His return home had taken twenty-six years. In that time, Airman Blassie's fragmentary remains had rested in the jungle of South Vietnam, in forensic labs in Thailand and Hawaii, and, for fourteen years, in the nation's most revered military crypt—the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

Blassie's life ended over An Loc, near the Cambodian border, on 11 May 1972. The twenty-four-year-old U.S. Air Force Academy graduate had served in Vietnam for almost four months. On his 132nd combat mission with the 8th Special Operations Squadron, enemy fire tore into his A-37 Dragonfly. ¹⁷⁸⁸ The napalm-laden plane went into an inverted nosedive before

exploding on impact with the ground. Blassie's parents were notified the following day that he was killed in action, but unrecovered.

Five months later, unbeknown to the Blassie family, his crash site and remains were discovered by a South Vietnamese soldier. The bones and personal possessions—ID card, wallet, flight suit fragments, pistol harness, parachute, and life raft—eventually went to the Saigon Mortuary. Analysts there determined that the remains were "believed to be" those of Blassie. In 1976, their journey continued to the Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii; the ID and wallet were lost in transit. Further tests on bone and blood samples determined a height, age, and blood type different than Blassie's. In 1980, Michael Blassie's remains were reclassified as unknown "X-26." 1789

The unpopularity of the Vietnam War compelled U.S. leaders to memorialize it in ways that would cast a more positive light on the conflict. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier offered an opportunity to do this. In World War I, World War II, and, to a lesser extent, the Korean War, there had been abundant unidentified remains with a low risk of identification. Vietnam was different. President Richard Nixon ordered that a Vietnam War crypt be added to the Tomb in November 1971, but no unknown remains were available at the time of the 1973 ceasefire. Subsequent administrations were similarly unsuccessful in finding suitable unknown candidates. ¹⁷⁹⁰ In 1984, an election year, President Ronald Reagan forced the issue. Discontented with the somber Vietnam Veterans Memorial (completed on the National Mall in 1982) and eager to move the country past the bitterness of an inglorious war, Reagan sought a Vietnam Unknown for the nation to honor at the Tomb. Only four sets of unidentified remains existed, each with questionable anonymity. X-26, despite strong crash site evidence and inconclusive science, proved to be the only viable option. ¹⁷⁹¹

On 17 May 1984, Michael Blassie's remains, casketed along with remnants from his crash site that were supposed to have been destroyed after X-26's selection, set sail for the continental United States. His casketed remains arrived at San Francisco seven days later and were flown to Washington, D.C., to lie in state prior to burial at the Tomb on Memorial Day, 28 May. ¹⁷⁹² President Reagan, functioning as next of kin at the funeral, placed the Medal of Honor on the casket. ¹⁷⁹³ During his speech at the ceremony, Reagan promised all Vietnam-era families who still had missing loved ones that the placement of an Unknown did not signify an end to recovery efforts. ¹⁷⁹⁴ Yet Blassie's own family knew no more about their son's whereabouts than they had known in 1972.

Until 1994, Blassie rested peacefully in anonymity as the national symbol of his war at the Tomb. That year, an article by Ted Sampley, an outspoken Vietnam veteran and activist, followed the paper trail created after Blassie's remains were initially discovered and identified him as the Vietnam Unknown. ¹⁷⁹⁵ A January 1998 CBS television exposé included interviews with Blassie's family. Mounting political pressure, along with new scientific techniques that nearly guaranteed positive identification, compelled the Department of Defense to allow the once unthinkable. The venerated crypt was opened, and the remains labeled X-26 were removed for forensic testing, on 14 May 1998. Blassie was positively identified and, per his family's wishes, brought to Missouri for burial in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. The Medal of Honor presented to X-26 did not go with him; it was instead placed in the Memorial Amphitheater Display Room, near the Tomb. It still represented the sacrifices of those who remained missing from the Vietnam War.

With the identification of Blassie, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was reduced from four to three occupants. His family had achieved their ultimate goal: to get his name and remains

back. Blassie's story is thus a symbol of hope for all military families still seeking closure. ¹⁷⁹⁶ And there are many such families: at Arlington and other national cemeteries across the country and around the world, and in countless undiscovered burial places, thousands of unknowns remain buried, still to be discovered or identified. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency continues to analyze cases from World War II on, and also works to exhume and identify remains in national cemeteries. ¹⁷⁹⁷ Michael Blassie was not the last identified unknown, but he may well be the United States' last unknown from a modern war.

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¹¹ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," National Cemetery Administration (NCA), U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Jan 2014, 1,

https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/docs/factsheets/history.pdf (page discontinued; accessed 20 Aug 2019), Author's Files, Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), Arlington, VA; Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps 1775–1939* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1989), 462.

¹² Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 462; Steven E. Anders, "With All Due Honors: A History of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Mission," Quartermaster Professional Bull, Sep 1988,

https://www.quartermasterfoundation.org/article/with-all-due-honors-a-history-of-the-quartermaster-graves-registration-mission/_(accessed 2 Apr 2012). For information on members of the American military who died abroad during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Chris Dickon, *The Foreign Burial of American War Dead: A History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2011), 6–26.

An Act Making Appropriations for the Support of the Army for the Year Ending the Thirtieth of June, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-One, 9 Stat. 504 (1850), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/31st-congress/session-1/c31s1ch78.pdf. Dickon asserts that the Mexico City cemetery was the first dedicated American military cemetery abroad.

¹⁹ "Mexico City National Cemetery," n.d.; "Mexican-American War, Civil War, and Spanish American War," ABMC, n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/mexican-american-war-civil-war-and-spanish-american-war (accessed on 2 Apr 2021). American military dead from subsequent wars were later added to this cemetery, now known as Mexico City National Cemetery and administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). For more on Mexico City National Cemetery, see Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 25–26.

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 5–7, 9–12.

² See bibliography for examples.

³ P. J. Tobia, "Defense Secretary Carter Opens All Combat Jobs to Women," *PBS NewsHour*, 3 Dec 2015, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/watch-live-defense-secretary-carter-to-lift-ban-on-women-in-combat-jobs; Emma Moore, "Women in Combat: Five-Year Status Update," Center for a New American Security, 31 Mar 2020, https://www.cnas.org/publications/commentary/women-in-combat-five-year-status-update.

⁴ Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 163.

⁵ Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 164–66.

⁶ Cox, Proper Sense of Honor, 164–66, 174.

⁷ Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 2–35, 164–66, 174.

⁸ Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 179–80, 189, 197. Cox notes that few noncommissioned officers received burial honors.

⁹ Cox, Proper Sense of Honor, 179–80.

¹⁰ Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 183–84, 191–94. Throughout this book, the term "mass grave" refers to graves that contain multiple sets of unknown remains. The term "group burial" refers to graves that contain multiple sets of remains, in which the identity of some remains may be known, but in which the remains are comingled and unable to be identified individually. Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," National Cemetery Administration (NCA), U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Jan 2014, 1,

¹³ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 462–63.

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¹⁶ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 463–64.

¹⁷ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Michael Sledge, *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor Our Military Fallen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 32–33.

¹⁸ "Mexico City National Cemetery," American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/Mexico-City (accessed 2 Apr 2012); Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 25–26;

- ²¹ Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), xvi, 63–64; "The Cost of War: Killed, Wounded, Captured, and Missing," Civil War Casualties, American Battlefield Trust, n.d., https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-casualties_(accessed 2 Apr 2012); Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 1–2; "History & Development of the National Cemetery Administration," NCA, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Mar 2021, https://www.cem.va.gov/docs/factsheets/History_and_Development_of_NCA.pdf. Although recent scholarship suggests that the total number of Civil War deaths could be 700,000 or higher, the figures maintained by the Department of Veterans Affairs are used throughout this book. See "America's Wars." U.S. Dept. of Veterans
- ²² Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 3–4, 39, 41–42, 102; "Small Arms of the Civil War," American Battlefield Trust, n.d., https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/small-arms-civil-war (accessed 2 Apr 2021).

Affairs, Nov 2020, https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs americas wars.pdf.

- ²³ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 229; Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 1, *The United States Army and the Forging of a Nation*, 1775–1917, Army Historical Series, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2009), 301–4.
- ²⁴ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 63–64.
- ²⁵ For an in-depth examination of death and dying during the Civil War, see Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, xi–xviii, 62–65.
- ²⁶ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 6–17; Shannon Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation*, 1863–1921 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 11–13.
- ²⁷ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 6–14.
- ²⁸ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 6–11.
- ²⁹ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 61–64.
- ³⁰ Faust, This Republic of Suffering, xvi–xvii.
- ³¹ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, xvi–xvii, 62.
- ³² Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 82–84.
- ³³ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 69–71, 73–74, 82–83.
- ³⁴ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration"; "History & Development of the National Cemetery Administration," Mar 2021; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 64; War Dept. (WD) GO 75, For the Purpose of Preserving Accurate and Permanent Records of Deceased Soldiers, 11 Sep 1861, in Thomas M. O'Brien and Oliver Diefendorf, *General Orders of the War Department, Embracing the Years 1861, 1862 & 1863* (New York: Derby & Miller, 1864), 158,
- https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015019793622&view=1up&seq=214&size=125.
- ³⁵ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 64; WD GO 75, 11 Sep 1861, 158.
- ³⁶ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 64; WD GO 75, 11 Sep 1861, 158.
- ³⁷ WD GO 33, 3 Apr 1862, in O'Brien and Diefendorf, General Orders of the War Department, 248; Faust, This Republic of Suffering, 65.
- ³⁸ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 65, 67; Catherine W. Zipf, "Marking Union Victory in the South: The Construction of the National Cemetery System," in *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory*, ed. Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 27–29.
- ³⁹ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 1–2; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 99; WD, Quartermaster General's (QMG) Ofc, *Compilation of Laws, Orders, Opinions, Instructions, Etc. in Regard to National Military Cemeteries* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1878), 5, https://www.loc.gov/resource/dcmsiabooks.compilationoflaw00unit_0/?sp=11&r=-0.219,0.524,1.487,0.782,0.
- ⁴⁰ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 1–2; "History: General History," NCA, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, n.d., https://www.cem.va.gov/history/history.asp (accessed 2 Apr 2021); See Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration."
- ⁴¹ WD, QMG Ofc, Compilation of Laws, 5.

²⁰ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration"; Anders, "With All Due Honors," Sep 1988; Sledge, *Soldier Dead*, 33.

- ⁴² An Act to Establish and to Protect National Cemeteries, 14 Stat. 399 (1867), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/39th-congress/session-2/c39s2ch61.pdf; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 234; Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 33; WD, QMG Ofc, *Compilation of Laws*, 5–6.
- ⁴³ 14 Stat. 399 (1867); Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 234; Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 33; WD, QMG Ofc, *Compilation of Laws*, 5–6.
- ⁴⁴ WD, QMG Ofc, *Compilation of Laws*, 5–6; 14 Stat. 399 (1867); Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 234; Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 33.
- ⁴⁵ NCA, Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016), 15–16; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 466.
- ⁴⁶ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 2–3; Zipf, "Marking Union Victory in the South," 29; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 466.
- ⁴⁷ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 2; Zipf, "Marking Union Victory in the South, 29; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 466.
- ⁴⁸ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 466.
- ⁴⁹ Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 466.
- ⁵⁰ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 2–4; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 466.
- ⁵¹ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 2–4.
- ⁵² Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 2–4; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 102–3.
- ⁵³ NCA, Stewardship of Confederate Dead, 14, 16; WD GO 75, 11 Sep 1861, 158.
- ⁵⁴ NCA, *Stewardship of Confederate Dead*, 14, 16. For more on southern women's role in the burial and memorialization of the Confederate dead and the Confederacy, see for example, Mills and Simpson, *Monuments to the Lost Cause*; Caroline Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), especially Chapters 1–3; Karen Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).
- ⁵⁵ NCA, *Stewardship of Confederate Dead*, 16–39. For a discussion of the impact of the federal government's decision to take on the care of Confederate graves and how that decision further entrenched the "Lost Cause" mythology, particularly at ANC, see: Caitlin Smith and Allison S. Finkelstein, "Phase II Intensive-Level Survey of the Confederate Memorial (000-1235)," 20 Mar. 2023,
- https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/ConfederateMemorial-Phase%20II%20Survey%20Report-230803-DHR%202022-0201_1.pdf (accessed 28 Sept. 2025).
- ⁵⁶ Fact Sheet, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration," 4–5. The nineteenth-century rural cemetery movement favored the beautification of graves and park-like settings. Following these landscaping trends, both civilian and military cemeteries were transformed from utilitarian spaces into more peaceful, organized, and picturesque places to honor to the dead.
- ⁵⁷ "History of Arlington National Cemetery," ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/History-of-Arlington-National-Cemetery (accessed 2 Apr 2012).
- ⁵⁸ "George Washington Parke Custis," Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial (ARHO), National Park Service (NPS), n.d., https://www.nps.gov/arho/learn/historyculture/george-custis.htm (accessed 2 Apr 2012). ⁵⁹ "Mary Anna Randolph Custis Lee," ARHO, NPS, n.d., https://www.nps.gov/arho/learn/historyculture/mary-
- ⁵⁹ "Mary Anna Randolph Custis Lee," ARHO, NPS, n.d., https://www.nps.gov/arho/learn/historyculture/mary-lee.htm (accessed 2 Apr 2012).
- ⁶⁰ Robert M. Poole, *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2009), 11–12; Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 20–21.
- ⁶¹ "History of Arlington National Cemetery," n.d.; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 15–18.
- ⁶² "History of Arlington National Cemetery," n.d. Today, Arlington House is run by the National Park Service, while the cemetery remains under the control of the U.S. Army.
- ⁶³ "Freedman's Village," ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/History-of-Arlington-National-Cemetery/Freedmans-Village (accessed 2 Apr 2012); Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 52–54. Freedman's Village itself has a fascinating history that cannot be explored within the scope of this book. See, for example, Lindsey Bestebreurtje, "Beyond the Plantation: Freedmen, Social Experimentation, and African American Community

Development in Freedman's Village, 1863–1900," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 126, no. 3 (2018): 334–65; Lindsey Bestebreurtje, "Built by the People Themselves: African American Community Development in Arlington, Virginia, From the Civil War Through Civil Rights" (PhD diss., George Mason University, 2017), http://mars.gmu.edu/bitstream/handle/1920/11125/Bestebreurtje_gmu_0883E_11369.pdf, Author's Files, ANC. 64 "History of Arlington National Cemetery," n.d.; Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, sub: Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Amphitheater, and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, 12–13, https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/Docs/Arlington%20Mem%20Amph%20HABS%20VA-1348-G FINAL%20REPORT Apr2020.pdf.

- ⁶⁵ "History of Arlington National Cemetery.," n.d. For more on the transfer of the Arlington property, see McElya, *Politics of Mourning*, 38–40; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 54–55.
- ⁶⁶ "Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns," ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Monuments-and-Memorials/Civil-War-Unknowns (accessed 2 Apr 2021); Kathryn Allamong Jacob, *Testament to Union: Civil War Monuments in Washington, D.C.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 156–57; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 72–73.
- ⁶⁷ NCA, Stewardship of Confederate Dead, 18; Janney, Burying the Dead but Not the Past, 76–77; Cox, Dixie's Daughters, 4–5; David W. Blight, Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 64–65.
- ⁶⁸ Janney, Burying the Dead but Not the Past, 76; Blight, Race and Reunion, 64–77.
- ⁶⁹ David W. Blight, "Forgetting Why We Remember," *New York Times*, 29 May 2011, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/30/opinion/30blight.html; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 64–71.
- ⁷⁰ "History of Arlington National Cemetery," n.d.; NCA, *Stewardship of Confederate Dead*, 18–22. For more on women's roles in Civil War commemorations, see Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past*; Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*; and Mills and Simpson, *Monuments to the Lost Cause*.
- ⁷¹ "History of Arlington National Cemetery," n.d.; Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past*, 76–79; Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 4–5, 11; HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 13–14.
- 72 "LOGAN, John Alexander," History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, n.d., https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/17094 (accessed 2 Apr 2021); "General John A. Logan, Memorial Day Founder," Army Historical Foundation, n.d., https://armyhistory.org/general-john-a-logan-memorial-day-founder/ (accessed 2 Apr 2021); NCA, Stewardship of Confederate Dead, 18; Janney, Burying the Dead but Not the Past, 76; Blight, Race and Reunion, 71; "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial" online exhibit, ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Memorial-Amphitheater-100 (accessed 2 Apr 2021).
- ⁷³ Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 77–78; HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 13–14; "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," n.d.; "History of Arlington National Cemetery," ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/History-of-Arlington-National-Cemetery (accessed 2 Apr 2021).
- ⁷⁴ Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 77–78; HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 13–14; "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," n.d.
- ⁷⁵ Restored in 2014, this amphitheater is now called the Tanner Amphitheater, named after James R. Tanner, a double amputee Civil War veteran buried nearby. ANC Press Release, "Arlington National Cemetery to Rename 'Old' Amphitheater after Civil War Wounded Warrior, James R. Tanner," 21 May 2014, https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Media/News/Post/4549/Arlington-National-Cemetery-to-rename-Old-

Amphitheater-after-Civil-War-Wounded-Warrior-James-R-Tanner; HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 14. ⁷⁶ HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 14–16. For a full history of Memorial Amphitheater and analysis of its design, see this report and the Arlington National Cemetery online exhibit "The Memorial Amphitheater

- design, see this report and the Arlington National Cemetery online exhibit, "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," n.d.
- ⁷⁷ HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 2, 16–20.
- ⁷⁸ HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 34.
- ⁷⁹ HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 2; "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," n.d.
- ⁸⁰ Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919–1933* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 17–18.
- ⁸¹ An Act Making Appropriations to Pay Session Employees of the House of Representatives, and for Other Purposes, 30 Stat. 730, ch. 646 (1898); An Act to Reimburse the Governors of States and Territories for Expenses Incurred by Them in Aiding the United States to Raise and Organize, and Supply and Equip the Volunteer Army of the United States in the Existing War with Spain, 30 Stat 730, ch. 647 (1898),

https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/55th-congress/session-2/c55s2ch647.pdf; Edward Steere, *The Graves Registration Service in World War II* (Washington, DC: Historical Section, Office of the Quartermaster General, 1951), 10, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112101586458&view=1up&seq=22&size=150.

- 82 30 Stat. 730, ch. 646 (1898); 30 Stat 730, ch. 647 (1898); Steere, Graves Registration Service, 10.
- ⁸³ Although the Army's official name for this conflict is the Philippine Insurrection, Philippine-American War is the more widely used and accepted name.
- 84 Stewart, American Military History, vol. 1, 359.
- 85 Budreau, Bodies of War, 27; "America's Wars," Nov 2020, 1; Stewart, American Military History, vol. 1, 365.
- 86 Steere, Graves Registration Service, 10; Budreau, Bodies of War, 28.
- 87 Budreau, Bodies of War, 28.
- ⁸⁸ "Soldier Dead Are Here—Transport Crook Reported Off the Jersey Coast—Bodies Will Receive Military Honors," *New York Times*, 29 Mar 1899; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 28.
- ⁸⁹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 28–29; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 10; Sledge, *Soldier Dead*, 35. For a specific examination of the return of the dead from the USS *Maine*, see Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 119–47.
- ⁹⁰ Budreau, Bodies of War, 28–29; Steere, Graves Registration Service, 10; Sledge, Soldier Dead, 35.
- ⁹¹ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 10; Anders, "With All Due Honors," Sep 1988. For more on D. H. Rhodes's work at Arlington National Cemetery over the years, see Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 110–11, 123–24, 130, 163; Edward C. and Melissa Johnson, "Mr. D. H. Rhodes: The Conscientious Caretaker of Arlington National Cemetery," *American Cemetery* (Feb 1983): 20–24, in History-David Rhodes folder, box 3, ANC Historical Research Collection (ANCHRC).
- ⁹² Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 28–31. For a more detailed study of the care of the war dead during the Philippine-American War, see Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 164–79.
- ⁹³ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 10–11. After Rhodes's tour of duty ended in June 1901, F. S. Croggon ran recovery operations. Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 169–70.
- ⁹⁴ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 10–11; Sledge, Soldier Dead, 35–36; Budreau, Bodies of War, 30–36.
- ⁹⁵ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 10–11; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 30–36; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 169–70.
- ⁹⁶ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 10–11; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 164.
- ⁹⁷ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 10–12.
- 98 Steere, Graves Registration Service, 12; Budreau, Bodies of War. 34.
- 99 Budreau, Bodies of War, 34.
- ¹⁰⁰ ANC Explorer, n.d., https://ancexplorer.army.mil/publicwmv/#/arlington-national/search/results/1/CgZwaWVyY2USB2NoYXJsZXM-/ (accessed 25 May 2021).
- ¹⁰¹ "America's Wars," Nov 2020, 1; Thomas H. Conner, *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018), 22. See also page 246, note 23, which states that 1,656 American unknown World War I dead were interred in ABMC cemeteries as "unknowns." See also "World War I Burials and Memorializations," ABMC, n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/node/533509 (accessed 22 Jun 2021).
- World War I, American women had only limited opportunities to serve in or with the military. Although women did serve as Army and Navy nurses without full rank, women were barred from enlisting in all branches of the military except (temporarily) in the Navy and Marine Corps, and women were not allowed in any combat roles. Women also served overseas in a variety of civilian positions with the military and with civilian organizations, but not in combat. Therefore, because it is most likely that the Unknown Soldier served in combat, it is practically impossible for the World War I Unknown Soldier buried in the Tomb to be a woman. For more on the anonymity of the Unknown, see Chapter 6. On women in World War I, see Lettie Gavin, *American Women in World War I: They Also Served* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 1997); Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Kimberly Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008); Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider, *Into the Breach: American Women Overseas in World War I* (New York: Viking, 1991); Susan Zeiger, *In Uncle Sam's Service: Women Workers with the American Expeditionary Force, 1917–1919* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Jean Ebbert and Marie-Beth Hall, *The First, the Few, the Forgotten: Navy and Marine Corps Women in World War I* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2002). On U.S. military nurses in World War

I, see Elizabeth A. P. Vane, "Contributions of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in World War I," Army Nurse Corps Association, n.d., https://e-anca.org/History/Topics-in-ANC-History/Contributions-of-the-US-Army-Nurse-Corps-in-WWI (accessed 31 Mar 2021); "United States Navy Nurse Corps, World War I," Naval History and Heritage Command, 28 Apr 2017, https://www.history.navy.mil/our-collections/artifacts/exhibits/uniform--navy-nurse-corps-world-war-i.html.

- ¹⁰³ For more on the size and structure of the U.S. Army on the eve of World War I, see Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 1, 388–89; John S. D. Eisenhower, *Yanks: The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 22–25; Benjamin King, Richard C. Biggs, and Eric R. Criner, *Spearhead of Logistics: A History of the United States Army Transportation Corps* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Transportation Center and U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2001), 93, https://history.army.mil/html/books/069/69-7-1/cmhPub_69-7-1.pdf (accessed 31 Mar 2021).
- 104 Eisenhower, Yanks, 23–25; Arlene Balkansky, "The Draft in World War I: America 'Volunteered its Mass," Headlines and Heroes, Library of Congress, 19 Jun 2018, https://blogs.loc.gov/headlinesandheroes/2018/06/wwidraft/; Jennifer D. Keene, Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 1–3; Jeffery T. Sammons and John H. Morrow Jr., Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2014), 131; An Act to Authorize the President to Increase Temporarily the Military Establishment of the United States, PL 12, 40 Stat. 76 (1917), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/65th-congress/session-1/c65s1ch15.pdf.
- ¹⁰⁵ Eisenhower, Yanks, 40; Keene, Doughboys, 2; Balkansky, "The Draft in World War I."
- ¹⁰⁶ On the concept of the citizen-soldier in World War I, see Keene, *Doughboys*, 1–7.
- ¹⁰⁷ Keene, *Doughboys*, 3, 11; David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 150, 165–66.
- ¹⁰⁸ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 150, 165–66. Keene, *Doughboys*, 3, 11.
- ¹⁰⁹ Eisenhower, *Yanks*, 34–36; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 41, 61–66.
- ¹¹⁰ George E. Creel, "Four Million Citizen Defenders: What Universal Training Means in Dollars, Duty, and Defense," *Everybody's Magazine* 36 (Jan-Jun 1917), 545–47, 553,
- https://www.google.com/books/edition/Everybody_s_Magazine/Tq3NAAAAMAAJ; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 145. ¹¹¹ Warren G. Harding, "Address at the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier," (presidential address, Arlington Cemetery, 11 Nov 1921), 3, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t8nc6t24q&view=1up&seq=6. ¹¹² Kennedy, *Over Here*, 147–48.
- 113 Keene, *Doughboys*, 28; Ford, 67–68.
- 114 Keene, Doughboys, 28–29.
- ¹¹⁵ Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 2, *The United States Army in a Global Era*, 1917–2008, Army Historical Series, 2nd ed. (Washington DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2010), 9–11, 18–21. For more on the National Guard during the World War I era, see: *The U.S. Army in the World War I Era* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2017), 12–13, 16–18, 30.
- 116 Stewart, American Military History, vol. 2, 26–27; Keene, Doughboys, 4.
- 117 "Cantigny American Monument," ABMC, n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/europe/cantigny-american-monument (accessed 31 Mar 2021); Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 30–31.
- ¹¹⁸ Stewart, American Military History, vol. 2, 35.
- ¹¹⁹ Edward G. Lengel, *To Conquer Hell, The Meuse-Argonne, 1918: The Epic Battle that Ended the First World War* (New York: Henry Holt, 2008), 4. For more on the Meuse-Argonne, see Mitchell Yockelson, *Forty-Seven Days: How Pershing's Warriors Came of Age to Defeat the German Army in World War I* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2016); Eisenhower, *Yanks*, 198–239.
- ¹²⁰ During World War I, the U.S. Army consisted of three components: the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the National Army. For more information, see Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 21.
- ¹²¹ "Mass Immigration and WWI," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), 30 July 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/mass-immigration-and-wwi; "The Immigrant Army: Immigrant Service Members in World War I," USCIS, 5 Mar 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/history-office-and-library/featured-stories-from-the-uscis-history-office-and-library/the-immigrant-army-immigrant-service-members-in-world-war-i; Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since*

- 1882 (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 124–26; Nancy Gentile Ford, Americans All!: Foreign-Born Soldiers in World War I (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), 3–16.
- ¹²² "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020. For an extensive analysis of immigrants in the U.S. Army during World War I, see Ford, *Americans All!*.
- ¹²³ Keene, *Doughboys*, 19; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 157; "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020.
- ¹²⁴ Ford, *Americans All!*, 3, 67–68; Keene, *Doughboys*, 20; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 157; Byron Farwell, *Over There: The United States in the Great War*, 1917–1918 (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), 60–61; "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020. Many native-born service members were also illiterate or barely literate.
- ¹²⁵ Ford, *Americans All!*, 67–68, Farwell, *Over There*, 61; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 157–58; Keene, *Doughboys*, 20–21; "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020. Americanization was neither new during World War I, nor a unified movement with a singular approach. The ideology encompassed various tactics to acculturate immigrants, which ranged from inclusive and benevolent to harsh and charged with prejudice. For more on Americanization, see Ford, *Americans All!*, 5–6, 11, 16–17, 107–10.
- ¹²⁶ Ford, Americans All!, 67–75.
- ¹²⁷ Kennedy, Over Here, 158; Lengel, To Conquer Hell, 35–36, 117–20; United States Army, History of the Seventy-Seventh Division, August 25, 1917–November 11, 1918 (New York: W. H. Crawford, 1919), 8–9, https://archive.org/details/historyofseventy00uni/page/10/mode/2up (accessed 31 Mar 2021); "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020.
- ¹²⁸ Thomas A. Britten, *American Indians in World War I: At Home and Abroad* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 257; Ford, *Americans All!*, 67–87.
- ¹²⁹ Ford, Americans All!, 75–87.
- ¹³⁰ Ford, *Americans All!*, 75–87.
- ¹³¹ Ford, Americans All!, 77.
- ¹³² "Citizenship and Immigration During the First World War," USCIS, Department of Homeland Security World War I Centennial Poster Series, vol. 1, 2017,
- https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/newsletters/WWI_18x24_USCIS.pdf (Accessed 9 Oct 2025); "The Immigrant Army," 5 Mar 2020; Ford, *Americans All!*, 63–64; Farwell, *Over There*, 61; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 157–58; Keene, *Doughboys*, 20–21.
- ¹³³ Lonnie G. Bunch III, "Introduction," in *We Return Fighting: World War I and the Shaping of Modern Black Identity*, ed. Kinshasha Homan Conwill, National Museum of African American History and Culture (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2019), 11; Krewasky A. Salter, "From Civil War to World War: African American Soldiers and the Roots of the Civil Rights Movement," in Conwill, *We Return Fighting*, 54.
- ¹³⁴ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 66. Indeed, African Americans already served in the military on the eve of World War I. See Emmett J. Scott, *Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War* (Chicago: Homewood Press, 1919), 9, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015010328592&view=2up&seq=16 (accessed 31 Mar 2021). For more, see Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*, chapter 1.
- ¹³⁵ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 66–71; Scott, Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War, 9; Farwell, Over There, 149; Kennedy, Over Here, 156, 162.
- ¹³⁶ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 66–71; Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 33; Keene, *Doughboys*, 20; Scott, *Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War*, 9; Farwell, *Over There*, 149.

 ¹³⁷ Farwell, *Over There*, 149–50.
- 138 Keene, *Doughboys*, 21–23. Many scholars have covered the history of the segregation of African Americans in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). See, for example, Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*; Mark Whalen, *The Great War and the Culture of the New Negro* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008); Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Chad Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Nina Mjagkij, *Loyalty in the Time of Trial: The African American Experience during World War I* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011); and Kennedy, *Over Here*, 158–59.

 139 Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 71, 78–79; Keene, *Doughboys*, 21–24, 83–84; Scott, *Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War*, 315, 316–27; Farwell, *Over There*, 80, 151; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 161–62; Jami L. Bryan, "Fighting for Respect: African American Soldiers in WWI," Army Historical Foundation, n.d., https://armyhistory.org/fighting-for-respect-african-american-soldiers-in-wwi/ (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁴⁷ Britten, American Indians in World War I, 52–56, 59–72. Britten estimates that more than one third of American Indians did not have citizenship in 1917, and their citizenship status was often hard to determine, complicating the process of registering American Indians for the draft and even determining if they were eligible for it. See also Farwell, Over There, 158–60: Susan Applegate Krouse, North American Indians in the Great War (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 5; Steven Sabol, "In Search of Citizenship: The Society of American Indians and the First World War," Oregon Historical Quarterly 118 (Summer 2017), 268-72; Cynthia Smith, "Native Americans in the First World War and the Fight for Citizenship," Worlds Revealed: Geography and Maps, Library of Congress, 28 Mar 2018, https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2018/03/native-americans-in-the-first-world-war-and-thefight-for-citizenship/; Sentinel Staff, "Honoring Native American, Alaska Native Heritage," 22 Nov 2010, https://www.army.mil/article/48472/honoring native american alaska native heritage; "Native Words, Native Warriors" online exhibit, NMAI, n.d., https://americanindian.si.edu/education/codetalkers/html/index.html (accessed 31 Mar 2021). Not all American Indians supported the war, and some resisted the draft, such as those on the Goshute (Gosiute) reservation in Nevada and Utah, to name just one example. For more on American Indian draft resistance, see Capozzola, Uncle Sam Wants You, 30; Britten, American Indians in World War I, 67-72; Erik M. Zissu, "Conscription, Sovereignty, and Land: American Indian Resistance during World War I," Pacific Historical Review 64, no. 4 (Nov 1995): 537-66; Matthias Voigt, "Indigenous Experiences of War (USA)," 1914-1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 9 Dec 2019, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918online.net/article/indigenous experiences of war usa.

¹⁴⁸ Farwell, *Over There*, 158–60; Smith, "Native Americans in the First World War," 28 Mar 2018, https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2018/03/native-americans-in-the-first-world-war-and-the-fight-for-citizenship/?loclr=blogtea; Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 58–59; "Patriot Nations" online exhibit, NMAI, n.d.,

https://americanindian.si.edu/static/patriot-nations/world-wars.html#ww1 (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁴⁰ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 71, 78–79; Keene, *Doughboys*, 21–24, 83–84; Bryan, "Fighting for Respect," n.d.; Scott, *Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War*, 315, 316–27; Farwell, *Over There*, 80, 151; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 161–62.

¹⁴¹ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 80–81.

¹⁴² Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 80–87.

¹⁴³ Farwell, *Over There*, 150–51; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 160–61; John H. Morrow, "At Home and Abroad: During and after the War," in Conwill, *We Return Fighting*, 112.

¹⁴⁴ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 80–92; Farwell, *Over There*, 148–54; Kennedy, *Over Here*, 199–200; Bunch, "Introduction," 13.

¹⁴⁵ Scott, Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 57. Because the term Native American has fallen out of favor with many of the people to whom it has referred, the term American Indian is used throughout this book to refer to the Indigenous people of the United States. Whenever possible, specific tribal names have been used. See "What is the Correct Terminology," National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), n.d., https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/faq/did-you-know (accessed 8 Jun 2021).

¹⁴⁹ Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 54–60; "Patriot Nations," n.d.; Farwell, *Over There*, 159. Britten and Farwell note that there were also complications when noncitizen American Indians wanted to enlist in the military. ¹⁵⁰ Krouse, *North American Indians in the Great War*, 17, 23, 27.

^{151 &}quot;Patriot Nations," n.d.

¹⁵² Farwell, *Over There*, 158–60; Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 51–52; Smith, "Native Americans in the First World War," 28 Mar 2018; "Patriot Nations," n.d.; National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (NCVAS), *Minority Veterans Report: Military Service History and VA Benefit Utilization Statistics* (Washington, DC: Department of Veterans Affairs, Mar 2017), 12, https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Minority_Veterans_Report.pdf; "Legacy," American Indians in WWI Centennial Commission, United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/american-indians-in-ww1-legacy.html (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁵³ Farwell, Over There, 158–60; Britten, American Indians in World War I, 51–52; Smith, "Native Americans in the First World War," 28 Mar 2018; NCVAS, Minority Veterans Report, 12; "Patriot Nations," n.d.; "Legacy," n.d. 154 Britten, American Indians in World War I, 4, 141, 157.

¹⁵⁵ Britten, American Indians in World War I, 4.

¹⁵⁶ Britten, American Indians in World War I, 141–57.

- ¹⁵⁷ Farwell, *Over There*, 160; "Awards, French Croix de Guerre," American Indians in WWI Centennial Commission, United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwarlcentennial.org/index.php/american-indians-in-wwl-legacy.html (accessed 31 Mar 2021).
- ¹⁵⁸ NCVAS, *Minority Veterans Report*, 12; An Act Granting Citizenship to Certain Indians, PL 75, 41 Stat. 350 (1919), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/66th-congress/session-1/c66s1ch95.pdf.
- ¹⁵⁹ Smith, "Native Americans in the First World War," 28 Mar 2018; "Today in History–June 2: Indian Citizenship Act," Library of Congress, n.d., https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/june-02/ (accessed 31 Mar 2021); "Legacy," n.d.; "Voting Rights for Native Americans," n.d., https://www.loc.gov/classroom-

materials/elections/right-to-vote/voting-rights-for-native-americans/ (accessed 6 Jun 2021). However, even after the 1924 act, some American Indians were still denied the right to vote in some states.

- ¹⁶⁰ For example, the 125th, 141st, 325th, 359th, and 360th Infantry contained large numbers of Mexican American men; Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 124, 127. On the AEF's 36th Division and the 90th Division, nicknamed the "Tough 'Ombres" (*'Ombres* for *hombres* [men] in Spanish), see Victoria María MacDonald and Emma Taylor, "Towards a History of Mexican American Participation in World War I, Part I," The Text Message, National Archives, 9 Oct 2018, https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2018/10/09/towards-a-history-of-mexican-american-participation-in-world-war-i-part-i/.
- ¹⁶¹ Lorena Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts: Latinos in the Military," in *American Latinos and the Making of the United States: A Theme Study*, ed. Stephen J. Pitti (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2012), 255–59, https://www.nps.gov/heritageinitiatives/latino/latinothemestudy/military.htm.
- ¹⁶²Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 257; MacDonald and Taylor, "Towards a History of Mexican American Participation," 9 Oct 2018.
- ¹⁶³ Britten, American Indians in World War I, 122–23.
- ¹⁶⁴ José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), ch. 1; Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 12.
- ¹⁶⁵ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 22; Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 123; MacDonald and Taylor, "Towards a History of Mexican American Participation," 9 Oct 2018. For more on the League of United Latin American Citizens and its history, see Amy Waters Yarsinske, *All for One and One for All: A Celebration of 75 Years of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)* (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company, 2004), https://lulac.org/about/history.pdf (accessed 31 Mar 2021); Cynthia E. Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009). ¹⁶⁶ Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 32; Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 257.
- ¹⁶⁷ Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 257–58; Britten, American Indians in World War I, 122.
- ¹⁶⁸ Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 258; Britten, American Indians in World War I, 124.
- ¹⁶⁹ Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 256; "Jones Act," The World of 1898: The Spanish-American War, Library of Congress, n.d., https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/jonesact.html (accessed 31 Mar 2021); "Foreign in a Domestic Sense, 1898–1945: Puerto Rico," Hispanic Americans in Congress, History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, n.d., https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/HAIC/Historical-Essays/Foreign-Domestic/Puerto-Rico/(accessed 31 Mar 2021).
- ¹⁷⁰ Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 256; "Foreign in a Domestic Sense," n.d.
- ¹⁷¹ Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 256; "Foreign in a Domestic Sense," n.d.
- ¹⁷² Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 256.
- ¹⁷³ Britten, American Indians in World War I, 124.
- ¹⁷⁴ Andrew Huber, "Hispanic Heritage Month: Celebrating Veterans," Library of Congress Blog, 4 Oct 2017, https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2017/10/national-hispanic-heritage-month-celebrating-veterans/; "Hispanics in the U.S. Army," U.S. Army, n.d., https://www.army.mil/hispanics/history.html (accessed 1 Apr 2021); Refugío I. Rochín and Lionel Fernandez, *U.S. Latino Patriots: From the American Revolution to Iraq 2003—An Overview* (Lansing: Julian Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University, 2005), 14–15,

https://jsri.msu.edu/upload/ebooks/Latino%20Patriots.pdf (accessed April 2, 2021); Rolando Duarte, "Serna, Marcelino (1896–1992)," Texas State Historical Association Handbook of Texas, n.d.,

https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/serna-marcelino (accessed 1 Apr 2021); Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts," 255–59; MacDonald and Taylor, "Towards a History of Mexican American Participation," 9 Oct 2018.

¹⁷⁷ "Asian-American History," Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), n.d., https://jacl.org/asian-american-history/ (page discontinued; accessed 28 Sep 2020); Lon Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion: The Untold History of Anti-Asian Racism in the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 106.

¹⁷⁸ Mai Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 37–38; Marian L. Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality: INS Administration of Racial Provisions in U.S. Immigration and Nationality Law Since 1898," *Prologue Magazine* 34, no. 2 (Summer 2002), National Archives, https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/immigration-law-1.html; "Asian-American History," n.d; An Act to Amend the Naturalization Laws and to Punish Crimes against the Same, and for Other Purposes, 16 Stat. 254 (1870), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/41st-congress/session-2/c41s2ch254.pdf.

¹⁷⁹ "McGettrick Certificates," USCIS, 5 Feb 2025, https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/stories-from-the-archives/mcgettrick-certificates; "Early American Immigration Policies," USCIS, 30 Jul 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/overview-of-ins-history/early-american-immigration-policies; Marian L. Smith, "Overview of INS History to 1998," USCIS, 6 Jan 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy/our-history/overview-of-ins-history-to-1998; "Asian-American History," n.d.; Ngai, *Impossible*

¹⁸⁰ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 38.

Subjects, 38.

¹⁸¹ An Act to Regulate the Immigration of, Aliens to, and the Residence of Aliens in, the United States, PL 301, 39 Stat. 874 (1917), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/64th-congress/session-2/c64s2ch29.pdf; Smith, "Overview of INS History," 6 Jan 2020; "Public Charge Provisions of Immigration Law: A Brief Historical Background," USCIS, 14 Aug 2019, https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/history-office-and-library/our-history/public-charge-provisions-of-immigration-law-a-brief-historical-background#_ftnref12; "Mass Immigration and WWI," 30 Jul 2020; Smith, "Overview of INS History," USCIS, 6 Jan 2020; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 18–19, 64

¹⁸² According to Thomas A. Bruscino Jr., several thousand individuals of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Filipino descent fought for the U.S. military in World War I. Bruscino, "Minorities in the Military," 887. See also Salyer, "Baptism by Fire."

¹⁸³ Philip Chin, "A Short History About Chinese American Military Veterans," Chinese American Heroes, 24 Nov 2011, http://chineseamericanheroes.org/cah-history/ (accessed 1 Apr 2021).

¹⁸⁴ Philip Chin, "Sing Lau Kee: Forgotten Hero of World War I," 17 Nov 2014,

http://chineseamericanheroes.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Sing-Lau-Kee.pdf; Andrew R. Chow, "Overlooked No More: Lau Sing Kee, War Hero Jailed for Helping Immigrants," *New York Times*, 21 Aug 2019,

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/obituaries/lau-sing-kee-overlooked.html; Guy Takamatsu, "Lau Sing Kee," United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d.,

https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/commemorate/family-ties/stories-of-service/2207-lau-sing-kee.html (accessed 1 Apr 2021).

¹⁸⁵ "Over 800 Immigrant Japanese and Nisei Served in US Army during World War I. Road to Gain Citizenship Was Long and Arduous," Japanese American Veterans Association, Discover Nikkei, 3 Jun 2019,

http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2019/6/3/wwi-veterans/; "The Insular Force: Adapting to Local Conditions," Naval History and Heritage Command, Naval History Blog, U.S. Naval Institute, 1 Apr 2011, https://www.navalhistory.org/2011/04/01/the-insular-force-adapting-to-local-conditions.

¹⁸⁶ Gina Vergara-Bautista and Clement Bautista, "Hawaii's Filipino American Soldiers: A Legacy of Valor and Loyalty," Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii exhibit, 6–23 Oct 2009, http://www.efilarchives.org/pdf/veteran%20exhibit%20main%20text.pdf.

¹⁸⁷Colin P. A. Jones, "Japanese People v. the United States et al," *Japan Times*, 12 Apr 2017, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2017/04/12/issues/japanese-people-v-united-states-et-al; *Hidemitsu Toyota v. United States*, 268 U.S. 402 (1925), https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/268/402.

¹⁸⁸ Sanjoy Chakravorty, Devesh Kapur, and Nirvkar Singh, *The Other One Percent: Indians in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 11.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas A. Bruscino Jr., "Minorities in the Military," in *A Companion to American Military History*, ed. James C. Bradford (New York: Wiley, 2009), 887.

¹⁷⁶ Bruscino, "Minorities in the Military," 887. See also Lucy E. Salyer, "Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and U.S. Citizenship Policy, 1918-1935," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 3 (Dec 2004): 847–76.

- ¹⁸⁹ Tanveer Kalo, "Indians who Served: Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwarlcentennial.org/index.php/indians-who-served (accessed 8 Jun 2021). ¹⁹⁰ Tanveer Kalo, "Rajah William Bandy," United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwarlcentennial.org/index.php/indians-who-served/4130-rajah-william-bandy.html (accessed 1 Apr 2021).
- ¹⁹¹ Chakravorty, Kapur, and Singh, *The Other One Percent*, 13–14; Tanveer Kalo, "In Defense of Their New Home: Indian Americans Who Fought for the United States in WWI," United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwarlcentennial.org/index.php/communicate/press-media/wwi-centennial-news/3039-in-defense-of-their-new-home-indian-americans-who-fought-for-the-united-states-in-world-war-i.html (accessed 1 Apr 2021); Tanveer Kalo, "Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," United States World War One Centennial Commission, n.d., https://www.worldwarlcentennial.org/index.php/indians-who-served/1940-dr-bhagat-singh-thing.html (accessed 1 Apr 2021).
- ¹⁹² Some accounts cite Thind as the first turbaned Sikh to serve in the U.S. military: Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 42; Kalo, "In Defense of Their New Home," n.d.; Kalo, "Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," n.d; "Chapter 10: US vs. Bhagat Singh Thund," in "Echoes of Freedom: South Asian Pioneers in California, 1899–1965" online exhibit, Berkeley Library, University of California, n.d., https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/echoes-of-freedom/bhagat-singh-thind (accessed 1 Apr 2021).
- 193 Kalo, "Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," n.d.
- ¹⁹⁴ Kalo, "Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," n.d.; United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind, 261 U.S. 204 (19 Feb 1923), https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/ll/usrep/usrep261/usrep261204/usrep261204.pdf (accessed 1 Apr 2021); and United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind, 261 U.S. 204 (1923),

https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/261/204 (accessed 1 Apr 2021).

- ¹⁹⁵ Kalo, "Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind," n.d.
- ¹⁹⁶ Christopher Capozzola, Bound by War: How the United States and the Philippines Built America's First Pacific Century (New York: Basic Books, 2020), 91.
- ¹⁹⁷ "Asian Americans in the U.S. Military, with an Emphasis on the U.S. Navy," adapted from an essay by Regina T. Akers, Naval History and Heritage Command, 4 Jan 2013, updated Apr 2017, https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/diversity/asian-americans-pacific-islanders-in-the-navy/asian-americans-us-military.html.
- ¹⁹⁸ Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 91.
- ¹⁹⁹ Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 94–96; An Act to Amend the Naturalization Laws and to Repeal Certain Sections of the Revised Statues of the United States and Other Laws relating to Naturalization, and for Other Purposes, PL 144, 40 Stat. 542 (1918), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/65th-congress/session-2/c65s2ch69.pdf.
- ²⁰⁰ Ricardo Trota Jose, "The Philippine National Guard in World War I," *Philippine Studies* 36, no. 3 (1988): 275–76; Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 94–103; Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific*, 1902–1940 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 109–11.
- ²⁰¹ Jose, "The Philippine National Guard in World War I," 276–78; Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 96–97.
- ²⁰² Quoted in Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 97–98.
- ²⁰³ Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 99.
- ²⁰⁴ Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 99.
- ²⁰⁵ Jose, "The Philippine National Guard in World War I," 282–83, 285–86; Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 99–102; Linn, *Guardians of Empire*, 111.
- ²⁰⁶ Jose, "The Philippine National Guard in World War I," 294–95, 299. Many members of the Philippine National Guard died in service, especially from influenza. See also "Echoes of the Great War: American Experiences of World War I" online exhibit, Library of Congress, n.d., https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/world-war-i-american-experiences/about-this-exhibition/over-here/raising-an-army/first-philippine-division/ (accessed 1 Apr 2021); Ambeth R. Ocampo, "Filipinos in World War I," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 Nov 2018, https://opinion.inquirer.net/117456/filipinos-in-world-war-i; "Julio Ereneta," Mt. Soledad National Veterans
- Memorial, n.d., https://soledadmemorial.org/plaques/chief-warrant-officer-julio-ereneta/ (accessed 1 Apr 2021).
- ²⁰⁷ ANC Explorer, n.d. Both men are buried in Section 17 of the cemetery: Balingao is in Grave 20350, and Galvez is in Grave 20356.
- ²⁰⁸ Capozzola, Bound by War, 88, 98; Linn, Guardians of Empire, 109.

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/donut-girls-wwi-helped-fill-soldiers-bellies-and-get-women-vote-180962864/; "What Do We Do?," About Us, Salvation Army, n.d., https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/about/ (accessed 3 Apr 2021); Schneider and Schneider, *Into the Breach*, 120–24. Keene notes that the Knights of Columbus and Jewish Welfare Board established racially integrated recreation huts in larger camps in the United States.

https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/liberty-american-jewish-experience-wwi; "Over There: Profiles of American Jews in World War I" exhibit, National Museum of American Jewish Military History, n.d., https://nmajmh.org/stories/over-there-profiles-of-american-jews-in-world-wwi/ (accessed 1 Apr 2021); Robert Michael, *A Concise History of American Antisemitism* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 101.

- ²²¹ Michael, *A Concise History of American Antisemitism*, 101. Michael notes that a higher percentage of Jews were wounded than the rest of the AEF and that about 3,500 Jews were killed in action or died of wounds. Jews accounted for 5 percent of Americans killed in action. The number of Jews wounded was an estimated 12,000, or 4.8 percent, of the Jews who served, while 4.3 percent of all Americans were wounded.
- ²²² Farwell, *Over There*, 60–61; Ford, *Americans All!*, 121. For a detailed history of the Jewish Welfare Board in World War I, see Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for America*.

https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1839&context=etd. This thesis offers a broader history of Mormons and World War I in the United States.

²⁰⁹ Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 97, 103–5. For a detailed analysis of World War I's broader effects on U.S.-Philippine relations, as well as on Filipino migration to the mainland United States, see Capozzola, *Bound by War*, 81–112.

²¹⁰ Ford, Americans All!, 120.

²¹¹ Ford, Americans All!, 120.

²¹² For example, Regular Army Christian chaplains (of any race) who served during World War I represented twenty-three different denominations, consisting of African Methodist Episcopal, Christian (not Disciples of Christ), Congregational, Congregational Unitarian, Cumberland Presbyterian, Episcopal, Baptist (Colored), Baptist (North), Baptist (South), Disciples of Christ, German Reformed of the U.S., Lutheran, Lutheran (Augustana Synod), Method Episcopal (North), Method Episcopal (South), Missionary Baptist, Presbyterian (U.S.A.), Reformed Church of America, Roman Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist, Unitarian, United Evangelical, and Universalist. By contrast, Regular Army Christian African American chaplains represented fourteen different denominations, consisting of Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian United, African Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, Congregational, Disciples, Methodist Episcopal (North), Baptist (North), African Methodist Episcopal (Zion), National Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal. See Earl F. Stover, *Up From Handymen: The United States Army Chaplaincy, 1865-1920, Volume III* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 1977), 254–71.

²¹³ Ford, Americans All!, 121.

²¹⁴ Ford, *Americans All!*, 120; Jessica Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for America: World War I and the Origins of Religious Pluralism* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 7–11; Keene, *Doughboys*, 94; Farwell, *Over There*, 137; Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 92; Lorraine Boissoneault, "The Women Who Fried Donuts and Dodged Bombs on the Front Lines of WWI," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 12 Apr 2017,

²¹⁵ Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for America*, 7–11.

²¹⁶ Cooperman, Making Judaism Safe for America, 158.

²¹⁷ Ford, Americans All!, 105.

²¹⁸ Ford, *Americans All!*, 105; "Historical Note," in "National Catholic War Council: An Inventory of Records of the National Catholic War Council at The American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives," n.d., https://libraries.catholic.edu/special-collections/archives/collections/finding-aids/finding-aids.html?file=nc-war-council, (accessed 1 Apr 2021).

²¹⁹ Ford, Americans All!, 105.

²²⁰ Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for America*, 9; "For Liberty: American Jewish Experience in WWI" exhibit, National WWI Museum and Memorial, 29 Jun–11 Nov 2018,

²²³ Farwell, Over There, 60–61; Ford, Americans All!, 121.

²²⁴ Ford, Americans All!, 121–22.

²²⁵ James I. Mangum, "The Influence of the First World War on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 23 Jan 2007), 3–6,

https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/how-britain-invented-the-tank-in-the-first-world-war (accessed 2 Apr 2021). ²³⁹ Philip Sawford and Katharine Alston, "How Has War in the Air Changed Over Time?" Imperial War Museum, 7

https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/nmusn/explore/photography/wwi/wwi-aef/weapons/chemical-warfare.html (accessed 2 Apr 2021); Gerard J. Fitzgerald, "Chemical Warfare and Medical Response during World War I," *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no. 4 (Apr 2008): 611–25, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2376985/.

²⁴¹ Ian M. Brown, "Transportation and Logistics," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 6 Feb 2018, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/transportation_and_logistics; "Transport and Supply during the First World War," Imperial War Museum, n.d., https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/transport-and-supply-during-the-first-world-war (accessed 2 Apr 2021); "World War I: Shifting to Motor Transportation," U.S. Army Transportation Museum, 9 Mar 2021, https://transportation.army.mil/museum/wwi/index.html. For more on transportation and the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during World War I, see Benjamin King, Richard C. Biggs, and Eric R. Criner, *Spearhead of Logistics: A History of the United States Army Transportation Corps* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Transportation Center and U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2001), 101–12, https://history.army.mil/html/books/069/69-7-1/cmhPub_69-7-1.pdf.

²⁴² Elizabeth Bruton, "Communication Technology," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 9 Dec 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/communication_technology; Heidi J. S. Tworek, "Wireless Telegraphy," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 8 Oct 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/wireless_telegraphy; Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1915* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 305–12.

²⁴³ Mark D. Karau, "Submarines and Submarine Warfare," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 24 Jul 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-

online.net/article/submarines_and_submarine_warfare.

²⁴⁴ "1918 Pandemic (H1N1 Virus)," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 20 Mar 2019, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html.

²²⁶ Mangum, "Influence of the First World War," 3–4. Three Mormon chaplains served in the war and ministered to the men from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. See also "Three LDS Chaplains: Discovering Different Paths of Service," in "The Great War: A Centennial Remembrance" online exhibit, Brigham Young University, Sep 2014–Jul 2015, http://exhibits.lib.byu.edu/the-great-war/three-lds-chaplains.html.

²²⁷ Mangum, "Influence of the First World War," 3–4.

²²⁸ Mangum, "Influence of the First World War," 47–48.

²²⁹ Mangum, "Influence of the First World War," 58–59. For more information regarding the armed confrontation between the Mormons and the U.S. government in the late 1850s, see Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders*, 1789–1878, Army Historical Series (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2011), 194–226.

²³⁰ Mangum, "Influence of the First World War," 58; "Thomas C. Neibaur: The First Latter-day Saint Medal of Honor Recipient," in "The Great War" online exhibit, Sep 2014—Jul 2015, http://exhibits.lib.byu.edu/the-great-war/thomas-c-neibaur.html; "Thomas C. Neibaur," Stories of Sacrifice, Congressional Medal of Honor Society, n.d., https://www.cmohs.org/recipients/thomas-c-neibaur (accessed 1 Apr 2021).

²³¹ Edward V. Curtis IV, *Muslim Americans in the Military: Centuries of Service* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), loc. 492 of 1832, Kindle.

²³² Curtis, *Muslim Americans in the Military*, loc. 492-507 of 1832. Curtis's book provides a rare summation of Muslim service in the American military during World War I.

²³³ Curtis, Muslim Americans in the Military, loc. 492-507 of 1832.

²³⁴ Harding, "Address at the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier," (presidential address, 11 Nov 1921), 3.

²³⁵ John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields," in *Punch* 149, 8 Dec 1915, 468.

²³⁶ Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 2–3.

²³⁷ Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 2–3.

²³⁸ "How Britain Invented the Tank in the First World War," Imperial War Museum, n.d.,

Dec 2017, https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/how-has-war-in-the-air-changed-over-time; Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 3.

²⁴⁰ Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 3; "Weapons: Chemical Warfare," National Museum of the U.S. Navy, Naval History and Heritage Command, n.d.,

²⁴⁵ "1918 Pandemic (H1N1 Virus)," 20 Mar 2019.

- ²⁴⁶ John M. Barry, "The Site of Origin of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic and Its Public Health Implications," *Journal of Translational Medicine* 2, no. 1 (20 Jan 2004), 3, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC340389/. Barry cites Haskell County, Kansas, as the place where the influenza pandemic originated. See also John M. Barry, "How the Horrific 1918 Flu Spread Across America," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Nov 2017,
- https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/journal-plague-year-180965222/; Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19; Kathleen M. Fargey, "The Deadliest Enemy: The U.S. Army and Influenza, 1918–1919," *Army History* 111 (Spring 2019): 24–39.
- ²⁴⁷ Susan H. Godson, *Serving Proudly: A History of Women in the U.S. Navy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2002), 76.
- ²⁴⁸ "History of 1918 Flu Pandemic," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 21 Mar 2018, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-commemoration/1918-pandemic-history.htm.
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- ²⁵⁰ Nadège Mougel, "World War I Casualties," trans. Julie Gratz, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/reperes112018.pdf; "5 Things You Need to Know About the First World War," Imperial War Museum, n.d., https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-first-world-war (accessed 2 Apr 2021); *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Killed, Wounded, and Missing" by Dennis E. Showalter and John G. Royde-Smith, https://www.britannica.com/event/World-War-I/Killed-wounded-and-missing (accessed 2 Apr 2021); Antoine Prost, "War Losses," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 8 Oct 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war losses.
- ²⁵¹ Robin Cross, *In Memoriam: Remembering the Great War* (London: Ebury, 2008), 256; John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 423; *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Killed, Wounded, and Missing." ²⁵² Cross, *In Memoriam*, 256; Keegan, *First World War*, 423; Mehmet Fath Baş, "War Losses (Ottoman Empire/Middle East)," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 20 Nov 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_losses_ottoman_empiremiddle_east; *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Killed, Wounded, and Missing"; Michael Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts: A Statistical Encyclopedia of Casualty and Other Figures, 1492–2015*, 4th ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2017), 430–35. See Clodfelter for more detailed statistics on wartime deaths and casualties, including those for other nations such as Bulgaria and Romania.
- ²⁵³ Cross, *In Memoriam*, 256; Keegan, *First World War*, 421–23; William Spencer and Simon Fowler, *Army Service Records of the First World War* (London: A&C Black, 2001), 94; Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 295–302; Neil Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 224; Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts*, 431–32. Jay Winter estimates that more than 4 million men died in the military service of France, Britain, and Germany alone; see Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1–2.
- ²⁵⁴ "America's Wars," Nov 2020, 1; United States World War One Centennial Commission, https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/about.html (accessed April 2, 2021); "World War I Burials and Memorializations," n.d.
- ²⁵⁵ Fargey, "Deadliest Enemy," 25. Compared with the estimated figure of 53,000 American battle deaths during World War I, the flu likely accounted for about half of all U.S. military fatalities during the war. See "America's Wars," Nov 2020, 1.
- ²⁵⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Killed, Wounded, and Missing."
- ²⁵⁷ Keegan, First World War, 421.
- ²⁵⁸ Keegan, First World War, 421–23.
- ²⁵⁹ American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), History of the American Graves Registration Service, Q.M.C. in Europe, vols. 1–3, To September 1920 (ca. 1920–1922), 27, digitized copy (from the ABMC Headquarters Collection, Arlington, VA), Author's Files, ANC; William G. Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service (1917–1950s)," American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology 4, no. 3 (Sep 1983): 231–44; Winter, Sites of Memory, 36.
- ²⁶⁰ Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 236.

- ²⁶⁴ Gavin, American Women in World War I, 192–94; Budreau, Bodies of War, 232; American Red Cross, The Work of the American Red Cross during the War: A statement of Finances and Accomplishments for the Period July 1, 1917 to February 28, 1919 (Washington, DC: American Red Cross, 1919), 60–61,
- http://resource.nlm.nih.gov/01110560R; Edward Hungerford, With the Doughboy in France: A Few Chapters of an American Effort (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 242–48.
- ²⁶⁵ Winter, Sites of Memory, 36–44; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 323; Gavin, American Women in World War I, 192–94.
- ²⁶⁶ Gavin, *American Women in World War I*, 191–94; American Red Cross, *Work of the American Red Cross*, 60–61; GO 81, American Red Cross Bureau of Information of Casualties, 24 Dec 1917, in U.S. Army Center of Military History, *United States Army in the World War*, 1917–1919, vol. 16, *General Orders, GHQ, AEF* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1992), 151.
- ²⁶⁷ Gavin, American Women in World War I, 192–94; GO 81, 24 Dec 1917, 151.
- ²⁶⁸ Gavin, American Women in World War I, 191–94; American Red Cross, Work of the American Red Cross, 60–61.
- ²⁶⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Killed, Wounded, and Missing"; Prost, "War Losses," 8 Oct 2014.
- ²⁷⁰ Winter, Sites of Memory, 36.
- Winter notes that perhaps as many as half of the Australians who died in action were missing or unidentifiable, and that about 700,000 of the more than 1 million French dead had been identified; see Winter, *Sites of Memory*, 26, 36. Hanson states that almost half of the British dead (499,000) were listed as missing in action and 173,000 were found but unidentifiable, though he cites a 1928 source that may not be accurate; see Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 224–25. According to Thomas W. Laqueur, there were about 517,000 British unknown dead, but he does not provide a source for this figure; see Thomas W. Laqueur, "Memory and Naming in the Great War," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 156.
- ²⁷² Baş, "War Losses (Ottoman Empire/Middle East)," 20 Nov. 2017; Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 239–41; Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts*, 431, 434.
- ²⁷³ Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 234–36.
- ²⁷⁴ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 2.
- ²⁷⁵ Return of Body of Unknown American Who Lost His Life During the World War: Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 66th Cong. (1 Feb 1921), 5–6, folder 293.8 (1-4-21), box 563, entry 37, Rcds of the Adjutant Gen's Ofc, Record Group (RG) 407, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD, (NACP).
- ²⁷⁶ Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 6. Fish was not involved in the work of identifying bodies, and he does not define his terms. "Absolutely unknown dead" could refer to those whom they would never be able to identify, and "unidentified dead" could refer to those whom they still might be able to identify.
- ²⁷⁷ Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 19–20.
- ²⁷⁸ Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 19–20.
- ²⁷⁹ The number 1,650 is the number of unknown bodies buried at American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) cemeteries. It comes from that agency's records. With the addition of the one unknown body from World War I buried in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, that number becomes 1,651. However, ABMC historian Ben Brands notes that 1,650 is the agency's best assessment, and due to the nature of World War I burials, it must be understood as an estimate, especially as some of these graves likely contain multiple sets of remains, among other possible inaccuracies. Excel Database, ABMC, 17 Jun 2021, "Record of unknown burials by site," Cemetery Operations Division Internal Files, ABMC, Paris, France; Email, Benjamin Brands to Allison S. Finkelstein, 18 Jun

²⁶¹ In an example typical of many, a 22 August 1920 article in the *Detroit Free Press* discussed the feelings of the families of the missing and unidentified dead, describing how "anxious hearts of parents and friends yearn for knowledge not conveyed in the terse records of the army." "War's Unsolved Mysteries," *Detroit Free Press*, 22 Aug 1920

²⁶² Winter, Sites of Memory, 36–44.

²⁶³ Winter, Sites of Memory, 36–44; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 323; Lettie Gavin, American Women in World War I: They Also Served (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2006), 192–94; Robert Sackville-West, The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021).

- 2021, sub: Sidebar 03a, "Time Will Not Dim the Glory of their Deeds", for final review, Author's Files, ANC; Email, Benjamin Brands to Roderick R. Gainer, 17 Sep 2020, sub: World War I Unknown numbers, Author's Files, ANC. The 1,656 number comes from Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 22, 246n23. However, Conner's number seems to be based on estimated calculations. See also "World War I Burials and Memorializations," n.d.
- ²⁸⁰ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 11–12; William F. Ross and Charles F. Romanus, *The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War Against Germany*, United States Army in World War II: The Technical Services (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1991), 1–2.
- ²⁸¹ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 11–12; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91.
- ²⁸² Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 11–12.
- ²⁸³ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 37–40.
- ²⁸⁴ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 12.
- ²⁸⁵ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 12.
- ²⁸⁶ Sarah G. Forgey, ed., *The Great War: U.S. Army Artifacts* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2018), 86; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 51; Tracy Fisher, "'For Us the Living': How America Buried its World War I Overseas Dead" (PhD diss., George Mason University, 2016), 40,
- https://mars.gmu.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/4f1e4e2d-d09e-4b64-b02d-f9b7436c3f55/content; GO 30, Identification Tags, 15 Feb 1918, in *United States Army in the World War, 1917–1919*, vol. 16, 213.
- ²⁸⁷ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 12. Indeed, the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) history notes that "the bodies of a vast majority of the dead possessed metal tags and no doubt as to identity ever arose. There were in all some 2,000 unknown dead and un-located burials." AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 65.
- ²⁸⁸ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 12; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 34; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690; Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 231; U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies of American Soldiers Who Died Overseas: Special Report of Statistics Branch, General Staff, January 15, 1920* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 3, ABMC Headquarters Collection, Arlington, VA; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 12.
- ²⁸⁹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 39; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 12–13; U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies*, 3. This report states that the consolidation of the Graves Registration Service (GRS) and the AEF Burial Department took place on 15 February 1918, and that henceforth the organization went by the name Graves Registration Service. General Orders No. 30 officially merged the two organizations. See GO 30, 15 Feb 1918, 213.
- ²⁹⁰ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 39; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 12–13; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 249–53.
- ²⁹¹ Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 12; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 34; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 12. ²⁹² Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; Sledge, *Soldier Dead*, 36; U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies*, 3.
- ²⁹³ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 19; G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 94–95; U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies*, 3–4. This report specifies that the commander in chief of the AEF decided on 30 December 1917 that the dead must be buried by the units themselves. Troops were responsible for burials, which resulted in the appointment of division and corps burial officers. Burial officers and chaplains would coordinate their work with the GRS. For the orders that outlined the responsibilities of the GRS, see GO 30, 15 Feb. 1918, 213.
- ²⁹⁴ For more on the role of chaplains in support of the GRS, see David I. Goldman, "Charlie' Chaplains in the Great War: Chaplains' Experiences in the U.S. Army, 1917–1919," *Journal of Military History* 84, no. 2 (Apr 2020): 418–21; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 250–51; Maj. William R. White, "Our Soldier Dead," *Quartermaster Review* 9, no. 6 (May-Jun 1930), 12.; GO 30, 15 Feb 1918, 213.

- ²⁹⁵ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; Anders, "With All Due Honors"; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 19; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 94–95; U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies*, 3–4.
- ²⁹⁶ Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 691.
- ²⁹⁷ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 13; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 691.
- ²⁹⁸ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 13; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 691.
- ²⁹⁹ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; GO 30, 15 Feb 1918, 211–13.
- ³⁰⁰ Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 691–92; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 22; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 249–50. There were even graves in northern Russia, in response to U.S. military involvement there. For more on the consolidation of American graves, see U.S. War Department, *Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies*.
- ³⁰¹ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 692.
- ³⁰² AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 7.
- ³⁰³ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 13; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 41–43, 55–59; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 692.
- ³⁰⁴ Steere, Graves Registration Service, 13; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 693; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 2.
- ³⁰⁵ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 7, 41–42.
- ³⁰⁶ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 236–40; Anders, "With All Due Honors."
- ³⁰⁷ Steere, *Graves Registration Service*, 13; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 690–91; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 13. For more on the similarities between the British and American burial efforts, see Kyle Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death: U.S. Army Graves Registration Service and Its Burial of the World War I Dead" (PhD diss., University of North Texas, 2020), 68–75, https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1707387/.
- ³⁰⁸ Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 264–67.
- ³⁰⁹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 4.
- ³¹⁰ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 5.
- 311 Budreau, Bodies of War, 53-61; Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 78-80.
- 312 Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 66–71.
- 313 Budreau, Bodies of War, 53-54
- ³¹⁴ Salter, "From Civil War to World War," 71; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 53–61. While African American soldiers in the AEF did much of the initial burial labor during and immediately after the war, sources indicate that they did not form as large a part of the labor force of the AGRS, which took charge of the burial, identification, and cemetery efforts in 1919. While the sources from the time do not often clearly specify the AGRS workers' races, the AGRS history discusses its challenges in its efforts to hire workers, which implies that African American soldiers were likely not used at that time. See AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 87–89. As Lisa Budreau points out, the AGRS history scarcely mentions the labor of the African Americans soldiers at any period of time, but its few references indicate that their work took place in 1919 or earlier. See Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 54–55; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 34–35.
- ³¹⁵ Adele Logan Alexander, "Introduction," in Addie W. Hunton and Kathryn M. Johnson, *Two Colored Women With the American Expeditionary Forces* (New York: G. K. Hall & Co, 1997), xxvii–xxix.
- 316 Alexander, "Introduction," xxvii–xxix.
- 317 Hunton and Johnson, Two Colored Women With the American Expeditionary Forces, 234.
- ³¹⁸ Hunton and Johnson, Two Colored Women With the American Expeditionary Forces, 234.
- ³¹⁹ Hunton and Johnson, Two Colored Women With the American Expeditionary Forces, 234–35.
- ³²⁰ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 20–21, 38–40; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 691; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 94–95.
- ³²¹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 21; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 17; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 94–97.
- ³²² Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 24–26, 41–48; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 94–97; Fisher, "For Us the Living," 4–5; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 266–73; Allison S. Finkelstein, "Carry On: American Women and the Veteranist-Commemoration of the First World War, 1917–1945" (PhD diss., University of

Maryland, College Park, 2015), 194–96, https://drum.lib.umd.edu/handle/1903/1668; Allison S. Finkelstein, Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials: How American Women Commemorated the Great War, 1917–1945 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021), 132–34.

- ³²³ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 47–50, 69–72
- ³²⁴ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 7; Conner, War and Remembrance, 17.
- ³²⁵ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 7.
- ³²⁶ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 71–72; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 8.
- ³²⁷ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 8.
- ³²⁸ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 39–40; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 8; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 20–21; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 693–94; Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 234; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 259–64.
- ³²⁹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 7.
- ³³⁰ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 42–44. For a history of the Imperial War Graves Commission, see David Crane, *Empires of the Dead: How One Man's Vision Led to the Creation of WWI's War Graves* (London: William Collins, 2013).
- ³³¹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 8.
- ³³² Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 43–48.
- ³³³ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 43–48; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 17–20; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 693. For a more detailed analysis of the choices about the disposition of the dead given to families, and the ways families navigated these choices, see Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 37–50, and Fisher, "For Us the Living." In some circumstances, families could also choose to keep their loved one buried at or near where he fell. See Dickon, *Foreign Burial of American War Dead*, 59–68, 260–62; Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 316; Fisher, "For Us the Living," 337–52.
- ³³⁴ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 10.
- ³³⁵ Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 21–22; Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 200–202; Finkelstein, "Carry On,"194–96; Finkelstein, *Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials*, 132–34. For a detailed examination and analysis of the correspondence process between the War Department and the next of kin, see Fisher, "For Us the Living," 5–8, 24–28.
- ³³⁶ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 10.
- 337 Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 70–71, 79; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 10; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 17–18; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 270–71. The level of debate over the issue of what to do with the war dead and the number of rumors about the care of the dead were both so high that a 1920 government report specifically reiterated the government's policies, in order to quash "curious misimpressions regarding the intention of the Government with respect to the disposition of American military remains." This report also detailed other issues, including the reasons that delayed repatriation (such as the strain on French morale); outlined the American debate on repatriation; summarized the negotiations between France and the United States; explained the work of the GRS (and the AGRS); described the fledgling American overseas cemeteries; and generally provided an on-the-ground perspective on the multitude of issues regarding the final disposition of the American war dead. It attempted to reassure the American public that the War Department was doing careful work and provided recommendations for the next steps. Ralph Hayes, *The Care of the Fallen: A Report to the Secretary of War on American Military Dead Overseas* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 11, 13–14, 19–30, ABMC Headquarters Collection, Arlington, VA.
- ³³⁸ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 70; Andrew Carroll, "World War I Letters Show Theodore Roosevelt's Unbearable Grief After the Death of His Son," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 3 Apr 2017,
- https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/letters-unbearable-grief-theodore-roosevelt-death-son-180962743/; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 96; Allison S. Finkelstein, "A Female Sanctuary on the Western Front: The Gold Star Pilgrimage Rest Houses in France, 1930–33," *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 23, no. 1 (Spring 2016), 54; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 17–19; "Roosevelt Objects to Removal of Son," *New York Times*, 18 Nov 1918.
- ³³⁹ "Pleads For Unknown Dead: Mrs. Robinson Urges Mothers Here to Leave Sons to France's Care," *New York Times*, 31 May 1920; Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 176–77. Mrs. Robinson's name is given only as Mrs. Charles L.

- F. Robinson in the article. Her full name can be found at "Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Beach Robinson," Find a Grave, n.d., https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/57092198/elizabeth-hart_jarvis-robinson (accessed 10 Jun 2021). ³⁴⁰ "Pleads For Unknown Dead"; McElya, *Politics of Mourning*, 176–77.
- ³⁴¹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 10; Fisher, "For Us the Living," 5–8, 24– 28. For more on how the repatriation and identification process affected families of the war dead, see Fisher, "For Us the Living"; David Seitz, "Grave Negotiations: The Rhetorical Foundations of American World War I Cemeteries in Europe" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2011), 27–29, http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/9050/; David W. Seitz, World War I, Mass Death, and the Birth of the Modern US Soldier: A Rhetorical History (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018), ch. 3, 147-82.
- ³⁴² Budreau, Bodies of War, 48; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 1, 44–45.
- ³⁴³ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 48; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 1, 44–45, 86–89. See AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, ch. 10, for details about the complex employment issues the AGRS faced during its overseas work.
- ³⁴⁴ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 694; Conner, War and Remembrance, 20–21; Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 85. For more on the negotiations between the French and American governments regarding the war dead, see Hayes, Care of the Fallen, 19–30.
- ³⁴⁵ Fisher, "For Us the Living," 5–7; Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 237–40.
- ³⁴⁶ Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 233–34. For the most part, the records pertaining to the disposition of the World War I dead can be found in the WWI Burial Case Files in Record Group 92 at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. (NADC). Previously, these records were located at the National Archives, College Park, Maryland (NACP), where the author researched them, but they have since been moved to the National Archives in St. Louis, Missouri. Many of these records have been digitized and are available online. See Suzanne Zoumbaris, "Now Available Online: Burial Cards of World War I Soldiers," The Text Message, National Archives, 8 Nov 2018, https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2018/11/08/nowavailable-online-burial-cards-of-world-war-i-soldiers/. For a detailed examination of the WWI Burial Case Files, see Fisher, "For Us the Living," 25–30.

 347 Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 242.
- ³⁴⁸ Eckert, "History of the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service," 231–43; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 81–82.
- ³⁴⁹ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 82.
- ³⁵⁰ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 82.
- ³⁵¹ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 82.
- ³⁵² AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 82–83.
- ³⁵³ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 83.
- ³⁵⁴ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 83.
- ³⁵⁵ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 83.
- ³⁵⁶ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 83.
- ³⁵⁷ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 83.
- ³⁵⁸ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 85.
- ³⁵⁹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 85.
- ³⁶⁰ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 85.
- ³⁶¹ Conner, War and Remembrance, 22; Budreau, Bodies of War, 75, 256n7; Piehler, Remembering War the American Way, 97.
- ³⁶² Piehler, Remembering War the American Way, 97; Conner, War and Remembrance, 20–22; Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 694.

 363 "Our Story," Commonwealth War Graves Commission, n.d., https://www.cwgc.org/who-we-are/our-history/
- (accessed 3 Apr 2021); Conner, War and Remembrance, 23, 60-61; Budreau, Bodies of War, 123-24; Piehler, Remembering War the American Way, 97; George L. Mosse, Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 81–82. On the history of the Imperial War Graves Commission and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, see also Crane, Empires of the Dead; on the headstones of the unknown dead buried in British cemeteries, see Suzanne Evans, Mothers of Heroes, Mothers of Martyrs: World War I and the Politics of Grief (Montreal: McGill-Oueen's University Press, 2007), 148–51.
- ³⁶⁴ Conner, War and Remembrance, 22–23; Budreau, Bodies of War, 99.

- Commemorating the Services of the American Battle Monuments Commission to Erect Suitable Memorials Commemorating the Services of the American Soldier in Europe, and for Other Purposes, PL 534, 42 Stat. 1509 (1923), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/67th-congress/Session%204/c67s4ch283.pdf?loclr=bloglaw; Budreau, Bodies of War, 111; Conner, War and Remembrance, 15–16, 33, Piehler, Remembering War the American Way, 97–98. Various scholars have looked at the history of the ABMC. See, for example, Budreau, Bodies of War; Conner, War and Remembrance; Ron Robin, Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900–1965 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Piehler, Remembering War the American Way; Bontrager, Death at the Edges of Empire; Seitz, "Grave Negotiations"; Kate Clarke Lemay, Triumph of the Dead: American World War II Cemeteries, Monuments, and Diplomacy in France (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2018); Hulver, "Remains in Peace"; Elizabeth G. Grossman, "Architecture for a Public Client: The Monuments and Chapels of the American Battle Monuments Commission," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 42, no. 2 (May 1984): 119–43; Steven Trout, On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919–1941 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010).
- ³⁸⁰ Conner, War and Remembrance, 16, 33–34.

- ³⁸² Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 110–11; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 46–47; ABMC, *American Overseas Commemorative Cemeteries and Memorials*, Commemorative Sites Booklet (Washington, DC: American Battle Monuments Commission, Feb 2018), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-Y3_AM3-PURL; "History," ABMC, n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/history (accessed 3 Apr 2021). In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 6614 permanently gave ABMC the administration of all overseas cemeteries and memorials, ending questions about whether ABMC would be a permanent or temporary agency. Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 136; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 161; "History," n.d.; ABMC, *American Overseas Commemorative Cemeteries and Memorials*; Presidential Duties and Powers, 36 U.S.C. § 2111 (1998).
- ³⁸³ Conner, War and Remembrance, 47–51; Budreau, Bodies of War, 111–13; ABMC, American Overseas Commemorative Cemeteries and Memorials, 2; "History," n.d.
- ³⁸⁴ For the guidebooks and Dwight D. Eisenhower's role in leading them, see the prologue in Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory*; Richard Allen Hulver, "Bereavement and Mourning (USA)," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 21 Aug 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/bereavement_and_mourning_usa; Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 79–80. The 1938 edition of the guidebook is available digitally here: ABMC, *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe: A History, Guide, and Reference Book* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1938),

https://www.abmc.gov/sites/default/files/publications/AABEFINAL_Blue_Book.pdf. For the maps at ABMC cemeteries, see, for example, "Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery," ABMC, n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/Meuse-Argonne (accessed 3 Apr 2021).

³⁶⁵ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 82.

³⁶⁶ Graves are discussed in Articles 225 and 226 of the "Treaty of Peace with Germany (Treaty of Versailles)," in *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America (1776–1949)*, vol. 2, *Multilateral 1918–1930*, compiled by Charles I. Bevans (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1969), 136, https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000002-0043.pdf; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 82–83.

³⁶⁷ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 82–83.

³⁶⁸ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 174–75.

³⁶⁹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 22, 75–76.

³⁷⁰ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 692; Budreau, Bodies of War, 22.

³⁷¹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 54–55, 116–17.

³⁷² Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 116.

³⁷³ "Cemeteries & Memorials Map," ABMC, n.d, https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/cemeteries-memorials-map (accessed 3 Apr 2021).

³⁷⁴ Risch, Quartermaster Support of the Army, 693; Budreau, Bodies of War, 64–65; Piehler, Remembering War the American Way, 97.

³⁷⁵ Conner, War and Remembrance, 23–24.

³⁷⁶ Conner, War and Remembrance, 23–24.

³⁷⁷ Conner, War and Remembrance, 23–24.

³⁷⁸ "World War I Burials and Memorializations," n.d.

³⁸¹ Conner, War and Remembrance, 33–45; Budreau, Bodies of War, 108–10.

³⁸⁶ For more on the architectural meaning and symbolism of the World War I ABMC cemeteries, see Robin, *Enclaves of America*, 30–62; Grossman, "Architecture for a Public Client: The Monuments and Chapels of the American Battle Monuments Commission,"; Budreau, *Bodies of War*; Conner, *War and Remembrance*.

³⁸⁷ For a history of the ABMC's World War II sites, see Lemay, *Triumph of the Dead*; Robin, *Enclaves of America*, 109–35.

³⁸⁸ For more on the ABMC and diplomatic power, see Richard Hulver, "Remains in Peace: American Military Remains and Diplomacy in France, 1918–1972" (PhD diss., West Virginia University, 2015), https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd/5837/; Robin, *Enclaves of America*, 39–62.

³⁸⁹ Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 96; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 104–6. After World War II, additional American cemeteries and monuments further embedded the United States into Europe's physical and cultural landscapes of memory. See Robin, *Enclaves of America*, 109–35; Lemay, *Triumph of the Dead: American World War II Cemeteries, Monuments, and Diplomacy in France*; Hulver, "Remains in Peace."

³⁹⁰ On grief in the war's aftermath, see Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 437–38; Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chs. 1–2; Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919–1933* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); Suzanne Evans, *Mothers of Heroes, Mothers of Martyrs: World War I and the Politics of Grief* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007).

391 Studies of commemorations of World War I include Winter, Sites of Memory; Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); Mark David Sheftall, Altered Memories of the Great War: Divergent Narratives of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010); Mark Connelly, The Great War, Memory and Ritual: Commemoration in the City and East London, 1916–1939 (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2001); Nicholas J. Saunders, ed., Matters of Conflict: Material Culture, Memory and the First World War (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2004); Marilène Patten Henry, Monumental Accusations: The Monuments aux Morts as Expressions of Popular Resentment (New York: Peter Lang, 1996); Richard van Emden, The Quick and the Dead: Fallen Soldiers and Their Families in the Great War (London: Bloomsbury, 2011); George L. Mosse, Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Annette Becker, War and Faith: The Religious Imagination in France, 1914–1930, trans. Helen McPhail (New York: Berg, 1998); Marina Larsson, Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2009); Jay Winter, Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); Thomas W. Laqueur, The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

³⁹² Winter, Remembering War, 1; see also Steven Trout, On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919–1941 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 1.

³⁹³ Studies that discuss living and utilitarian memorials to World War I include Jennifer Wingate, *Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America's World War I Memorials* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013); Jennifer Wingate, "Doughboys, Art Worlds, and Identities: Sculpted Memories of World War I in the United States" (PhD diss., Stony Brook University, 2002), 39–52; Jennifer Wingate, "Motherhood, Memorials, and Anti-Militarism: Bashka Paeff's 'Sacrifices of War," *Woman's Art Journal* 29, no. 2 (Fall–Winter 2008): 31–40; Jennifer Wingate, "Real Art, War Art and the Politics of Peace Memorials in the United States after World War I," *Public Art Dialogue* 2, no. 2 (Sep 2012): 162–89; Jennifer Wingate, "Over the Top: The Doughboy in World War I Memorials and Visual Culture," *American Art* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 26–47; Andrew M. Shanken, "Planning Memory: Living Memorials in the United States during World War II," *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 1 (Mar 2002): 130–47; Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 2; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 99–103; Allison S. Finkelstein, *Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials: How American Women Commemorated the Great War*, 1917–1945 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021).

³⁹⁴ Scholarship on the commemoration of World War I in the United States includes Mark A. Snell, ed., *Unknown Soldiers: The American Expeditionary Forces in Memory and Remembrance* (Kent, OH: Kent State University

³⁸⁵ Hulver, "Bereavement and Mourning (USA)," 21 Aug 2015. For digitized examples of the ABMC's divisional histories, see ABMC, *29th Division: Summary of Operations in the World War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1944), https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.\$b13521&view=1up&seq=3; and ABMC, *5th Division: Summary of Operations in the World War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1944), https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3158090&view=1up&seq=3.

Press, 2008); Trout, On the Battlefield of Memory, 1, 252; Budreau, Bodies of War; Ron Robin, Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900–1965 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Kimberly J. Lamay Licursi, Remembering World War I in America (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018); G. Kurt Piehler, Remembering War the American Way (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004); Lisa M. Budreau, "The Politics of Remembrance: The Gold Star Mothers' Pilgrimage and America's Fading Memory of the Great War," Journal of Military History 72, no. 2 (Apr 2008): 371–411.

- ³⁹⁵ Winter, Sites of Memory, 52–53; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 92–93, 99–101, 152–56.
- ³⁹⁶ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 7, 35, 80–93.
- ³⁹⁷ Winter, Sites of Memory, 27, 52–53; Budreau, Bodies of War, 99.
- ³⁹⁸ Malcolm Brown, "Introduction: A War of Lasting Memory," in Robin Cross, *In Memoriam: Remembering the Great War* (London: Ebury, 2008), 14; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 116–17; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 94. Only the examples of America's allies are covered in this chapter, since they formed the direct inspiration for the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Germany designated the Neue Wache in Berlin as its Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1931, though its impact was far smaller than the tombs in Great Britain and France. See Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 97–98, 213.
- ³⁹⁹ Winter, Sites of Memory, 27; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 9, 94–95; Evans, Mothers of Heroes, 140.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94; Neil Hanson, Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War (New York: Vintage, 2007), 328.
- ⁴⁰¹ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94: André Loez, Les 100 Mots de la Grande Guerre (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013), 115. The exact origins of the idea of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier have long been murky. For example, in 1926 and 1927, War Department researchers determined that the Reverend David Railton originated the idea in Great Britain, but they did not find a definitive answer about the origins of the idea in France. The U.S. military attaché in France explained that the French War Department did "not desire to give any individual credit for the idea of the Unknown Soldier and thus lay themselves open to contradiction." Ltr. Kenyon A. Joyce, Mil Attaché, American Embassy London, to the Army Ch of Staff, G-2, WD, "Unknown Soldier," 31 Jan 1927, folder 12 (Precedents), box 1271, entry 37H, Record Group (RG) 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP); William W. Harts, Mil Attaché, American Embassy Paris, to Historical Section, Army War College, 14 Jun 1927, folder 12, box 1271, entry 37H, RG 407, NACP. ⁴⁰² Jean-François Jagielski, "Autour de la tombe du Soldat inconnu français: un débat engage," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe, n.d., 2-3, https://www.laflammesouslarcdetriomphe.org/data/documents/4/d/autour-de-latombe-du-soldat-inconnu-français-un-debat-engage-jean-françois-jagielski.pdf (accessed 6 Apr 2021); Jean-François Jagielski, Le Soldat Inconnu—Invention et postérité d'un symbole (Paris: Imago, 2005), 54; see also Justin Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior," National Army Museum, n.d, https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/unknown-warrior-mystery-solved (accessed 6 Apr 2021); "Le Tombeau du Soldat inconnu," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe, n.d., https://www.laflammesouslarcdetriomphe.org/arc-detriomphe/le-tombeau-du-soldat-inconnu (accessed 6 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁰³ Jagielski, "Autour de la tombe du Soldat inconnu français," 3–4; Loez, *Les 100 Mots de la Grande Guerre*, 115; "L'Arc de Triomphe: un lien entre Histoire et Mémoire," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe, n.d., https://www.laflammesouslarcdetriomphe.org/data/documents/3/5/l-arc-de-triomphe-un-lien-entre-histoire-et-memoire.pdf (accessed 6 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁰⁴ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 94–95; "Body of Poilu Will Personify Armistice," *Indianapolis Star*, 9 Nov 1920; "Poilu to Be Buried under Paris Arch," *New York Times*, 9 Nov 1920.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Franco-German War," https://www.britannica.com/event/Franco-German-War (accessed 6 Apr 2021); Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Second Empire,"
- https://www.britannica.com/topic/Second-Empire (accessed 7 Apr 2021); Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France, 1870–1871* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1, 456.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Leon Gambetta," https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leon-Gambetta (accessed 6 Apr 2021); Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94; "Poilu to Be Buried under Paris Arch," New York Times.
- ⁴⁰⁸ "Body of Poilu Will Personify Armistice," *Indianapolis Star*; see also Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 94; K. S. Inglis, "Entombing Unknown Soldiers: From London and Paris to Baghdad," *History and Memory* 5, no. 2 (Fall–Winter 1993): 14, 24.

- ⁴⁰⁹ "Poilu to Be Buried under Paris Arch," *New York Times*; "Body of Poilu Will Personify Armistice," *Indianapolis Star*.
- ⁴¹⁰ "300,000 Francs Voted for Unknown Poilu," New York Times, 8 Nov 1920.
- ⁴¹¹ Chris Kempshall, "Le Poilu," *1914–1918 Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, updated 29 Mar 2016, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/le poilu.
- 412 "L'Arc de Triomphe," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 96.
- ⁴¹³ John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 421–23; Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, 295–302.
- ⁴¹⁴ "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," *New York Times*, 10 Nov 1920; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 94; Walter Duranty, "France's Unknown: French Author Pictures Emotions of the Homecoming," *New York Times*, 11 Nov 1920; Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 93.
- 415 "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," New York Times.
- ⁴¹⁶ Duranty, "France's Unknown"; on Dorgelès, see also "Roland Dorgeles, Writer, Dies; President of Goncourt Academy," *New York Times*, 20 Mar 1973.
- ⁴¹⁷ Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 418 "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," New York Times; Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 419 Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 420 "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," New York Times.
- ⁴²¹ Duranty, "France's Unknown." For a full account of the selection of the French Unknown, see Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 94–95.
- ⁴²² "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," Buffalo (NY) Evening News, 12 Nov 1920.
- ⁴²³ Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 95–99; Jagielski, "Autour de la tombe du Soldat inconnu français," 9–10; Rémi Dalisson and Elise Julien, "Bereavement and Mourning, Commemoration and Cult of the Fallen (France)," *1914–1918 Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, updated 8 Oct 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/bereavement_and_mourning_commemoration_and_cult_of_the_fallen_france/; Service Record, Auguste Jules Louis Thin, 1919, https://archives.calvados.fr/ark:/52329/z42qfhnm8156/, Archives du Calvados, Caen, France.
- ⁴²⁴ "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," *Buffalo Evening News*; see also Jagielski, "Autour de la tombe du Soldat inconnu français," 9–10. According to Jagielski, André Maginot, then minister of pensions, handed Thin the flowers, but he does not mention whether Maginot made this short speech. Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 97–98.
- ⁴²⁵ "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," Buffalo Evening News; see also Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 426 "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," New York Times.
- ⁴²⁷ Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- ⁴²⁸ Jagielski, "Autour de la tombe du Soldat inconnu français"; Valmai Holt and Tonie Holt, *Major and Mrs Holt's Battlefield Guide to Western Front-South* (South Yorkshire, UK: Pen and Sword Books, 2011), 61; "300,000 Francs Voted for Unknown Poilu," *New York Times*; "8 Unknown Poilus Exhumed at Verdun," *New York Times*.

According to several of these sources, the seven unselected unknowns were buried in a special section below a cross in the center of the cemetery. Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 111, states that Thin accompanied the seven unselected remains for their reburial.

- ⁴²⁹ "300,000 Francs Voted for Unknown Poilu," *New York Times*; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 329; Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 430 Duranty, "France's Unknown,"
- 431 Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- ⁴³² Edwin L. James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries," New York Times, 12 Nov 1920.
- ⁴³³ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries"; see also Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- ⁴³⁴ Associated Press, "Tender Tributes to Soldier Dead," Sioux City (IA) Journal, 12 Nov 1920.
- ⁴³⁵ "France to Honor Unknown Dead: With Heart of Gambetta," New York Times, 3 Nov 1920.
- ⁴³⁶ "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," *Buffalo Evening News*; see also James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴³⁷ Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94; James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴³⁸ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries"; Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Leon Gambetta."
- ⁴³⁹ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- 440 James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴⁴¹ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries"; Jagielski, *Le Soldat Inconnu*, 108–9.
- ⁴⁴² James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."

- ⁴⁴³ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries"; "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," *Buffalo Evening News*; Duranty, "France's Unknown."
- 444 James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴⁴⁵ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- 446 James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴⁴⁷ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- 448 James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- 449 James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴⁵⁰ James, "France Celebrates Two Anniversaries."
- ⁴⁵¹ "Paris Honors Its Hero Dead," *Buffalo Evening News*; Associated Press, "Tender Tributes to Soldier Dead." ⁴⁵² Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 329; "To Shift Unknown's Grave: Poilu's Body Will Rest under, Not in, the Arc," New York Times, 24 Nov 1920.
- ⁴⁵³ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 329; "Le Tombeau du Soldat inconnu," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 329; Loez, Les 100 Mots de la Grande Guerre, 116; Dalisson and Julien,
- "Bereavement and Mourning"; "L'Arc de Triomphe," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe; "Organisation & Missions," La Flamme sous l'Arc de Triomphe, n.d.,
- https://www.laflammesouslarcdetriomphe.org/association/organisation-et-missions (accessed 6 Apr 2021). For more on the meaning of the Tomb to the French, see Daniel J. Sherman, The Construction of Memory in Interwar France (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 100–103.
- ⁴⁵⁵ David Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave," Our Empire 7 (Nov 1931), Westminster Abbey, https://www.westminster-abbey.org/media/3qilipc5/unknown-warrior-origin-our-empire.pdf; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 3–4.
- ⁴⁵⁶ Cross, In Memoriam, 254; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 3–4; Andrew Richards, The Flag: The Story of Revd David Railton MC and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (Oxford: Casemate, 2017), 164-69; Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave"; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey, n.d., https://www.westminsterabbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/unknown-warrior (accessed 7 Apr 2021); "Reverend David Railton," Westminster Abbey, n.d., https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-
- commemorations/commemorations/reverend-david-railton (accessed 7 Apr 2021); "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey, n.d., https://www.westminster-abbey.org/about-the-abbey/history/buried-among-the-kings (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁵⁷ Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- ⁴⁵⁸ Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave"; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 262–63. There was some suggestion in articles of the time that the Tomb be located elsewhere—underneath the Cenotaph or in Saint Paul's Cathedral—but these suggestions did not receive serious consideration. See David W. Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism: Pilgrimage and the Commemoration of the Great War in Britain, Australia and Canada, 1919–1939 (New York: Berg, 1998), 64-65; Richards, The Flag.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave"; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 262–79; Cross, *In* Memoriam, 254-55; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 63-65; "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey; see also Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior"; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94-95. Notably, although many credit Railton with the idea for the Tomb, some also credit the news editor of the Express. Additionally, K. S. Inglis argues that educated Europeans were familiar with Thucydides's account of memorial ceremonies in his History of the Peloponnesian War, which may have played some part in the inspiration; see Inglis, "Entombing Unknown Soldiers," 8. For a detailed account of Railton and his idea for the Tomb, see Richards, The Flag. As noted by Richards himself, this book uses factual evidence and creative license to imagine some scenes; it is not a traditional scholarly history.
- ⁴⁶⁰ Cross, In Memoriam, 254–55; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 271, 274–75; Winter, Sites of Memory, 102–3; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 94; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 51-52; Inglis, "Entombing Unknown Soldiers," 10; "What Is the Cenotaph?," Imperial War Museum, n.d., https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-is-the-cenotaph (accessed 7 Apr 2021); "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage, n.d., https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/thecenotaph/history/ (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁶¹ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 271–75; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage; "What Is the Cenotaph?," Imperial War Museum; "Was the Whitehall Cenotaph Made of Wood?," Historic England, n.d.,

https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/heritage-highlights/whitehall-cenotaph-made-of-wood/ (accessed 7 Apr 2021).

- ⁴⁶² Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 95; Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "cenotaph," https://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/collegiate/cenotaph (accessed 23 Oct 2025).
- ⁴⁶³ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 272–75; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 51–56; Winter, Sites of Memory, 104; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 95–96; "What Is the Cenotaph?," Imperial War Museum; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage; Cross, In Memoriam, 254-55.
- 464 "Brookwood Military Cemetery," Commonwealth War Graves Commission, n.d., https://www.cwgc.org/visitus/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/44400/ (accessed 8 Apr 2021); "Discover Our Cemeteries & Memorials in the United Kingdom, West Region," Commonwealth War Graves Commission, n.d., http://publications.cwgc.org/ (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
- 465 Budreau, Bodies of War, 99.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 274–75; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 52–53; "What Is the Cenotaph?," Imperial War Museum; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 274–78; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 51–57; "Was the Whitehall Cenotaph Made of Wood?," Historic England; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 266–78; Winter, *Sites of Memory*, 103–4; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 95–96. For more on the Cenotaph as a sacred site of pilgrimage, see Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 9, 33-34, 39, 49-93.
- ⁴⁶⁹ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 278–82; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 65. Paul Fussell argues that the British called their unknown a "warrior" because of "the British tendency toward heroic grandiosity about all their wars." Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, 175.
- ⁴⁷⁰ Railton, "Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- ⁴⁷¹ See Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 279.
- ⁴⁷² Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 278–81; "Peace and Commemoration," National Army Museum, n.d., https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/peace-and-commemoration (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁷³ These dates and the selection process have been the subject of discussion over the years, and some information may be lost to history. According to the National Army Museum, the correct dates for the selection are 8 and 9 November 1921. See Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior"; see also Richards, *The Flag*, 182–84. Richards points out that there remain many discrepancies and unclear facts about the selection of the British Unknown, as well as other aspects of the process, such as the reburial of the unselected candidates and their number; see Richards, Flag, 179-83; see also Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 65-68; Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior."
- ⁴⁷⁴ Some discrepancy remains in the number exhumed. Westminster Abbey specifies that four bodies were exhumed; the National Army Museum concurs that this was most likely. For these sources, see "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey; Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior." See also Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 282; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 65–68; Inglis, "Entombing Unknown Soldiers," 11; Cross, In Memoriam,
- ⁴⁷⁵ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 282–84; Richards, *The Flag*, ch. 11; see also Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 67–68.
- ⁴⁷⁶ Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior."
- ⁴⁷⁷ Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 67; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 282–85; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey. National Army Museum curator Justin Saddington provides an overview of the different accounts, including newly found sources, but contends that there remains much doubt about what actually happened to these bodies. See Saddington, "The Mysterious Story of the Unknown Warrior."
- ⁴⁷⁸ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 285–86; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 67–68; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 95; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey; "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey.
- ⁴⁷⁹ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 286–87; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 67–68.
- 480 "France Honors Unknown 'Tommy," New York Times, 11 Nov 1920.
 481 "France Honors Unknown 'Tommy," New York Times; see also Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 286–87; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 67–69.
- ⁴⁸² "France Honors Unknown 'Tommy,'" New York Times; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 286–89; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 67-69; Mosse, Fallen Soldiers, 95; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey; "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey; "Unknown's Body Reaches London," New York Times, 11 Nov 1920.

- ⁴⁸³ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 288–89; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 68; Byron Farwell, *Mr. Kipling's Army: All the Queen's Men* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 92–93; Kempshall, "Le Poilu."
- ⁴⁸⁴ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 289–90; Katie Pickles, "Cavell, Edith Louisa," *1914–1918 Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, updated 24 Jan 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/cavell_edith_louisa; "Who Was Edith Cavell?," Imperial War Museum, n.d., https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/who-was-edith-cavell (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁴⁸⁵ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 289–91; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 68–69; "Unknown's Body Reaches London," *New York Times*.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 292–93; Philip Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier as War Memorial," *New York Times*, 12 Nov 1920; "Crowds Pass Grave till Midnight," *New York Times*, 11 Nov 1920; "Reverend David Railton," Westminster Abbey; Railton, "Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- ⁴⁸⁷ "The Unknown Warrior. Last Home-Coming To-Day. France's Tribute at Boulogne. Marshal Foch to Be Present," *Times* (London), 10 Nov 1920; "In the Abbey. The Story of the Padre's Flag," *Times* (London), 10 Nov 1920.
- ⁴⁸⁸ Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- ⁴⁸⁹ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 293; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 69.
- ⁴⁹⁰ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 293–96; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 69; Cross, *In Memoriam*, 255; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey.
- ⁴⁹¹ "Britain Buries Her Unknown Soldier," Chicago Daily Tribune, 5 Dec 1920.
- ⁴⁹² Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier."
- ⁴⁹³ Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier."
- ⁴⁹⁴ Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier."
- ⁴⁹⁵ "To Bury Soldier in Abbey: Tablet over Unknown Warrior Will Commemorate Rank and File," *New York Times*, 20 Oct 1920.
- ⁴⁹⁶ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 296; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 80.
- ⁴⁹⁷ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 296; Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier."
- ⁴⁹⁸ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 297–301; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 69–70; "Armistice Day the Burial of the Unknown Warrior, Supplement," *Times* (London), 12 Nov 1920; see also Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919–1946* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994).
- ⁴⁹⁹ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 301; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 70.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 301–3; Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 78–81.
- ⁵⁰¹ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 302–3; "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey.
- ⁵⁰² Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 302–3.
- ⁵⁰³ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 285, 303; Gibbs, "England Honors Unknown Soldier"; "Crowds Pass Grave till Midnight," *New York Times*. Hanson states that the dirt was from the Ypres Salient, but Gibbs reported that it was from the Unknown's original grave.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 305; "Last Post and Reveille on Wilfred Owen's Bugle," Royal Academy of Music, n.d., https://www.ram.ac.uk/recordings/last-post-and-reveille-on-wilfred-owens-bugle (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁵⁰⁵ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 304–13; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 70–75; "The People's Homage. Night Pilgrims at the Cenotaph. Unending Procession," *Times* (London), 13 Nov 1920; Associated Press, "Tender Tributes to Soldier Dead."
- 506 "1,500,000 Visit Tomb of 'Unknown Warrior,"" New York Times, 19 Nov 1920.
- 507 "Crowds Pass Grave till Midnight," New York Times.
- ⁵⁰⁸ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 313; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 74–87; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey. On 11 November 1921, a black marble stone was installed over the Tomb, giving the Tomb its permanent design.
- ⁵⁰⁹ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 189; Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, 49–93; "England's Place of Glorious Grief," *New York Times*, 8 May 1921. According to Lloyd, the pilgrimages to the Cenotaph and Tomb continued until around 1939. ⁵¹⁰ "To Bury Soldier in Abbey," *New York Times*.
- ⁵¹¹ "The Quick and the Dead," *Times* (London), 12 Nov 1920.
- 512 Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- ⁵¹³ "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 9 Dec 1920.
- 514 Lloyd, Battlefield Tourism, 82.
- 515 "The Unknown Soldier." New York Times.

⁵¹⁶ Winter, Sites of Memory, 27; Evans, Mothers of Heroes, 152.

- 517 Winter, Sites of Memory, 28; "Hall of Memory," Australian War Memorial, n.d.,
- https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/visitor-information/features/hall-of-memory (accessed 7 Apr 2021); "Tomb of the Unknown Warrior—Pukeahu Park," New Zealand Ministry for Cultural and Heritage, n.d., https://nzhistory.govt.nz/tomb-unknown-warrior-pukeahu-park (accessed 9 Apr 2021).
- ⁵¹⁸ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 354; Evans, *Mothers of Heroes*, 132; "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Veterans Affairs Canada, n.d., https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canada/tomb-unknown-soldier (accessed 7 Apr 2021).
- ⁵¹⁹ Cross, *In Memoriam*, 254; "History of the Cenotaph," English Heritage.
- ⁵²⁰ Richards, *The Flag*, 208–9, 213–20; "Reverend David Railton," Westminster Abbey; "Buried Among the Kings," Westminster Abbey; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey; Railton, "The Origin of the Unknown Warrior's Grave."
- 521 "Remembrance Day," Royal Family, n.d., https://www.royal.uk/remembrance-day (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
- ⁵²² John Hall, foreword to Richards, *The Flag*, vi.
- ⁵²³ Hanson, *Unknown Warriors*, 306; Hall, foreword, to Richards, *The Flag*, xii–xv; "Unknown Warrior," Westminster Abbey.
- ⁵²⁴ Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 176–78; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 331–32.
- 525 The Associated Press, for example, released a piece on 11 November 1920 that noted grassroots efforts to commemorate the armistice. "No ceremonies of a national character were held in the United States; but men who served their country during the war observed the day which in some states was made a holiday. In others, governors issued proclamations pointing out the significance of the occasion. The exercises consisted, for the most part, of parades, memorial services and meetings at which patriotic addresses were delivered. . . . The U.S. naval department observed the day by awarding crosses and medals to men who did heroic work during the war." Associated Press, "U.S. Honors Heroic Men Who Turned Tide in Great World War," *Davenport (IA) Daily Times*, 11 Nov 1920.
- 526 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Tribune, 11 Nov 1920.
- 527 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Tribune.
- ⁵²⁸ William H. Pangburn Jr., "The Unknown Soldier," New York Tribune, 13 Nov 1920.
- ⁵²⁹ McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 177–78; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 333; "Plan to Honor American 'Unknown Warrior' in Victory Hall Proposed to Secretary Baker," *New York Times*, 20 Nov 1920; Accession Sheet, New York Public Library, Dec 1985, sub: Victory Hall Association Records,
- https://www.nypl.org/sites/default/files/archivalcollections/pdf/victoryhall.pdf.
- 530 "Plan to Honor American 'Unknown Warrior," New York Times.
- 531 "Plan to Honor American 'Unknown Warrior," New York Times.
- ⁵³² McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 177–78; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 333; "Bars Burial Here of Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*, 27 Nov 1920.
- ⁵³³ Telg, William M. Calder to Newton Baker, ca. Nov 1920, file 293.8, box 565, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP; telg, Newton Baker to William M. Calder, ca. Nov 1920, file 293.8, box 565, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP.
- 534 Ltr, Newton Baker to George W. Wingate, 24 Nov 1920, file 293.8, section 13, box 565, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP; see also "Gen. G. W. Wingate, Youth's Friend, Dies," *New York Times*, 23 Mar 1928. Requests from nongovernmental organizations to repatriate and bury an unknown soldier continued even after the passage of the legislation creating the Tomb on 4 March 1921. For example, the Soldiers', Sailors', and Marines' Cemetery Association in Oregon made such a request on 6 August 1921. On 17 August 1921, citing multiple "miscellaneous requests of this kind," the quartermaster general told the adjutant general that "it is not contemplated to return the remains of an unknown soldier for burial in any other place," as such requests would "inevitably detract from the significance and solemnity of the burial in Arlington National Cemetery." Ltr, Franklin F. Korell to Adjutant Gen, 6 Aug 1921, file 293.8, box 565, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Quartermaster Gen to Adjutant Gen, 17 Aug 1921, file 293.8, box 565, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁵³⁵ Ltr, Baker to Wingate, 24 Nov 1920; see also McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 177–78; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 333; "Bars Burial Here of Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*.
- 536 Ltr, Baker to Wingate, 24 Nov 1920.
- 537 Ltr, Baker to Wingate, 24 Nov 1920.

- ⁵³⁸ Ltr, Baker to Wingate, 24 Nov 1920.
- 539 Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 333; McElya, The Politics of Mourning, 178.
- ⁵⁴⁰ "Baker and the Unknown Dead," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 4 Dec 1920 (reprinted from the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*).
- ⁵⁴¹ "Baker and the Unknown Dead," Chicago Daily Tribune.
- 542 "Baker and the Unknown Dead," Chicago Daily Tribune.
- ⁵⁴³ "A Request Wisely Refused," New York Times, 29 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁴⁴ "A Request Wisely Refused," New York Times; see also McElya, The Politics of Mourning, 178.
- 545 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times; see also McElya, Politics of Mourning, 178.
- ⁵⁴⁶ "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times; Robert M. Poole, On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery (New York: Walker, 2009), 147.
- ⁵⁴⁷ B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals, 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 3; McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 177; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 146; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 330–32.
- ⁵⁴⁸ Ltr, Marie M. Meloney to Gen. P. C. March, 13 Nov 1920, folder 2, box 563, central decimal files, 1917–1925, RG 407, NACP; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 3; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 146–47; *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Women's Magazines," updated 8 Sep 2025,

https://www.britannica.com/topic/publishing/Womens-magazines; Finding Aid, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries Archival Collections, n.d., sub: Marie Mattingly Meloney Papers, 1891–1943, http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_4079096/ (accessed 10 Oct 2025).

- ⁵⁴⁹ Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920.
- 550 Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920; see also Poole, On Hallowed Ground, 146–47.
- 551 Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁵² Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920; see also Poole, On Hallowed Ground, 146–47.
- 553 Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁵⁴ Ltr, Meloney to March, 13 Nov 1920.
- 555 For more on criticism of the American funeral industry and tensions dealing with repatriation, see Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 70–75, 97.
- ⁵⁵⁶ Ltr, Gen. P. C. March to Mrs. Marie M. Meloney, 16 Nov 1920, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 3; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 146–47.
- 557 Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 3.
- ⁵⁵⁸ Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920 (original emphasis); see also Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 146–47.
- 559 Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁶⁰ Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁶¹ Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920; see also Poole, On Hallowed Ground, 146–47.
- ⁵⁶² Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 3; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 146–47.
- ⁵⁶³ Ltr, March to Meloney, 16 Nov 1920.
- ⁵⁶⁴ "Fish, Hamilton," Ofc of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives, n.d.,

https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/13150 (accessed 8 Apr 2021); Joint Resolution Providing for the Transportation to This Country of the Body of an Unknown American Soldier Who Fell on the Battle Fields of France and for the Burial of the Remains with Appropriate Ceremonies, H.R. Joint Res. 386, 66th Cong. (6 Dec 1920), ProQuest Congressional.

- ⁵⁶⁵ "Fish, Hamilton," Ofc of the Historian; "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921; Jeffrey T. Sammons and John H. Morrow Jr., Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015), 139. For a full biography of Fish, see Anthony C. Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr. and the Politics of American Nationalism, 1912–1945" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1993); and Fish's own memoir, Hamilton Fish, Memoir of an American Patriot (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 1991).
- 566 Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Preparedness Movement," n.d.,

https://www.britannica.com/event/Preparedness-Movement (accessed 8 Apr 2021); Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 30–31, 45–48; Fish, *Memoir*, 25–26.

- ⁵⁶⁷ Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 45–48; Fish, *Memoir*, 25–26; "Fish, Hamilton," Ofc of the Historian. For more on the history of the 369th, see Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*.
- ⁵⁶⁸ For a detailed account of Fish's time with his company from training through the end of the war, including racial tensions they experienced in the United States before embarking for Europe, see Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 44–69.
- ⁵⁶⁹ Fish, *Memoir*, 28–31; Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 56–69; Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*, 116–17, 191–204, 346–47, 485–86; "Fish, Hamilton," Ofc of the Historian.
- ⁵⁷⁰ Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 46–69; Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*, 486; Fish, *Memoir*, 32–36.
- ⁵⁷¹ Fish, *Memoir*, 3.
- ⁵⁷² Fish, *Memoir*, 26–33; Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 44–69, 58–59.
- ⁵⁷³ Fish, *Memoir*, 37–39; Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," ii, 73–77; "Fish, Hamilton," *Biographical Dictionary of the United States Congress*, n.d., https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/F000142 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
- ⁵⁷⁴ Sammons and Morrow, *Harlem's Rattlers*, 485–86; Fish, *Memoir*, 32–36.
- ⁵⁷⁵ Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 77–78; "Index to the Proceedings," *Congressional Record* 60, pt. 5 (1921): 4809; "Public Bills, Resolutions, and Memorials," *Congressional Record* 60, pt. 1 (1921): H1921.
- ⁵⁷⁶ Fish, *Memoir*, 51; see also Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 77–78.
- ⁵⁷⁷ Fish, *Memoir*, 50.
- ⁵⁷⁸ Fish, *Memoir*, 50; for an analysis of nationalism in relation to Fish's ideas about race and the Unknown Soldier, see Michael J. Allen, "'Sacrilege of a Strange, Contemporary Kind': The Unknown Soldier and the Imagined Community after the Vietnam War," *History and Memory* 30, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2011), 99–100.
- ⁵⁷⁹ Fish, *Memoir*, 51.
- ⁵⁸⁰ Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 79–80; Fish, *Memoir*, 51.
- ⁵⁸¹ H.R. Joint Res. 386, 66th Cong. (6 Dec 1920), ProQuest Congressional.
- ⁵⁸² Providing for the Return of an Unknown American Soldier to the United States, H.R. Joint Res. 386, 66th Cong., *Congressional Record* 60, pt. 1 (6 Dec 1920): 11.
- ⁵⁸³ Return of Body of Unknown American Who Lost His Life During World War, Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 66th Cong. (1 Feb 1921), 12, folder 293.8 (1-4-21), box 563, entry 37, Record Group (RG) 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP); Joint Resolution Providing for the Bringing to the United States of a Body of an Unknown American Killed on the Battle Fields of France, and for the Burial of the Remains with Appropriate Ceremonies, H.R. Joint Res. 426, 66th Cong. (21 Dec 1920), sec. 1, Legislation Providing for Burial of the Unknown Soldier, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁵⁸⁴ Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 12.
- ⁵⁸⁵ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁸⁶ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁸⁷ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁸⁸ See, e.g., the two *New York Times* editorials discussed in chapter 4: "A Request Wisely Refused," *New York Times*, 29 Nov 1920; "The Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*, 9 Dec 1920, 1.
- ⁵⁸⁹ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁹⁰ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁹¹ H.R. Joint Res. 426 (21 Dec 1920).
- ⁵⁹² Senate Resolution Providing for the Bringing to the United States of a Body of an Unknown American Killed on the Battle Fields of France, and for the Burial of the Remains with Appropriate Ceremonies, S. Res. 4754, 66th Cong. (3 Jan 1921), ProQuest Congressional.
- ⁵⁹³ S. Res. 4754 (3 Jan 1921).
- ⁵⁹⁴ Ltr, Julius Kahn to Newton Baker, 4 Jan 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁵⁹⁵ Ltr, Newton Baker to Julius Kahn, 8 Jan 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; see also "Kahn, Julius," Ofc of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives, n.d., https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/K/KAHN,-Julius-(K000003)/ (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
- 596 Ltr, Baker to Kahn, 8 Jan 1921.
- ⁵⁹⁷ Ltr, Josephus Daniels to Newton Baker, 31 Jan 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁵⁹⁸ Ltr. Daniels to Baker, 31 Jan 1921.
- ⁵⁹⁹ Ltr, Daniels to Baker, 31 Jan 1921.

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600 Ltr, Daniels to Baker, 31 Jan 1921.
<sup>601</sup> Ltr, Newton Baker to Josephus Daniels, 3 Feb 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
602 Ltr, Baker to Daniels, 3 Feb 1921.
^{603} "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921. ^{604} "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921.
605 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921.
606 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921.
607 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 21 Jan 1921.
<sup>608</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 1–4.
609 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 4.
610 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 4.
611 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 4.
612 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5.
613 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5.
614 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5; see also "Crago, Thomas Spencer," Biographical
Directory of the United States Congress, n.d.,
https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=C000853 (accessed 12 Apr 2021).
615 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5.
616 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5.
617 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 5.
618 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 6.
619 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 6.
620 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 6–8.
621 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8.
622 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8.
623 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8.
624 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8.
625 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8.
626 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 8–9.
627 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 9.
628 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 9.
629 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 9.
630 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 9; see also "McKenzie, John Charles," Biographical
Directory of the United States Congress, n.d.,
https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=M000506 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
631 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 9.
632 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 10.
633 For more on Confederate Memorial Day, see, e.g., Drew Gilpin Faust, This Republic of Suffering: Death and the
American Civil War (New York: Vintage Books, 2023), 239-41; Caroline E. Janney, Burying the Dead but Not the
Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012),
56-60; Karen L. Cox, Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of
Confederate Culture (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 4–6, 163.
634 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 10–12; see also "Miller, John Franklin," Biographical
Directory of the United States Congress, n.d.,
https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=M000739 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
635 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 10; see also "Greene, Frank Lester," Biographical Directory
of the United States Congress, n.d., https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=G000425
(accessed 8 Apr 2021).
636 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 11; see also "Fields, William Jason," Biographical
Directory of the United States Congress, n.d.,
https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=F000113 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
637 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 11.
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638 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 12; see also "Page, William Tyler," Ofc of the Historian,
U.S. House of Representatives, n.d., https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/38458 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).
639 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 12.
<sup>640</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13.
<sup>641</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13; see also Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 77–78.
<sup>642</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13.
<sup>643</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13.
<sup>644</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13.
<sup>645</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 13.
<sup>646</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 14.
<sup>647</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 14.
<sup>648</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 15.
<sup>649</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 15.
650 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 16.
651 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 17.
652 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 17.
653 For more about Baker's role in the creation and dedication of Memorial Amphitheater, and for a detailed history
of the amphitheater itself, see Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), "Arlington National Cemetery
Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 34, 75. See
also "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," Arlington National Cemetery, n.d.,
https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/memorial-amphitheater-100 (accessed 10 Oct 2025).
<sup>654</sup> HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 47–48, 61.
655 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 17–18.
656 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 17–18.
657 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 18.
658 For more on World War I memorials and the debate over them during the interwar period, see Jennifer Wingate,
Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America's World War I Memorials (Farnham, UK: Ashgate,
2013); Allison S. Finkelstein, Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials: How American Women Commemorated the
Great War, 1917–1945 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021).
659 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 18.
660 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 18. Troncone asserts that Fish "preferred that the Tomb
could be used as a patriotic focal point to bring all American[s] together" and argues that Fish wanted the burial on
Memorial Day rather than Armistice Day, in part, to ensure that the rituals (of the Tomb and Armistice Day) were
not limited to just veterans of the Great War. Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 78.
661 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 18; Fish, Memoir, 51.
662 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 18-22; see the section "The Unknown Dead of World War
I" in chapter 3 for more on this part of the hearing, including the statistics provided by Harris.
663 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 21.
<sup>664</sup> Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 21.
665 Return of Body of Unknown American (1 Feb 1921), 21.
666 Fish, Memoir, 51. Indeed, evidence exists that Pershing's testimony in support of the Tomb resolution lent it
support among some citizens. For example, on 21 February 21 1921, M. M. Williams, president of Ohio's
Columbus-Morrow Country Club, wrote to president-elect Harding to share a resolution that the club had
unanimously adopted in favor of the Tomb proposal at its meeting on 4 February 4, just after the House Committee
on Military Affairs hearing. As justification for the club's support of the Tomb, the resolution referenced Pershing:
"AND WHEREAS, General John J. Pershing has given his approval of the proposition to return to this country the
body of an unknown American soldier who fell in defense of the Stars and Stripes across the sea . . ." Ltr, M. M.
Williams to Warren G. Harding, 21 Feb, 1921, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.
667 "Leaders for Honor to Unknown Dead," New York Times, 2 Feb 1921; "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," New York
Times, 3 Feb 1921; "Honor to Unknown Dead Soldier," Washington Post, 2 Feb 1921; "Honoring the Heroic Dead,"
Burlington (IA) Gazette, 4 Feb 1921.
668 "The Unknown Soldier," Amaroc News 2, no. 310 (24 Feb 1921): 2.
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669 "Leaders for Honor to Unknown Dead," New York Times.

- 670 "Leaders for Honor to Unknown Dead," New York Times.
- 671 "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," New York Times.
- ⁶⁷² "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," *New York Times*; see also Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 145.
- 673 "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," New York Times.
- 674 "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," New York Times.
- 675 "Unknown Soldier's Tomb," New York Times.
- ⁶⁷⁶ "Honoring the Heroic Dead," Burlington (IA) Gazette.
- 677 Ltr, Anna Chailes to Newton Baker, 3 Feb 1921, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.
- ⁶⁷⁸ Ltr, Chailes to Baker, 3 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁷⁹ Ltr, Newton Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁶⁸⁰ Ltr, Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁸¹ Ltr, Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁸² Ltr, Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁸³ Ltr, Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁸⁴ Ltr, Baker to Chairman, House Committee on Mil Affairs, 3 Feb 1921. In 2025, \$187,165 would be the equivalent of approximately \$3.4 million. Calculation from "US Inflation Calculator," Coinnews Media Group, https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/ (accessed 29 Oct. 2025).
- ⁶⁸⁵ Ltr, Julius Kahn to Newton Baker, 4 Feb 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁶⁸⁶ "Reports of Committees on Public Bills and Resolutions," *Congressional Record* 60, pt. 3 (4 Feb 1921): 2620; *Burial of an Unknown American Soldier Killed on the Battle Fields of France*, Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426, 66th Cong. (4 Feb 1921), 1–2, HeinOnline.
- ⁶⁸⁷ Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426 (4 Feb 1921), 1–2.
- ⁶⁸⁸ Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426 (4 Feb 1921), 1–2. As this report details, when Kahn reported the amended resolution to the Committee of the Whole, he emphasized that "by giving the Secretary of War the authority to prescribe the necessary regulations the latter would fix some holiday, like Memorial Day, for the carrying into effect the purposes of the resolution."
- ⁶⁸⁹ Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426 (4 Feb 1921), 1–2.
- ⁶⁹⁰ Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426 (4 Feb 1921), 1–2.
- ⁶⁹¹ Rpt No. 1292 to accompany H.R. Joint Res. 426 (4 Feb 1921), 1–2.
- ⁶⁹² Ltr, Newton Baker to Chairman, Senate Committee on Mil Affairs, 5 Feb 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP
- ⁶⁹³ "Favors General's Rites for Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 10 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁹⁴ "Philadelphia Asks Unknown Soldier," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Feb 1921; resolution signed by William H. Felton, clerk of City Council, Philadelphia, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.
- ⁶⁹⁵ Memo, Lt. Col. Charles C. Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 400, RG 117 (Rcds of the American Battle Monuments Commission), NACP. One anonymous Army account briefly summarizes some of Pierce's memo; see "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," undated manuscript, 1, originally in the holdings of the Old Guard Museum, now in the collections of the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) (uploaded to Flickr by the Old Guard Museum, 8 Nov 2015,
- https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldguardmuseum/albums/72157660990491415/).
- ⁶⁹⁶ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁹⁷ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁹⁸ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.
- ⁶⁹⁹ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.
- ⁷⁰⁰ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.
- ⁷⁰¹ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921. Lisa Budreau discusses Pierce's memo and proposal in the context of the U.S. government's ultimate decision to leave the unknown dead buried in the overseas cemeteries; see Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America*, 1919–1933 (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 100–102.
- ⁷⁰² Pierce's memo reveals that the military accepted the cultural norms that privileged mothers of the war dead above other relatives, and that the military understood the challenge created by burying some war dead and all unidentified

dead in overseas cemeteries (American families could not easily visit these graves). After years of lobbying by organizations of mothers, the government did eventually administer a program to enable mothers to visit the overseas cemeteries, although Pierce did not live to see it enacted. This legislation, passed in 1929, provided mothers and un-remarried widows of the war dead buried overseas with a trip to visit their loved ones' graves at the government's expense. The trip was eventually also offered to mothers and widows of those who had no identified grave or who had died at sea. Known as Gold Star pilgrimages, these trips were overseen by the Quartermaster Corps from 1930 to 1933. For more on the privileged role of American mothers in World War I commemorative culture and the history of the Gold Star pilgrimages, see Budreau, Bodies of War; Lisa M. Budreau, "The Politics of Remembrance: The Gold Star Mothers' Pilgrimage and America's Fading Memory of the Great War," Journal of Military History 72, no. 2 (Apr 2008): 371–411; Rebecca Jo Plant, Mom: The Transformation of Motherhood in Modern America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Rebecca Jo Plant, "The Gold Star Pilgrimages: Patriotic Maternalists and Their Critics in Interwar America," in Maternalism Reconsidered: Motherhood, Welfare, and Social Policy in the Twentieth Century, ed. Marian van der Klein et al. (New York: Bergham Books, 2012), 121-47; Rebecca Jo Plant and Frances M. Clarke, "The Crowning Insult': Federal Segregation and the Gold Star Mothers and Widows Pilgrimages of the Early 1930s," Journal of American History 102, no. 2 (Sep 2015): 406–32; John Graham, The Gold Star Pilgrimages of the 1930s: Overseas Grave Visitations by Mothers and Widows of Fallen U.S. World War I Soldiers (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005); Constance Potter, "World War I Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimages, Part I," Prologue 31, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 140-45; Constance Potter, "World War I Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimages, Part II," Prologue 31, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 210-15; G. Kurt Piehler, Remembering War the American Way (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 101-5; Finkelstein, Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials; Allison S. Finkelstein, "A Female Sanctuary on the Former Western Front: The Gold Star Pilgrimage Rest Houses in France, 1930–33," Buildings and Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum 23, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 52–77.

⁷⁰³ Memo, Pierce for Quartermaster Gen, 8 Feb 1921.

⁷⁰⁴ Ltr, Newton D. Baker to Sen. James W. Wadsworth Jr., 12 Feb 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 400, RG 117, NACP; see also B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 3–4; Robert M. Poole, *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery* (New York: Walker, 2009), 147; "Wadsworth, James Wolcott, Jr.," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, n.d.,

https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=w000012 (accessed 8 Apr 2021).

- ⁷⁰⁵ Ltr, Baker to Wadsworth, 12 Feb 1921.
- ⁷⁰⁶ Ltr, Baker to Wadsworth, 12 Feb 1921.
- ⁷⁰⁷ Ltr, Baker to Wadsworth, 12 Feb 1921.
- ⁷⁰⁸ "Asks Unknown Hero Delay," *New York Times*, 17 Feb 1921. A typed copy of this article, under the title "Unidentified Dead Removal Opposed until Late Date," can also be found in AGRS records tucked into American Battle Monuments Commission records: folder 2, box 87, entry 400, RG 117, NACP.
- 709 "Asks Unknown Hero Delay," New York Times.
- ⁷¹⁰ American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), *History of the American Graves Registration Service, Q.M.C. in Europe*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 66.
- The signed final legislation is held in the General Records of the U.S. Government, National Archives; a stamp indicates that the White House received it on 3 March 1921. See also "For Burial of Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 4 Mar 1921; Saladin Ambar, "Woodrow Wilson: Life after the Presidency," Miller Center, University of Virginia, n.d., https://millercenter.org/president/wilson/life-after-the-presidency (accessed 8 Apr 2021).

 An Act Authorizing Bestowal upon the Unknown, Unidentified British Soldier Buried in Westminster Abbey and the Unknown, Unidentified French Soldier Buried in the Arc de Triomphe of the Congressional Medal of Honor, PL 388, 41 Stat. 1367, ch. 160 (1921); Neil Hanson, Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War (New York: Vintage, 2007), 332; see also "Sidebar 04a An Exchange of Honors: Bestowing the Medal of Honor on Foreign Unknowns" by Tim Frank in chapter 4.

⁷¹⁴ An Act to Provide for the Erection of Memorials and the Entombment of Bodies in the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater, in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, PL 397, 41 Stat. 1440, ch. 169 (1921); see also HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 32.

⁷¹⁵ HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 2, 34, 47, 48, 61; "The Memorial Amphitheater Centennial," Arlington National Cemetery.

⁷¹⁶ PL 397, 41 Stat. 1440, ch. 169 (1921); see also HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 35.

⁷¹⁷ PL 397, 41 Stat. 1440, ch. 169 (1921). The first part of this stipulation prevented the inclusion of Confederates or memorials to them in the amphitheater, and possibly had to do with an earlier controversy regarding the inclusion of Confederates in various elements of the amphitheater, such as the inscriptions of names on its exterior. See HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 27–33.

⁷¹⁸ PL 397, 41 Stat. 1440, ch. 169 (1921); see also "About CFA," Commission of Fine Arts, n.d., https://www.cfa.gov/about-cfa (accessed 9 Apr 2021).

⁷¹⁹ Ltr, Hamilton Fish to John W. Weeks, 9 Mar 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

⁷²⁰ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²¹ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²² Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921; *Return of Body of Unknown American* (1 Feb 1921), 12.

⁷²³ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²⁴ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²⁵ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921. Fish's preference for holding the burial on Memorial Day strayed from the American Legion's larger goal to promote Armistice Day as a national holiday focused on the commemoration of World War I. For more on this topic, and a discussion of Fish's and the American Legion's perspectives on the burial date and location, see Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 114, 117–18.

⁷²⁶ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²⁷ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²⁸ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷²⁹ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921. Troncone notes that the American Legion wanted to have the burial on Armistice Day in order to create an annual ritual on that date, and argues that Fish's disagreement with the legion actually stemmed from his political beliefs and desire to unite the North and South to benefit the Republican Party. He asserts that "the South figured prominently in Fish's conception of what he hoped would be a new political alignment. He thought it possible that the Republican Party could use patriotic rituals to weaken the sectionally divisive issue of race." See Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr.," 78; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 333.

⁷³⁰ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷³¹ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷³² Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷³³ Ltr, Fish to Weeks, 9 Mar 1921.

⁷³⁴ Ltr, John W. Weeks to Hamilton Fish, 21 Mar 1921, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

⁷³⁵ Ltr, Weeks to Fish, 21 Mar 1921.

⁷³⁶ Ltr, Weeks to Fish, 21 Mar 1921.

⁷³⁷ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 3, 66.

⁷³⁸ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 71.

⁷³⁹ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 74.

^{740 &}quot;Unknown Soldier Burial on Nov. 11," New York Times, 17 Mar 1921.

^{741 &}quot;Unknown Soldier Burial on Nov. 11," New York Times.

⁷⁴² "Unknown Soldier Burial on Nov. 11," *New York Times*. Historian Micki McElya argues that the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns helped make possible the location of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington. She contends that the 1921 Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the attendant ceremonies "solidified Arlington's identification as a singularly national and representative terrain made sacred by military sacrifice everywhere." McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 171–72.

^{743 &}quot;Unknown Soldier Burial on Nov. 11," New York Times.

⁷⁴⁴ "Would Bury Unknown Soldier in Capitol," *Hartford (CT) Courant*, 12 Jun 1921; "Wants Unknown Dead Hero Here," *Washington Post*, 13 Jun 1921; "Among the Veterans," *Washington Post*, 6 Feb 1921; "Would Use Capitol Crypt," *New York Times*, 12 Jun 1921; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 332.

https://www.senate.gov/senators/FeaturedBios/Featured_Bio_McKellar.htm (accessed 10 Oct 2025).

- 748 "The Unknown Soldier," Youth's Companion, 344.
- 749 "The Unknown Soldier," Youth's Companion, 344.
- ⁷⁵⁰ "With Our Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*, May 5, 1921. Parts of this article were also printed in the *Amaroc News* under the same title. "With Our Unknown Soldier," *Amaroc News*, 2 Jun 1921.
- 751 "With Our Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- 752 "With Our Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- 753 "With Our Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- ⁷⁵⁴ "With Our Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*; "With Our Unknown Soldier," *Amaroc News*; "The Unknown Soldier," *Youth's Companion*, 344. Foch did not end up accompanying the Unknown Soldier on his voyage back to the United States.
- ⁷⁵⁵ For more on how the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier represented a democratization of military commemoration, see Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 117–18.
- ⁷⁵⁶ B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 4–5; War Department, Press Relations Section, G-2, press release, "Plan for the Selection, Transportation and Burial of an Unidentified American," No. 2, 23 Sep 1921, section 2 (Selection and Return of Body from France), box 563, entry 37, Record Group (RG) 407 (Reds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP). These orders to the quartermaster general appear to have originated as a memorandum from Brig. Gen. William Lassiter, assistant chief of staff, to the adjutant general on 8 September 1921, which the secretary of war directed the adjutant general to send to the quartermaster general, before being issued on 9 September. Similar language was used in both memos and later repeated in press releases. Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter, assistant chief of staff, for Adjutant Gen, "House Joint Resolution 426," 8 Sep 1921, section 2, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Adjutant Gen of the Army for Quartermaster Gen, "House Joint Resolution 426," 9 Sep 1921, section 2, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

 ⁷⁵⁷ War Department, Press Relations Section, G-2, press release, "Plan for the Selection, Transportation and Burial of an Unidentified American," No. 2, 23 Sep 1921.
- ⁷⁵⁸ Though this scenario never played out in the case of the World War I Unknown Soldier, it did indeed occur with the Vietnam Unknown. See the sidebar "Michael J. Blassie, the Vietnam Unknown" by Richard A. Hulver, in the conclusion.
- 759 Alexander F. Barnes, "Representative of a Victorious People': The Doughboy Watch on the Rhine," *Army History* 77 (Fall 2010): 15; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; memo, War Department, Ofc of the Chief of Staff, Operations and Training Division G-3, for the Adjutant Gen, "Ceremony in Connection with Burial of Unknown American at Arlington National Cemetery, November 11, 1921," 8 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. A copy of the cablegram was indeed received in code sometime between 9 and 11 September 1921; a decoded copy can be found in folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117 (Rcds of the American Battle Monuments Commission), NACP. A memo from the secretary of war to the secretary of the Navy provided similar directions for the Navy's part in the events: memo, Sec War for Sec Navy, "Joint Resolution 426," ca. 12 Sep 1921, Unknown Soldier WWI Account of Selection 1921, box 12, Historical Research Collection, Arlington National Cemetery (ANCHRC). A press release outlining the plan was released on 23 September 1921; see War Department, Press Relations Section, G-2, press release, "Plan for the Selection, Transportation and Burial of an Unidentified American," No. 2, 23 Sep 1921.
- ⁷⁶⁰ Memo, War Department, Ofc of the Chief of Staff, Operations and Training Division G-3, for the Adjutant Gen, 8 Sep 1921.
- ⁷⁶¹ In a 4 October 1921 letter to Maj. Philip H. Bagby, Col. Harry F. Rethers explained that "in accordance with the wishes of the War Department there will be no formal ceremonies at Chalons, the only honors paid being an escort that will be furnished by the French troops form the Corps Area," and that there would be "limited representation"

⁷⁴⁵ "Would Bury Unknown Soldier in Capitol," *Hartford (CT) Courant*; "Wants Unknown Dead Hero Here," *Washington Post*.

⁷⁴⁶ Ltr, W. E. Ward to Sen. K. D. McKellar, 3 Oct. 1921, Section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; see also "Kenneth Douglas McKellar: A Featured Biography," U.S. Senate, n.d.,

⁷⁴⁷ "The Unknown Soldier," *Youth's Companion* 95, no. 22 (2 Jun 1921): 344; Edward Moran, "The Youth's Companion," Encyclopedia.com, n.d., https://www.encyclopedia.com/media/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/youths-companion (accessed 9 Apr 2021).

from the troops of the A.F. in G." Ltr, Col. H. F. Rethers to Maj. Philip H. Bagby, 4 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.

- 762 Cablegram, Adjutant Gen to Mil Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Paris, 14 Sep 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 5; Harry F. Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier: Broadcasted from San Francisco, November 11, 1931 (San Francisco, CA: Reorder Printing, 1931), 1-2. In this document, which appears to be the transcript of a speech, Rethers noted that in October 1921 he received a cablegram from the War Department directing him to "select an unknown body and have it ready for transportation on a cruiser . . . in time for interment on Armistice Day." See Kyle J. Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death: US Graves Registration and Its Burial of the World War I Dead" (PhD diss., University of North Texas, 2020), 236-38.
- ⁷⁶³ Cablegram 46, Mai, Gen. Henry T. Allen to Adjutant Gen. 5 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407. NACP; see also "Herrick, Myron Timothy," Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, Case Western Reserve University, n.d., https://case.edu/ech/articles/h/herrick-myron-timothy (accessed on 27 Aug 21).
- ⁷⁶⁴ Cablegram 46, Allen to Adjutant Gen, 5 Oct 1921.
- ⁷⁶⁵ Cablegram 46, Allen to Adjutant Gen, 5 Oct 1921.
- ⁷⁶⁶ Memo, Sec War for Sec Navy, "House Joint Resolution 426," 21 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for Chief of Staff, "Burial of an Unidentified American," 19 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁷⁶⁷ Ltr, Lt. Col. William G. Ball to Chief of AGRS in Europe, 6 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 5.
- ⁷⁶⁸ Ltr, Ball to Chief of AGRS in Europe, 6 Oct 1921.
- ⁷⁶⁹ Ltr, Ball to Chief of AGRS in Europe, 6 Oct 1921.
- ⁷⁷⁰ Ltr, Ball to Chief of AGRS in Europe, 6 Oct 1921.
- ⁷⁷¹ Arthur E. Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier" (unpublished memoir/report, ca. 1931), 1, Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC). Note that Dewey prefaced the document with this signed statement: "The following article . . . was written ten years after that event took place, and reliance had to be placed upon memory. Should there be any discrepancies, it is the fault of a poor memory." While much of Dewey's account is corroborated with other sources, there are several instances in which his recollection differs from official accounts and other primary sources. These discrepancies are noted in the citations throughout this chapter.
- ⁷⁷² Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1.
- ⁷⁷³ Memo, Col. George H. Penrose to Col. H. F. Rethers, Sep 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- ⁷⁷⁴ American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), History of the American Graves Registration Service, O.M.C. in Europe, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 117. For another description of the AGRS's research in relation to the selection of the Unknown, see Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 237–38. ⁷⁷⁵ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 117–18.
- ⁷⁷⁶ Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 2; Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 237.
- 777 Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 4-5; Ltr, R. P. Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (WWI) Selection + Burial, box 12, ANCHRC; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5. On Harbold, see "Colonel Died Armistice Day: Chooser of Unknown Soldier Buried Near Tomb," Washington Post, 16 Nov 1952. The disinterment of the four candidates and the selection of the Unknown is briefly discussed in many secondary sources; see, e.g., Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 4–8: Neil Hanson, Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War (New York: Vintage, 2007), 336-41; Micki McElya, The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 182; Robert M. Poole, On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery (New York: Walker, 2009), 146-52; Kara Newcomer, "... Known but to God," Fortitudine 36, no. 2 (2011): 3-12.
- 778 Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 4-5; Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1–2.
- ⁷⁷⁹ Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, Apr 2020, 35; for more about these campaigns and battle areas, see American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), American Armies and Battlefields in Europe: A History, Guide, and Reference Book (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938); ABMC, World War I Battlefield Companion (Arlington, VA: ABMC, 2018), Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 334–35; Dewey,

- "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1–2; ABMC, "Somme American Cemetery and Memorial," Dec 2018, https://npshistory.com/publications/battlefield/abmc/somme/brochure-e-2018.pdf.
- ⁷⁸⁰ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 3, 33, 47–57.
- ⁷⁸¹ Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 2.
- ⁷⁸² Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 2.
- ⁷⁸³ Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 2; see also Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 238–39.
- ⁷⁸⁴ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier, 2–3; ltr, R. P. Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 5 Oct 1921, in Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1–3; memo, Harbold to Commanding Ofcr, Section 3, Field Forces, Roisel, "Unknown Dead Soldier," 5 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. In his account of the disinterment process, Dewey noted that the team sent to Thiaucourt also included a "conveyor."

 ⁷⁸⁵ Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 3.
- ⁷⁸⁶ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4. However, the exhumation at Thiaucourt had been started the day before. Under Lieutenant Dewey's instruction, a depth of about two feet had been pre-dug to expedite the actual exhumation the following day. This detail is only known because of Dewey's account; records of whether other disinterments were begun the day before have not yet been located. See Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 3; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 336–37; on the disinterment process, see also Hatzinger, "Democracy of Death," 237–44.

 ⁷⁸⁷ Ltr, Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne, to 1st Lt. Arthur E. Dewey, Quartermaster Corps, 18 Oct 1921, in Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," n.p. All the teams received similar instructions on how to conduct the disinterment; for the sake of a clear narrative, Dewey's orders are quoted most frequently here. The other orders can be found in ABMC decimal file—WWI Unknown Soldier, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- ⁷⁸⁸ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4.
- ⁷⁸⁹ Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 2–3.
- ⁷⁹⁰ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 5 Oct 1921, 1–2.
- ⁷⁹¹ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 118; see also Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 3–4.
- ⁷⁹² Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; see also Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1–3.
- ⁷⁹³ Ltr, Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne, to Dewey, 18 Oct 1921, n.p.; see also ltr, Operations Division AGRS to Ofcr in Charge of Operations at Romagne, "Unknown Dead Soldier," 14 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. The chosen caskets were sometimes referred to as "Springfield" caskets; see, e.g., memo, G. V. S. Quackenbush for S and T Division, 293 "Unknown," 18 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. ⁷⁹⁴ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 5 Oct 1921, 1.
- ⁷⁹⁵ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 118–19. This source does not report that the forms for the alternates were also destroyed, but Dewey implied that they were; this may be a discrepancy in his personal recollection. See Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5.
- ⁷⁹⁶ Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 3.
- ⁷⁹⁷ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 118–19.
- ⁷⁹⁸ Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 4. Shockingly, at least one document pertaining to an unknown candidate has survived in the records. This document is a 27 October 1921 communication between Louis R. Dice, the supervisor of Area no. 5, AGRS, Amiens, Somme, and the chief of the AGRS. In it, Dice asks whether the unknown disinterred from the Somme cemetery should be dropped from the directory, and gives the location of where this unknown had been buried. When the AGRS chief replied, he told Dice to eliminate the unknown from the records and remove the cross in the cemetery. This document, containing sensitive information about the candidate's burial location, should have been destroyed; somehow, it survived. Memo, Louis R. Dice to Chief of AGRS, "Unknown U.S. Soldier No. U.-114," 27 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; memo, Chief of AGRS to Louis R. Dice, n.d., folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- ⁷⁹⁹ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921.
- ⁸⁰⁰ Memo, R. P. Harbold for Personnel Branch, 15 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; memo, Operations Div to Maj. G. F. Waugh, "Unknown Dead Soldier," 15 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.

- Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–6; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony in Connection with the Selection of the Body of the Unknown American . . . ," 29 Oct 1921, 1, box 12, ANCHRC (this document was signed by Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers and likely written by him or his staff); "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," undated manuscript, 2, originally in the holdings of the Old Guard Museum, now in the collections of the AHEC (uploaded to Flickr by the Old Guard Museum, 8 Nov 2015, https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldguardmuseum/albums/72157660990491415/).
- Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–6; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier." 2.
- 803 Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 2.
- 804 Ltr, J. Servas to Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers, ca. 26 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. 805 Ltr, Servas to Rogers, ca. 26 Oct 1921.
- 806 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5; ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 118. Rethers offered a variant, perhaps because he was recalling the events of ten years prior, saying that the "four convoys of bodies arrived from the various points of the compass." Rethers, *Selection of Unknown Soldier*, 2.
- ⁸⁰⁷ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; ltr, Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne, to Camp Quartermaster, Meuse-Argonne Cemetery, 20 Oct 1921, in Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier." 1.
- ⁸⁰⁸ Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; ltr, Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne, to Camp Quartermaster, Meuse-Argonne Cemetery, 20 Oct 1921, in Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 1.
- 809 Ltr, Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne, to Camp Quartermaster, Meuse-Argonne Cemetery, 20 Oct 1921, 1.810 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 4.
- Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5.
- 812 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 118–19.
- ⁸¹³ According to AGRS, the pallbearers were from the Headquarters Company at Coblenz; see AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 119. See also "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 4.
- 814 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1. The guard detachment at the Hôtel de Ville was in the charge of Lieutenant Olmi of the French 106th Regiment of Infantry. After the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers lauded him for being "most attentive and thorough in the performance of the duty to which he was assigned and by his military bearing, good judgment and alertness won the approbation of all." Ltr, Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers to Gen. Duport, 26 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; see also Rethers, *Selection of Unknown Soldier*, 2.
- 815 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 4; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 119. Dewey wrote otherwise, stating that a detachment of French soldiers had shifted the caskets and that the two supervisory embalmers from Romagne Cemetery shifted the remains to different caskets on the night of 23 October, but this discrepancy could be the result of the years that elapsed before he wrote his account. Most other sources state that the rearrangement took place on the morning of 24 October. See Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 6. Another discrepant account appeared in the *Erie (PA) Daily Times* (18 Nov 1941), in a quotation attributed to supervisory embalmer Charles Keating. Keating said that he offered to take a squad of French soldiers to rearrange the bodies and did so, because "the officials were jittery. They were afraid that one of the caskets had been marked in some way so that it would be recognized by the parties who originally embalmed the body." However, thus far, this is the only source that states that Keating rearranged the bodies. Cited in Bob Lindsey, *The Charles Keating Story* (Corry, PA: Artcraft Printing, 1982), 14–15, folder "Keating, Charles," box 12, ANCHRC.
- ⁸¹⁷ Ltr, Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers to Col. George H. Penrose, 31 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2. However, as late as 23 October 1921, some American newspapers were still reporting that General Pershing himself would make the

- selection. "Tribute Prepared for America's Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 23 Oct 1921; see also "Unknown Soldier Ceremonies," New York Times, 22 Sep 1921.
- 818 Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1-2; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7; memo, Maj. Robert P. Harbold, 26 Oct 1921, WWI Tomb of Unknown US Soldier-Arlington National Cemetery 1921–1930, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. Information on Younger's military service and decorations can be found in "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 4; and in Edward Francis Younger personnel file, Official Military Personnel Files, 1912-1998, National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), Saint Louis, MO.
- 819 SO 268, Headquarters American Forces in Germany, Coblenz, 17 Oct 1921, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (WWI) Selection + Burial, box 12, ANCHRC.
- 820 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 4–5; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2.
- 821 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 6.
- 822 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 6.
- 823 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 1; see also Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 4-5; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 120.
- 824 Translations of his speech vary; it is quoted in AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2; Mossman and Stark, *The* Last Salute, 4-5; ltr, Henry Allen to Adjutant Gen, "American Unknown Soldier," 22 Dec 1921, section 2, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. A copy of Duport's speech in the original French can be found in folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- 825 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2.
- ⁸²⁶ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 5.
 ⁸²⁷ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 5; AGRS, *History of the American* Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 121; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 5. The primary sources do not indicate where Brulfer obtained these roses. One newspaper article from 1943 stated that they came from the garden of the town's mayor, but that has not been corroborated elsewhere. John C. O'Brien, "Penna. Officer Recalls Role Played in Choice of Unknown Soldier," Philadelphia Inquirer, 28 Nov 1943, shared by Steve
- 828 Ltr, Maj. Gen. H. L. Rogers to Brasseur Brulfer, 26 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- 829 Ltr, Brasseur Brulfer to Maj. Gen. H. L. Rogers, 2 Nov 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- 830 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 2-3; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 5-7; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 121; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 5.
- 831 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 7; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 119.
- 832 Memo, Adjutant Gen Army for the Quartermaster Gen, "House Joint Resolution 426," 9 Sep 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; memo, Penrose to Rethers, Sep 1921.
- 833 Ltr, Rethers to Bagby, 4 Oct 1921. A memo from Rethers also indicated that this casket had been shipped to France. Memo, H. F. Rethers for Operations Division, 293 "Unknown," 14 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. Rethers described it as "a very elaborate casket that had been sent from the United States." Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 3; see also "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 121. Some sources indicate that the Unknown's casket may have been manufactured by the Morgan Casket Company of Brooklyn, New York. However, the research team has not been able to definitively confirm this using official War Department records. See Morgan Casket Company advertisement, n.d., Casket of WWI Unknown, box 4, ANCHRC; "J.F. Morgan Dies; Made Casket of Nation's Unknown Soldier," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 14 Apr 1936; "Joseph F. Morgan: Head of Brooklyn Casket Co. Made Coffin for Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 14 Apr 1936.
- 834 Ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921, 3.
- 835 Lindsey, The Charles Keating Story, 3–14.
- 836 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 7; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 119, 121; memo, Rethers for Operations Division, 293 "Unknown," 14 Oct 1921; Lindsey, The Charles Keating Story, 16–18. According to "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6, the flag was "perfectly new" and "remain[ed] with the casket while en route to the United States."

837 Lindsey, The Charles Keating Story, 22.

838 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; corroborated in Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6. The AGRS history emphasized this step with words similar to the report signed by Rogers: "The purpose of this transfer was to have the casket buried (which originally contained the body that had been selected) and thus preclude the possibility of any mark of identification being left which might in any way show from what cemetery that body had been exhumed." AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 119–20. According to Dewey, a group of American officers moved the Unknown's body to the special casket, while he and two embalmers removed the body of an unselected unknown into the now-vacated steel casket. Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7.

⁸³⁹ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 120; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 7–8; ltr, Harbold to Ofcr in Charge of Operations, Romagnesous-Montfaucon, 15 Oct 1921; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier." 6.

⁸⁴⁰ Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier, 3.

⁸⁴¹ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 121–22.

842 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 8. Capt. Charles E. Moslander recalled that the American soldiers in the first group to guard the Unknown after the selection included four men who represented the Signal Corps, Corps of Engineers, Air Service (himself), and Railway Service. However, this account is undated and not well labeled or verified. He also stated, in 1967, that he thought that twenty-eight men had been sent to Châlons-sur-Marne as honor guard and casket bearers, but admitted that his recollection might not be accurate. Charles E. Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (WWI) Selection + Burial, box 12, ANCHRC; ltr, Charles E. Moslander to Thomas Wright, 24 Jan 1967, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC. See also AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 122. The American Legion had at least two representatives at the Châlons ceremonies: C. F. Humm and D. R. McAfee, civilian employees of the AGRS in the Supply and Transportation Division. They were members of Paris Post No. 1 and served as part of the honor guard. The post commander, Col. H. H. Harjes, also appears to have been in attendance, based on a list of people present at the ceremony; sources suggest that all three men were at Le Havre. Memo, AGRS Supply and Transportation Div for Administration Div, 24 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; ltr, C. M. Perkins to Motor Transport Ofcr, AGRS, 20 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 8; ltr, Colonel Rethers to H. H. Harjes, 20 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; ltr, H. H. Harjes to Colonel Rethers, 19 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; "Liste de Personalites Officielles Françaises & Americaines Assistant a la Ceremonie du Transport du Soldat Amercain Inconnu," n.d., folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. 843 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 8; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6.

⁸⁴⁴ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 122; Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 7–8.

⁸⁴⁵ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 3; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 7. Footage at the National Archives that appears to show the catafalque as it lay in state in Châlons indicates that many people did indeed gather to pay their respects. *Ceremonies Attending the Burial of an Unknown and Unidentified American Soldier Who Lost His Life During the War*, Signal Corps misc. film n. 379, ca. 1921, reel 1, around 01:18, Documentary Films, ca. 1914–1944, RG 111 (Rcds of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860–1985), NACP, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/35600.

⁸⁴⁶ Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 5–6, 8. Dewey wrote of two instances when the public could enter the Hôtel de Ville—on 23 and 24 October 1921. The quote here is from his description of the crowd on 23 October. Dewey's eyewitness account of the visitation offers a useful and evocative window into the events, but he likely muddled his dates: his report does not line up with the official Army records or with Rethers's 1931 account, and a public visitation on 23 October cannot be verified. See also Rethers, *Selection of Unknown Soldier*, 2.

⁸⁴⁷ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 6–7.

⁸⁴⁸ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 122.

- ⁸⁴⁹ Ltr, Allen to Adjutant Gen, "American Unknown Soldier," 22 Dec 1921; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8. A copy of Servas's speech in French can be found in folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.
- 850 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4.
- 851 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4.
- 852 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4.
- 853 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4.
- ⁸⁵⁴ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 4; see also "Pershing Conveys America's Homage to Unknown Poilu," *New York Times*, 3 Oct 1921.
- 855 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 5.
- 856 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 5.
- 857 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 5.
- 858 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 5.
- 859 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 10–11; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 122.
- ⁸⁶⁰ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 5; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 122–23; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 11. Dewey recalled that a Guard of Honor from the Army of Occupation in Coblenz, composed of twenty-four men and commanded by a sergeant major, followed the caisson, but *The Last Salute* and official documents only note the participation of a unit from the Quartermaster Corps. Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 8.
- ⁸⁶¹ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 11. According to an account attributed Moslander, the band played the "Dead March from Saul [an oratorio by George Frideric Handel], and others who I was unable to identify." Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France.
- ⁸⁶² AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8. Footage held in the National Archives shows the densely packed streets of Châlons during this procession; *Ceremonies Attending the Burial of an Unknown and Unidentified American Soldier*, ca. 1921, reel 1, 01:00–03:18.
- 863 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 11.
- ⁸⁶⁴ Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France.
- ⁸⁶⁵ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 12.
- ⁸⁶⁶ Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 9.
- Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 123. This special train, the awarding of the Legion d'Honneur, and the ceremonies, troops, and societies at the events at Châlons and Le Havre were organized by the "president of the Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs" of France. Ltr, Harry F. Rethers to Henry T. Allen, 27 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; "Programme des Ceremonies du Transport du Corps du Soldat Inconnu Americain," folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. According to an account attributed to Moslander, inside the train car the Unknown's casket rested on a pedestal about three feet off of the floor, with the bronze palm leaf from the Republic of France nearby, and the car's interior was draped in a gray cloth. This account also noted that "orders were issued that no one would be admitted in the car, except the men on duty. No outsiders, regardless who let them in." Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France. Charles Keating recalled that the French band played "The Star Spangled Banner" as the train departed the station. Lindsey, *The Charles Keating Story*, 18.
- 868 Dewey, "Selection of the Unknown Soldier," 9.
- ⁸⁶⁹ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 123.
- ⁸⁷⁰ Ltr, Servas to Rogers, ca. 26 Oct 1921.
- ⁸⁷¹ Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for Adjutant Gen, "Ceremony in Connection with Burial of Unknown American at Arlington National Cemetery, November 11, 1921," 8 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, Record Group (RG) 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP).

⁸⁷² American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), "Report of the Ceremony in Connection with the Selection of the Body of the Unknown American . . . ," 29 Oct 1921, 6, box 12, Historical Research Collection, Arlington National Cemetery (ANCHRC).

⁸⁷³ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 25 Oct 1921, 4–5, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117 (Rcds of the American Battle Monuments Commission), NACP. This article in the *Journal du Havre* states that Thomasset was a representative of the National Association of War Prisoners in France and that he was in charge of the guard of honor composed of various veterans' societies that watched over the Unknown overnight.

874 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 8–9; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," undated manuscript, 13, originally in the holdings of the Old Guard Museum, now in the collections of the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) (uploaded to Flickr by the Old Guard Museum, 8 Nov 2015, https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldguardmuseum/albums/72157660990491415/); ltr, Col. Harry F. Rethers to Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen, 12 Oct 1921, 1, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC, box 12; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service, Q.M.C. in Europe*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 123; "Programme des Ceremonies du Transport du Corps du Soldat Inconnu Americain," folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP.

⁸⁷⁵ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 123; "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 4; Bob Lindsey, *The Charles Keating Story* (Corry, PA: Artcraft Printing, 1982), 18, box 12, ANCHRC. The *Journal du Havre* article said that floral tributes from the city of Rouen were placed on the coffin. Some of the English-language sources consulted in this chapter misspelled General Duchêne's name as "DuChesne."

⁸⁷⁶ Ltr, Charles E. Moslander to Thomas Wright, 24 Jan 1967, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC. In another document attributed to Moslander, he mentioned that the train made many stops and that while people were not allowed inside the special train car, the car's doors were opened so that those on the station platforms could see the casket. Charles E. Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (WWI) Selection + Burial, box 12, ANCHRC.

⁸⁷⁷ Ltr, Moslander to Wright, 24 Jan 1967. Although the term *GI* was not used in World War I, Moslander was likely using the term most familiar to him years later, because he had served in the military (first the Army Air Service, then the Air Force) for many years. In the document in the ANCHRC attributed to Moslander, he claimed that this woman was American and that she left a single red rose on the casket; Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France.

⁸⁷⁸ Ltr, Charles E. Moslander to B. M. Davis, 26 Jan 1982, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC. Benjamin Davis worked at ANC as a historian starting around 1976. He is buried at ANC in Section 30. "History Arlington National Cemetery 1976: The Bicentennial Year," n.p., folder 1, box 1, ANCHRC; ANC Explorer, n.d., https://ancexplorer.army.mil (accessed 25 Oct 2025).

⁸⁷⁹ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8–9; De Meynard, "Depart du Soldat Inconnu Americain," 21 Oct 1921, 1, Unknown Soldier WWI Account of Selection 1921, box 12, ANCHRC. According to AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 123–24, the machine gun company likely belonged to the French 129th Infantry.

880 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8–9; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 124. The following document provides a list of American and French officials slated to be at the departure ceremony: "Liste de Personalites Officielles Francaises & Americaines Assistant a la Ceremonie du Transport du Soldat Amercain Inconnu," n.d., folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. In addition to those people listed in the text who were on the train or met the train at the Le Havre station, those at the departure ceremony also included (according to this document), for the French: L'Intendent Bezombes [sic], director of the Military Burials Office at the Ministry of Pensions; Captain Le Roch, the French liaison officer to the AGRS; and Mr. Louvel,, deputy chief of staff to Maginot. The Americans included: General Allen; Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers; Col. Harry F. Rethers; Lt. Col. William G. Ball; Col. H. H. Harjes, the delegate from the American Legion; Charles Keating, serving as a delegate from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW); and Capt. W. B. Sumner, aide-de-camp. According to Lindsey, *The Charles Keating Story*, 18, Keating was with the Americans on the train to Le Havre; see also "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 4.

- ⁸⁸¹ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8–9; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 124; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, reel 1, around 0:10, Historical Films, Compiled ca. 1914–ca. 1936, RG 111 (Rcds of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860–1985), NACP. The Signal Corps footage corroborates much of the narrative written here about the events in Le Havre.
- ⁸⁸² AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 6–7; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8–9; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 1; De Meynard, "Depart du Soldat Inconnu Americain," 1–2.
- ⁸⁸³ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 124.
- ⁸⁸⁴ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 124.
- ⁸⁸⁵ Ltr, Rethers to Allen, 12 Oct 1921, 1.
- 886 Harry F. Rethers, Selection of Unknown Soldier: Broadcasted from San Francisco, November 11, 1931 (San Francisco, CA: Reorder Printing, 1931), 3.
- ⁸⁸⁷ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 13–22; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 124–25; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 8–9; "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 4–7.
- ⁸⁸⁸ AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 125. "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, also reported that Younger was among these American men.
- ⁸⁸⁹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 125.
- 890 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 15.
- ⁸⁹¹ AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 124.
- 892 The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 1, around 2:10.
- ⁸⁹³ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 125; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9.
- ⁸⁹⁴ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7; AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 125.
- 895 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 15.
- 896 Moslander (likely), untitled document, n.d., sub: Summarizing Events in France.
- ⁸⁹⁷ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 1; logbook (deck log), USS Olympia, 25 Oct 1921, 722, RG 24 (Rcds of the Bureau of Naval Personnel), NACP, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/148844639 (accessed 31 Aug 2021); AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 126.
- Memo, Henry T. Allen, Commanding Gen, to Adjutant Gen of the Army, "American Unknown Soldier," 11 Dec 1921, section 2, box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP (this memo enclosed copies of the speeches from the ceremonies in Châlons-sur-Marne and Le Havre). See also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126. During World War II and the Nazi persecution of Jewish people, Léon Meyer was taken to the Theresienstadt (Terezín) and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps, which he survived. On Meyer, see "Meyer, Leon," Encyclopedia.com, n.d., https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/meyer-leon (accessed 31 Aug 2021); "Leon Meyer," EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure), n.d., https://portal.ehri-project.eu/authorities/ehri_pers-002500 (accessed 31 Aug 2021); "Le Havre," JGuideEurope, n.d., https://jguideeurope.org/en/region/france/normandy/le-havre/ (accessed 31 Aug 2021).
- ⁸⁹⁹ Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921.
- ⁹⁰⁰ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9; memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7.
- ⁹⁰¹ Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7.
- 902 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7.
- 903 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7.
- 904 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 7–8.
- 905 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- ⁹⁰⁶ Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 15–19.
- 907 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8; memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; Robert M. Poole, *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery* (New York: Walker, 2009), 151. On the award, see "The Legion of Honor," Grande Chancellerie de la Légion d'honneur,

- n.d., https://www.legiondhonneur.fr/en/les-decorations/les-decorations-francaises/legion-honor (accessed 25 Oct 2025).
- 908 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- 909 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- 910 Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- ⁹¹¹ Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- ⁹¹² Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8.
- ⁹¹³ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 8–9.
- ⁹¹⁴ Memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen Army, 11 Dec 1921.
- ⁹¹⁵ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 21; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126; rpt, R. Adm. L. H. Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), "Report of Movements of U.S.S. Olympia, October 3 to November 9, 1921, in Connection with the Return to the United States from France of the Body of an 'Unknown Dead' American Soldier...," 10 Nov 1921, 1, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC.
- 916 On ceremonial ruffles, see "Funeral Elements," Arlington National Cemetery, n.d.,
- https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Funerals/Funeral-Information/Funeral-Elements (accessed 25 Oct 2025); "Ceremonial Music," U.S. Navy Band, n.d., https://www.navyband.navy.mil/ceremonial (accessed 1 Sep 2021); "Ceremonial Music Guide," U.S. Army Band Pershing's Own, n.d., https://www.usarmyband.com/ceremonial-music-guide (accessed 1 Sep 2021).
- 917 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 21; memo, R. Adm. L. H. Chandler, "Memorandum Covering the Ceremonies at Havre October 25, 1921, in Connection with the Receipt of the Body of the Unknown Dead American Soldier on Board the U.S.S. Olympia," 24 Oct 1921, 1, folder "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 5; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 1; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9.
- 918 AGRS, History of the American Graves Registration Service, vol. 2, 127.
- ⁹¹⁹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 5; email, Mark T. Weber, Naval History and Heritage Commemoration, to Timothy Frank, 15 Apr 2021.
- ⁹²⁰ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 21; memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9.
- ⁹²¹ Memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1. The officers and crew had assembled on the deck at 2:20 p.m. Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 25 Oct 1921, 722; Neil Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 340; Robert J. Cressman, "Reuben James I (DD-245)," Naval History and Heritage Command, published 17 Oct 2019, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/r/reuben-james-i.html.
- ⁹²² AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9.
- ⁹²³ Memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 21; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 127; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9.
- ⁹²⁴ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 1.
- 925 "Tending the Side: A U.S. Navy Tradition," infographic, Naval History and Heritage Command, n.d., https://www.history.navy.mil/news-and-events/multimedia-gallery/infographics/heritage/tending-the-side.html (accessed 1 Sep 2021); memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; *Origin of Navy Terminology*, s.v. "Sideboys," Naval History and Heritage Command, n.d., https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/o/origin-navy-terminology.html (accessed 1 Sep 2021).
- ⁹²⁶ Memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; *Origin of Navy Terminology*, s.v. "Boatswain, Cockswain (or Coxswain), Skiffswain"; *Origin of Navy Terminology*, s.v. "Boatswain's Pipe," n.d.
- ⁹²⁷ Memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126.
- ⁹²⁸ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 22; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 1.
- ⁹²⁹ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 15, 21; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9.
- 930 Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1–2.

- 935 Memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1–2; AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 25 Oct 1921, 722; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9; AGRS, *History of the American Graves Registration Service*, vol. 2, 126–27. The French ships serving as escort to the *Olympia* were furnished by the préfet maritime de Cherbourg (maritime prefect of Cherbourg), who also provided berthing arrangements; Ltr, Rethers to Allen, 27 Oct 1921.
- ⁹³⁶ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6.
- ⁹³⁷ AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 341; De Meynard, "Depart du Soldat Inconnu Americain," 1–2.
- 938 Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 25 Oct 1921, 722.
- 939 AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9.
- ⁹⁴⁰ Ltr, Gen. Henry T. Allen to M. Aristide Briand, 29 Oct 1921, encl. in memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921 (Briand's first name is spelled *Arstide* in this source).
- 941 Ltr, Allen to Briand, 29 Oct 1921.
- 942 Copies of these letters are encl. in memo, Allen to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 11 Dec 1921.
- ⁹⁴³ "List of Wreaths Accompanying the Casket," 10 Nov 1921, encl. in rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921.
- 944 "List of Wreaths Accompanying the Casket," 10 Nov 1921.
- ⁹⁴⁵ "List of Wreaths Accompanying the Casket," 10 Nov 1921; Cédric Cotter, "Red Cross," *1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, updated 10 Apr 2018, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/red cross.
- 946 Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 1921, n.p., images 444–45.
- ⁹⁴⁷ For more about the *Olympia*, see the sidebar "From Manila Bay to Philadelphia: The Life and Service of the USS *Olympia*," by Timothy Frank.
- ⁹⁴⁸ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 27 Sep 1921, 646. The deck log misspells Erskine's name as *E.B. Askine*. A 1964 article in the *Marine Corps Gazette* gives an account of the Marine Corps' role in bringing home the Unknown. The article's sources are unclear, but it does provide what appear to be direct quotes from several marines on board during the events of 1921. Much of the account retells previously known aspects of this story, but it contains several factual errors as well as some details that have not been corroborated in other sources. This article was not used as a source here, but it may be of interest to those looking for another perspective. Dennis D. Nicholson, "In Good Hands," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Nov 1964. Thank you to Craig Bruns from the Independence Seaport Museum for sharing this article with me.
- ⁹⁴⁹ Oral history interv, Benis M. Frank with Graves B. Erskine, 1969–70, 69, Marine Corps History and Museums Division, Washington, DC. This transcript, completed in 1975, was edited by the staff of the Oral History Unit; Erskine did not get a chance to do so before he died. For more about the Marine Corps' involvement with the Unknown, see: "The March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (Dec 1921): 471.
- ⁹⁵⁰ Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 69–70.
- 951 Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 69.
- 952 Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 69, 71.
- ⁹⁵³ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 27 Sep 1921, 646–56. The logbook also records that cots were brought on board for the marines.

⁹³¹ Memo, F. N. Inman for H. L. Ward, 18 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 301, 341.

^{932 &}quot;Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 22.

⁹³³ "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 1. This article also notes that flowers from all over the British Empire were transported on board the HMS *Metagama* ahead of the Unknown Soldier's burial. These flowers had been specially prepared by the chief court florist, and were being conveyed to the United States by an expert group of gardeners so that they could be presented in full bloom on the day of the funeral.

⁹³⁴ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 25 Oct 1921, 722; see also AGRS, "Report of the Ceremony," 9; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9; memo, Chandler, 24 Oct 1921, 1–2; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; De Meynard, "Depart du Soldat Inconnu Americain," 1–2. While several sources state that six destroyers accompanied the *Olympia* out of port, others suggest that there were eight vessels, some describing them instead as cruisers or torpedo boats.

⁹⁵⁴ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, ca. 27 Sep 1921, n.p., image 445, and 1 Oct 1921, 656–58; Associated Press, "Priest Who Brought Unknown Soldier Home Visits Memorial," *Washington Post*, 5 Apr 1934, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 22, entry 17, RG 66 (Rcds of the Commission of Fine Arts), National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB).

⁹⁵⁵ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 1 Oct 1921, 656–58.

⁹⁵⁶ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 2; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 3 Oct 1921, 666, and 14 Oct 1921, 692.

⁹⁵⁷ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 2. In his oral history, Erskine remembered that the ship had a "pretty rough trip over." Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 69.

⁹⁵⁸ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 2–3; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 16 Oct 1921, 698. George Mark Trotter, a ship's cook on the *Olympia*, recalled that he had been selected for duty in London related to the British Unknown because of his good conduct record. Survey, George M. Trotter, n.d., U.S. Army Military History Research Collection (now the Army Heritage and Education Center), Cruiser Olympia Collections, Olympia Sailors T–Z, box 7, Independence Seaport Museum, Philadelphia, PA.

⁹⁵⁹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 3; "List of Officers," logbook, USS Olympia, n.d., 698.

⁹⁶⁰ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 3.

⁹⁶¹ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 14 Oct 1921, 692.

⁹⁶² Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 3. Chandler was not the only officer to make such visits; Captain Wyman visited the American consul and the mayor of Plymouth, for example. Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 17 Oct 1921, 700.

⁹⁶³ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 3.

⁹⁶⁴ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 4; SO 267, Headquarters, American Forces in Germany, 16 Oct 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP. According to Special Orders 267, Bagby was directed to go from Coblenz, Germany, to Plymouth, England, and report to the *Olympia*'s commander for duty. He would travel on the *Olympia* to Le Havre, where he was to report to General Allen for temporary duty before returning to Coblenz via Paris. "Moslander, Charles E.," box 12, ANCHRC.

⁹⁶⁵ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 4.

⁹⁶⁶ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 24 Oct 1921, 716–18.

⁹⁶⁷ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 4.

⁹⁶⁸ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 24 Oct 1921, 718.

⁹⁶⁹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 4.

⁹⁷⁰ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 4.

⁹⁷¹ Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 69–71.

⁹⁷² This determination was made in the course of developing the 2021 exhibition *Difficult Journey Home*, about the *Olympia*'s role in transporting the Unknown Soldier. The Independence Seaport Museum, which preserves the *Olympia*, did extensive research in the ship's logs, translating the codes for the weather notes and utilizing National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather charts and other weather data. See also Christopher W. Landsea et al., "A Reanalysis of the 1921–30 Atlantic Hurricane Database," *Journal of Climate* 25, no. 3 (1 Feb 2012): 865–85.

⁹⁷³ Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 70–71.

⁹⁷⁴ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 31 Oct 1921, 738.

⁹⁷⁵ Oral history interv, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 70; see also Kara Newcomer, "... Known but to God," Fortitudine 36, no. 2 (2011): 4. Research conducted by the Independence Seaport Museum concluded that one reason the Unknown's casket was kept on the bridge and not inside the ship was the casket's size. The casket may not have been able to fit through the doors leading from the ship's quarterdeck without being tipped, which would have disturbed the remains. Emails, Craig Bruns to Allison Finkelstein, 5–19 May 2021.

⁹⁷⁶ Oral history intery, Frank with Erskine, 1969–70, 70.

^{977 &}quot;Unknown's Body Is Nearing Port, as Funeral Details Are Finished," Washington Post, 7 Nov 1921.

^{978 &}quot;Unknown's Body Is Nearing Port, as Funeral Details Are Finished," Washington Post.

⁹⁷⁹ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 7 Nov 1921, 760, and 8 Nov 1921, 764–65; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 342–43; "Dead Comes Home on Olympia Today," *Washington Post*, 9 Nov 1921. This article noted that the *North Dakota* was "stationed to salute the body." The Navy reported (in

Chandler's rpt of 10 Nov 1921) that the *Bernadou* and the *Contoocook* met the *Olympia* off Cape Henry. It is unclear whether all the named ships escorted the *Olympia* to the Navy Yard.

- 980 "Dead Comes Home on Olympia Today," Washington Post.
- ⁹⁸¹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155. Other sources describe the weather, variously, as "a gray, gloomy day" with "a heavy mist and drizzling rain" ("Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25), a "rainy day" (Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9), and a "dull mist" ("Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," *Washington Post*, 10 Nov 1921).
- ⁹⁸² Kirke Larue Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 9 Nov 1921, *Service Bulletin of the Associated Press* 64 (December 1921): 2; see also Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155.
- ⁹⁸³ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770. This nautical usage of *stand/stood*—as "to sail, steer, direct one's course"—dates to the late sixteenth century. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "stand (v.)," sense VII.41.b, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1250610689 (accessed 28 Oct 2025).
- ⁹⁸⁴ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770.
- ⁹⁸⁵ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770. The deck log says that the *Olympia* went alongside the dock at the Navy Yard at 2:58 p.m. and was moored to the dock at 3:01 p.m.; Chandler's report says that the *Olympia* moored at 3:05 p.m. See Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155–56, for an additional description of the *Olympia*'s arrival at the Navy Yard.
- 986 Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7.
- ⁹⁸⁷ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770; see also "Origins of the Twenty-One Gun Salute," Naval History and Heritage Command, 5 Jun 2024, https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/heritage/customs-and-traditions0/twenty-one-gun-salute.html; "The 21-Gun Salute," U.S. Marine Corps History Division, n.d., https://www.usmcu.edu/Research/Marine-Corps-History-Division/Frequently-Requested-Topics/21-Gun-Salute/(accessed 25 Oct 2025).
- 988 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25.
- ⁹⁸⁹ Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 2; see also Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 155. The *Washington Post*, in "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," also reported on the sound of the salutes, indicating that they were readily heard by the public.
- ⁹⁹⁰ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770.
- 991 "Dead Comes Home on Olympia Today," Washington Post.
- ⁹⁹² George Rothwell Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," Washington Post, 10 Nov 1921.
- ⁹⁹³ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770. Sources give differing times that the *Olympia* docked: about 4:00 p.m. (given as 1600 in Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9), 3:01 p.m. (the deck log, 770), and 3:05 p.m. (rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy [Operations], 10 Nov 1921, 6).
- ⁹⁹⁴ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9–10. Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3, writes that the cavalry in attendance was the 2d and 3d Squadrons, 3d Cavalry, from Fort Myer. Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," says that it was Troops E, F, and G from the 3d Cavalry at Fort Myer. See also "Timeline," George S. Patton Papers: Diaries, 1910 to 1945, Library of Congress, n.d.,
- https://www.loc.gov/collections/george-s-patton-diaries/articles-and-essays/timeline/ (accessed 2 Sep 2021); Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers:1885–1940* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 756; "Weeks Names Pershing New Chief of Staff," *New York Times*, 14 May 1921.
- ⁹⁹⁵ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7. See also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9–10. Many events during the arrival at the Washington Navy Yard are also corroborated in *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 2.
- ⁹⁹⁶ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7.
- ⁹⁹⁷ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7.
- ⁹⁹⁸ "Annex No. 1 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies Pertaining to the Burial of an Unknown American, November 11, 1921: Plan for Receiving the Body at the Washington Navy Yard," ca. 11 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ⁹⁹⁹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7; see also "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier." 25.

- ¹⁰⁰⁰ Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 2; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 2.
- ¹⁰⁰¹ Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25. The *Washington Post*, in "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," recorded the names of some of the ten sailors and marines who lifted the casket as: chief water tender John Mack and chief gunner's mate Ray Lesure of the *Olympia*; Sergeant Boegaholtz and Corporal Spence of the U.S. Marine Corps; and sailors Voiles, Conrad, Davis, and Schuler. See also Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3; Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier"; "Ships' Bells," Naval History and Heritage Command, 2 Feb 2018,
- https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/bells-on-ships.html.
- ¹⁰⁰² Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3; Rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 7; logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 9–11.
- 1003 Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3.
- ¹⁰⁰⁴ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 10–11; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3.
- ¹⁰⁰⁵ Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 9 Nov 1921, 770. The *Washington Post*, "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," noted that the plaques and tributes given to the Unknown in France, and the box of soil, also came off the ship.
- ¹⁰⁰⁶ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11. Sgt. Samuel Woodfill stood at the head of the eight body bearers. Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3.
- 1007 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11.
- 1008 Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4.
- ¹⁰⁰⁹ For the initial plans to use a hearse, see "Annex No. 1 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," ca. 11 Oct 1921. For the use of the caisson, see Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 10–11; rpt, Chandler to Sec Navy (Operations), 10 Nov 1921, 6–7. The caisson horses were described as being "jet-black." "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," *Washington Post*.
- ¹⁰¹⁰ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25.
- ¹⁰¹¹ "Annex No. 1 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," ca. 11 Oct 1921; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 3; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11; "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown; His Wife White Ribbon," *Washington Post*.
- ¹⁰¹² "Annex No. 1 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," ca. 11 Oct 1921; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 25; Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, 155; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 2; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11.
- ¹⁰¹³ Ltr, John W. Weeks to the Secretary of State, 23 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, Record Group (RG) 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP); ltr, Charles E. Hughes, Secretary of State, to John Weeks, Secretary of War, with enclosed proclamation draft, 1 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. The proclamation was also sent by the War Department to all chiefs of bureaus and services; John C. Schofield, memo for Chiefs of Bureaus and Services, 11 Oct 1921, folder 293.1 (Unknown Dead), box 8, entry NM-81-1941 (Correspondence Relating to Cemeteries), RG 92 (Rcds of the Ofc of the Quartermaster Gen), NACP; "Harding Calls on People to Offer Silent Prayer on Armistice Day," *Baltimore Sun*, 1 Oct 1921.
- 1014 "Harding Calls on People," *Baltimore Sun*; ltr, Hughes to Weeks, 1 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁰¹⁵ "Harding Calls on People," *Baltimore Sun*; ltr, Hughes to Weeks, 1 Oct 1921.
- 1016 "Harding Calls on People," Baltimore Sun; ltr, Hughes to Weeks, 1 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁰¹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).
- 1018 "Harding Calls on People," *Baltimore Sun*; ltr, Hughes to Weeks, 1 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁰¹⁹ Ltr, Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Proclamation by the President—Observance of November 11, 1921," 29 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Harris, P. C. (Peter Charles), 1865–1951," NAID 10596405, National Archives, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/10596405.

- ¹⁰²⁰ Rad, Charles Harris to Commanding Gen, American Forces in Germany, Coblenz, 29 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁰²¹ "Distribution Sheet," 1 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁰²² Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day, 1921, a Legal Public Holiday, by the President of the United States of America," 4 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁰²³ Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921; Joint Resolution to Declare November 11, 1921, a Legal Public Holiday, H. Joint Res. 215, 42 Stat. 211 (1921).
- ¹⁰²⁴ Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921. For more on martial masculinity, see, e.g., Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
- ¹⁰²⁵ Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁰²⁶ Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁰²⁷ Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921.
- Department of State, "For the Press: November 5, 1921," section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁰²⁹ Telg, Charles Harris to Commanding Gen, First Corps Area, 7 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Proclamation, "Declaring Armistice Day," 4 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁰³⁰ Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 183.
- ¹⁰³¹ Ltr, Adjutant Gen of the Army to the Quartermaster Gen, 9 Sep 1921, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117 (Rcds of the American Battle Monuments Commission), NACP.
- ¹⁰³² Ltr, Adjutant Gen of the Army to the Quartermaster Gen, 9 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰³³ "About CFA," U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, https://www.cfa.gov/about-cfa (accessed 30 Mar 2022); "History of the Commission of Fine Arts," U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, https://cfa.gov/about-cfa/history (accessed 30 Mar. 2022); Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, April 2020, 2.
- 1034 Ltr, Thomas Hastings to Elliott Woods, 29 Jul 1921, folder 293 (The Unknown Soldier—Drawings), box 2 (Rcds Regarding the Design and Construction of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, 1926 to 1933), entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP; see also HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 75; "Elliott Woods," Architect of the Capitol, https://www.aoc.gov/about-us/history/architects-of-the-capitol/elliott-woods (accessed 30 Mar 2022); Kristen Frederick, "Elliott Woods: Superintendent, Experimenter, Operatic Composer... Kazoo Player?," Architect of the Capitol (blog), May 25, 2017, https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/blog/elliott-woods-superintendent-experimenter-operatic-composer-kazoo; William C. Allen, History of the United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Design, Construction, and Politics (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001); Report of the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater Commission (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1923), 32.
- ¹⁰³⁵ Ltr, Hastings to Woods, 29 Jul 1921.
- ¹⁰³⁶ Ltr, Hastings to Woods, 29 Jul 1921.
- ¹⁰³⁷ Ltr, Hastings to Woods, 29 Jul 1921.
- 1038 Ltr, Elliott Woods to the Secretary of War, 3 Aug 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹⁰³⁹ Ltr, Thomas Hastings to Charles C. Moore, 8 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66 (Project Files, 1910–1953), National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB).
- ¹⁰⁴⁰ "Charles Moore," U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, https://www.cfa.gov/about-cfa/who-we-are/charles-moore (accessed 30 Mar 2022).
- 1041 Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴² Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴³ Ltr, Hamilton Fish Jr. to Thomas Hastings, 2 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB.
- 1044 Ltr, Fish to Hastings, 2 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴⁵ Ltr, Fish to Hastings, 2 Sep 1921; ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴⁶ Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴⁷ Ltr. Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴⁸ Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.

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<sup>1049</sup> Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
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- 1051 "What Is the Cenotaph?," Imperial War Museums, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-is-the-cenotaph (accessed 30 Mar 2022); "Who Were the Architects of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission?," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (blog), 6 Jan 2023, https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/blog/who-were-thearchitects-of-the-commonwealth-war-graves-commission/; "The Cenotaph," English Heritage, https://www.englishheritage.org.uk/visit/places/the-cenotaph/ (accessed 25 Aug 2025). See Chapter 4 for more on the Cenotaph.
- ¹⁰⁵² Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁵³ Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁵⁴ Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.
- 1055 Ltr, Charles C. Moore to Thomas Hastings, 10 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB.
- ¹⁰⁵⁶ Ltr, Moore to Hastings, 10 Sep 1921.
- 1057 Wayne D. Rasmussen and Vivian Wiser, "Arlington—An Agricultural Experiment Farm in a Changing Era," Arlington Historical Magazine 3, no. 2 (Oct 1966): 24-30; "About Us: USDA ARS," U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service, 12 Aug 2016, https://www.ars.usda.gov/northeast-area/docs/usdahistory-exhibit/aboutus/; "Arlington Farms," Arlington Public Library, 29 May 2019,

https://library.arlingtonva.us/2019/05/29/arlington-farms/; Joseph M. Guyten, "Girl Town: Temporary World War II Housing at Arlington Farms," Arlington Historical Magazine 14, no. 3 (Oct 2011): 5.

- ¹⁰⁵⁸ Ltr, Moore to Hastings, 10 Sep 1921.
- 1059 Ltr, Moore to Hastings, 10 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁰ Ltr, Moore to Hastings, 10 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶¹ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, "Memorandum for the Commission of Fine Arts," 14 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB. This memo does not include the first names for all the men.
- ¹⁰⁶² The apse is the semicircular arch over the stage of the amphitheater; see *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "apse," 18 Oct 2016, https://www.britannica.com/topic/apse-church-architecture.
- ¹⁰⁶³ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁴ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁵ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁶ Ultimately, Hastings was not chosen to design the final Tomb, a story that is beyond the scope of this book.
- ¹⁰⁶⁷ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁸ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶⁹ "Extract of Minutes of Meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts Held in Washington, D.C., September 22 and 23, 1921," Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB.
- 1070 Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921; "Bartolomeo Colleoni Monument," World Monuments Fund, https://www.wmf.org/project/bartolomeo-colleoni-monument (accessed 30 Mar 2022).
- ¹⁰⁷¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "Bartolomeo Colleoni," updated 1 Jan 2025,

https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bartolomeo-Colleoni-Italian-condottiere.

- ¹⁰⁷² Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921; ltr, Quartermaster Gen of the Army to Charles Moore, signed by Geo. [George] H. Penrose, 19 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB; "Bartolomeo Colleoni Monument," World Monuments Fund.

 1073 Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921; "Bartolomeo Colleoni Monument," World Monuments Fund.
- ¹⁰⁷⁴ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921; see also "Bartolomeo Colleoni Monument," World Monuments Fund. Located on the first floor of Memorial Amphitheater and facing Washington, D.C., the Display Room (alternatively called the Trophy Room) space continues to be in use today as a museum exhibit about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
- 1075 Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921; see also Bartolomeo Colleoni Monument," World Monuments Fund; Collins Dictionary, s.v. "camposanto," https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/italian-english/camposanto (accessed 4 Aug 2025). The crypts inside Memorial Amphitheater have never been used for burials as intended; see HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater."
- ¹⁰⁷⁶ Memo, H. P. Caemmerer, 14 Sep 1921.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ltr, Hastings to Moore, 8 Sep 1921.

- ¹⁰⁷⁷ Ltr, Charles Moore to Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers, Quartermaster Gen, 14 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB. In this same letter, Moore also noted that the architects recommended that "the building be not scrubbed, but that the building be allowed to show signs of age through the weathering of the stone," a choice that would create a patina that would eventually correspond with the amphitheater's intended status as a monumental, historic building.

 ¹⁰⁷⁸ HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 26.
- ¹⁰⁷⁹ "Statement Accompanying the Report Made to the Honorable Secretary of War by the Commission of Fine Arts on the Location and Design of the Monument to the Unknown Soldier," ca. 19 Dec 1923, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB; "Extract of Minutes of Meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts," 22–23 Sep 1921.
- 1080 "Statement Accompanying the Report Made to the Honorable Secretary of War," ca. 19 Dec 1923.
- ¹⁰⁸¹ "Statement Accompanying the Report Made to the Honorable Secretary of War," ca. 19 Dec 1923.
- ¹⁰⁸² Ltr, Charles Moore to George Conlon, 27 Sep 1921, Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG 66, NAB; see also "George Conlon, Sculptor Who Carved the Famous," *Washington Post*, 18 Dec 1980.
- ¹⁰⁸³ "Statement Accompanying the Report Made to the Honorable Secretary of War," ca. 19 Dec 1923.
- ¹⁰⁸⁴ Ltr, Moore to Rogers, 14 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁸⁵ Memo, Wm. Lassiter, "Memorandum for the Chief of Staff," 3 Oct 1921, Procurement of Authorization for 4000 for Construction of a Base of a Sarcophagus Oct 1921, box 4 (Some Photos, Memorial Amphitheater Construction and WWI Unknown), Historical Research Collection, Arlington National Cemetery (ANCHRC). This document can also be found in section 3 (Construction of the Sarcophagus and Monument), box 563, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁰⁸⁶ Memo, Lassiter, "Memorandum for the Chief of Staff," 3 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁰⁸⁷ Memo, Lassiter, "Memorandum for the Chief of Staff," 3 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁰⁸⁸ Memo, Lassiter, "Memorandum for the Chief of Staff," 3 Oct 1921.
- 1089 Ltr, Adjutant Gen. Harry L. King to the Quartermaster Gen, 4 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP. The acceptance of this course of action likely happened around 4 October 1921, as the following memo provided the instructions contained in King's memo: memo, Wm Lassiter to the Adjutant General, 4 Oct 1921, Procurement of Authorization for 4000 for Construction of a Base of a Sarcophagus Oct 1921, box 4, ANCHRC.
 1090 Ltr, Quartermaster Gen to the Q.M. Supply Officer, Washington G.I. Depot, signed by H. J. Conner, 5 Oct 1921, folder 293 (Unknowns), Misc. 1921-36, box 63 (General Correspondence ["Subject File"]), entry 1890A, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹⁰⁹¹ "Contract for Construction and Repair of Public Works, Including Vessels," 26 Sep 1921, folder 293, Misc. 1921-36, box 63, entry 1890A, RG 92, NACP. This same folder also contains a signed copy of a "Contractor's Bond (Public Works)" for this project, dated 25 October 1921, that also states that the George H. Fuller Company entered into the contract on 26 September 1921.
- 1092 "Contract for Construction and Repair of Public Works," 26 Sep 1921.
- 1093 "Contract for Construction and Repair of Public Works," 26 Sep 1921.
- ¹⁰⁹⁴ HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 36.
- ¹⁰⁹⁵ Drawing, Carrère and Hastings, "Foundations Monument to the Unknown Dead Arlington Virginia," n.d., Unknown Soldier Completion of the Tomb—Original Plan by Thomas Hastings—1921–1927, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹⁰⁹⁶ In a 1931 letter replying to an inquiry from the Information Desk of the Dodge Hotel in Washington, DC, Maj. John T. Harris of the Quartermaster Corps noted that the grave was dug to "the usual depth of five feet"; ltr, Maj. John T. Harris to Fred J. May, 16 Feb 1931, War Dept. Subject Files 1921–47, entry 1890A, RG 92, NACP. The George H. Fuller Company eventually reported to Col. Penrose that it would have to excavate to a level of approximately ten feet below the lowest step to secure a stable foundation, a change the company outlined in terms of how it would affect the earlier cost estimates; ltr, James Baird to Col. George H. Penrose, n.d., General Correspondence ("Subject File"), entry 1890A, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹⁰⁹⁷ HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 36; Drawing, Carrère and Hastings, "Foundations Monument to the Unknown Dead."

- ¹⁰⁹⁸ Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces: Hearing before Subcommittee of House Committee on Appropriations, 67th Cong. (11 Oct 1921) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 13.
- ¹⁰⁹⁹ Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 13.
- ¹¹⁰⁰ Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 13–14.
- 1101 Ltr, George H. Penrose to Thomas Hastings, 21 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹¹⁰² Ltr, Penrose to Hastings, 21 Oct 1921. James Baird was vice president of the George H. Fuller Company; ltr, Baird to Penrose, n.d.
- 1103 Ltr, Thomas Hastings to Col. Penrose, 25 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.
- 1104 Ltr, Hastings to Penrose, 25 Oct 1921.
- 1105 Ltr, George H. Penrose to Thomas Hastings, 28 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, NACP,
- ¹¹⁰⁶ Ltr, Thomas Hastings to Col. Penrose, 31 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP; ltr, Thomas Hastings to Col. Penrose, 17 Nov 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP; two ltrs, Thomas Hastings to Col. Penrose, 1 Dec 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹¹⁰⁷ Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to the Chief of Finance, 13 Sep 1921, section 9 (Expenditures), box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- 1108 Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to the Quartermaster Gen, 16 Sep 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to the Chief of Staff, 22 Sep 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, John W. Weeks to the U.S. Comptroller Gen, 24 Sep 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; S. Rep. No. 67-285 (Providing Funds for Burial of Unknown Dead in Arlington), at 1 (1921).
- ¹¹⁰⁹ Ltr, Weeks to the U.S. Comptroller Gen, 24 Sep 1921; ltr, U.S. Comptroller Gen to the Secretary of War, 13 Oct 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹¹⁰ Ltr, John W. Weeks to Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, 4 Oct 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to the Chief of Staff, 4 Oct 1921, section 9, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹¹¹ S. Rep. No. 67-285 (Providing Funds for Burial of Unknown Dead in Arlington), at 1–2 (1921); H.R. Rep. No. 67-404 (Providing for the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier in the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater, Arlington, Va., on Armistice Day), at 1–2 (1921); Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces.
- 1112 Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 9.
- Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 9, and see 10–13; "Madden, Martin Barnaby," US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/17373 ((accessed 30 Oct. 30 2025).
- ¹¹¹⁴ Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 10.
- 1115 Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces, 15.
- ¹¹¹⁶ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier, Congressional Record 61 (15 Oct 1921): H6351.
- ¹¹¹⁷ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6351.
- ¹¹¹⁸ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6351.
- ¹¹¹⁹ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6351; *Expenses of Burial in Arlington Cemetery of Unknown Member of American Expeditionary Forces*, 2; "Byrns, Joseph Wellington," History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/B/BYRNS,-Joseph-Wellington-(B001217)/ (accessed 5 Aug 2025).
- ¹¹²⁰ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6351.
- ¹¹²¹ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- ¹¹²² Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- ¹¹²³ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- ¹¹²⁴ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- ¹¹²⁵ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- 1126 Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- 1127 "Blanton, Thomas Lindsay," History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives,
- https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/B/BLANTON,-Thomas-Lindsay-(B000549)/ (accessed 5 Aug 2025).
- ¹¹²⁸ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.
- ¹¹²⁹ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352.

- ¹¹³⁰ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6352–53.
- ¹¹³¹ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6353.
- ¹¹³² Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6353.
- 1133 Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6353; for more on the movement to focus commemoration on helping others, see Allison S. Finkelstein, *Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials: How American Women Commemorated the Great War, 1917–1945* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021).

 1134 For additional sources on this topic, see Allison S. Finkelstein, "Carry On: American Women and the Veteranist-Commemoration of the First World War, 1917–1945" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2015),
- ¹¹³⁵ "Connally, Thomas Terry (Tom)," History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/11312 (accessed 5 Aug 2025).
- ¹¹³⁶ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- ¹¹³⁷ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- 1138 Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- 1139 Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- ¹¹⁴⁰ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- ¹¹⁴¹ Burial of an Unknown American Soldier (15 Oct 1921), H6354.
- 1142 Joint Resolution Authorizing the Secretary of War to Expend from the Appropriation "Disposition of Remains of Officers, Soldiers, and Civilian Employees, 1922," S. Joint Res. 123, 42 Stat. 207 (1921). The Secretary of War also checked with the U.S. comptroller general to ensure that the \$50,000 for the sarcophagus could be properly charged against the appropriation "Disposition of Remains of Officers, Soldiers, and Civilian Employees, 1922"; ltr, John W. Weeks to the U.S. Comptroller Gen, ca. 22 Oct 1921, folder 293, box 2, entry 1894C, RG 92, NACP.

 1143 B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals* 1921–1969 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 9; War Department press release, "Invited Guests, Burial of Unknown Soldier,"

 No. 1, 19 Oct 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies Pertaining to the Burial of an Unknown American, November 11, 1921," 8 or 11 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- 1144 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," undated manuscript, 26, originally in the holdings of the Old Guard Museum, now in the collections of the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) (uploaded to Flickr by the Old Guard Museum, 8 Nov 2015,
- https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldguardmuseum/albums/72157660990491415/). It appears that this committee did not initially include an official representative from the Quartermaster Corps, which caused General Rogers to write to the assistant secretary of War on 19 September 1921 to request that Colonel Penrose be designated as a member, since, Rogers wrote, the Quartermaster Corps "has practically everything to do with this matter." Memo, H. L. Rogers to the Assistant Secretary of War, 19 Sep 1921, folder 293.1, box 8, entry NM-81-1941, RG 92, NACP. A few days later, General Lassiter explained to Rogers that Penrose had been serving as an associate member, and suggested that he be officially designated to this role. Memo, Wm. Lassiter to the Quartermaster Gen, "Committee on Arrangements for Ceremonies, November 11, 1921," 21 Sep 1921, folder 293.1, box 8, entry NM-81-1941, RG 92, NACP.
- ¹¹⁴⁵ Memo, John T. Axton for Major Fenton, 25 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁴⁶ Memo, Axton for Fenton, 25 Oct 1921; the circular in question was Cir 286, War Department, 24 Jul 1920, sub: Courtesies at Military Funerals, War Department Circulars, Series Lists, Project Files and Misc. DOD Insurances, Departmental Records Branch, RG 407.
- ¹¹⁴⁷ Memo for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Distribution of Circular 286, W.D. July 24, 1920," 26 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁴⁸ Cir 286, War Department, 24 Jul 1920.
- ¹¹⁴⁹ Orders to Maj. Edgar B. Colladay, 8 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁵⁰ Orders to Maj. Charles H. Steese, 8 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁵¹ Orders to 1st Lt. Henry J. Conner, 5 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Orders to 1st Lt. Thomas North, 5 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, 5 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Memo for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 7 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Memo for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 8 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. According to the *Marine Corps Gazette*, three companies of Marines,

including forty ushers, were stationed at the amphitheater and the cemetery, with two officers in charge of the ushers. *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (December 1921): 473.

- WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; Kirke Larue Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead is Laid Away," 11 Nov 1921, Service Bulletin of the Associated Press 64 (December 1921): 15. Today, when Tomb Guards "walk the mat" (conduct their ceremonial patrol) at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, they do not wear any rank so as to not outrank the Unknowns. Perhaps the motivation for the prohibition on service members wearing most awards on their uniforms during the 1921 events in the D.C. area came from a similar intention. Though the sources do not specify, there are certainly similarities between the current tradition at the Tomb and that 1921 directive. Phone interview, Sfc. Andrew D. Jay, 41st Sergeant of the Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, 27 Aug 2025.

 1153 War Department press release, "Invited Guests," 19 Oct 1921; memo for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Designation of Officers to Assist Commanding General, District of Washington, November 10 and 11, 1921," 19 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. According to the Marine Corps Gazette, one Marine officer was among those stationed at the Reception Bureau. Marine Corps Gazette 6, no. 4 (December 1921): 473.

 1154 "City Thronged as Plans Are Made by Nation to Honor Unknown Hero," Washington Post, 5 Nov 1921.

 1155 War Department press release, "Information for the Public Regarding Ceremonies of November 11, 1921," No. 2, 7 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- 1156 War Department press release, "Information for the Public," 7 Nov 1921.
- ¹¹⁵⁷ Memo for the Adjutant Gen, "Official Photographs and Motion Pictures to Be Taken on November 11th," 19 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁵⁸ "Individuals Who Have Lain in State or in Honor," History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives, https://history.house.gov/Institution/Lie-In-State/Lie-In-State-Honor/ (accessed 5 Aug 2025); "Lying in State or in Honor," Architect of the Capitol, https://www.aoc.gov/nations-stage/lying-state-honor (accessed 5 Aug 2025); "Henry Clay: A Featured Biography," U.S. Senate,

https://www.senate.gov/senators/FeaturedBios/Featured Bio Clay.htm (accessed 5 Aug 2025).

1159 "Lying in State or in Honor," Architect of the Capitol; "USS Olympia (Cruiser #6, CA-15, CL-15, IX-40)," National Museum of the U.S. Navy,

https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/nmusn/explore/photography/ships-us/ships-usn-o/uss-olympia-cruiser-6-ca-15-cl-15-ix-40.html (accessed 5 Aug 2025).

¹¹⁶⁰ "Lying in State or in Honor," Architect of the Capitol.

1161 "The Lincoln Catafalque in the U.S. Capitol," Architect of the Capitol, 15 Apr 2015,

https://www.aoc.gov/blog/lincoln-catafalque-us-capitol; "Lincoln Catafalque," Architect of the Capitol, https://www.aoc.gov/what-we-do/programs-ceremonies/lying-in-state-honor/lincoln-catafalque (accessed 5 Aug 2025).

- ¹¹⁶² War Department press release, "Catafalque on Which Body of Unknown American Soldier Will Lie in State at the Capitol," 4 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹¹⁶³ Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26.
- 1164 War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11; "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921; Kirke Larue Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 10 Nov 1921, *Service Bulletin of the Associated Press* 64 (December 1921): 7; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26.
- 1165 War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11; "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921; ltr, Chief of Coast Artillery to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 21 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Specifically, Major Gross had under his command details composed of one noncommissioned officer and four men each from the Army aviation, the field artillery, the coast artillery, and the infantry, as well as the Navy, Marine Corps, and District of Columbia National Guard. Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26; Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7. 1166 "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921.
- ¹¹⁶⁷ "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921. According to the *Marine Corps Gazette*, eight Marines and one noncommissioned Marine officer took part in the guard at the catafalque. Additionally, three

- companies of Marines under the command of Maj. Thomas S. Clarke served as guards on the Capitol grounds. "The March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (December 1921): 473.
- ¹¹⁶⁸ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7.
- 1169 "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times, 11 Nov 1921.
- ¹¹⁷⁰ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7. Evidence beyond this article to prove that African American soldiers were differently included has not yet been found.
- ¹¹⁷¹ "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921; "Harding & Taft at Bier of Unknown Soldier in Capitol," photograph, 9 Nov 1921, https://lccn.loc.gov/2016845814; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, reel 2, around 01:04, Historical Films, Compiled ca. 1914–ca. 1936, RG 111 (Rcds of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860–1985), NACP.
- ¹¹⁷² "Annex No. 2 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," 8 or 11 Oct 1921.
- ¹¹⁷³ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 2, around 00:55.
- 1174 Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 11.
- ¹¹⁷⁵ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26; War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921.
- ¹¹⁷⁶ "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown," *Washington Post*, 10 Nov 1921 (ceremony only lasted ten minutes); George Rothwell Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," *Washington Post*, 10 Nov 1921 (for silence); "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26.
- 1177 Kirke Larue Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 9 Nov 1921, Service Bulletin of the Associated Press 64 (December 1921): 4; Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 11.
- 1178 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 26–27; see also Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 11; Neil Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 344; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4. Several articles state that the Hardings were at the Rotunda at 5:30 that evening; see, e.g., Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier"; "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown," *Washington Post*.
- 1179 "Harding Places Roses on Bier of Unknown," *Washington Post*; see also "Mrs. Harding at Bier of Unknown Soldier," photograph, 9 Nov 1921, https://lccn.loc.gov/2016845817; "Harding & Taft at Bier of Unknown Soldier in Capitol," 9 Nov 1921; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, reel 2, around 00:40. However, Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," says that it was forty-nine stars on the shield, one for each state and the District of Columbia.
- 1180 Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4.
- ¹¹⁸¹ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 27; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4. However, Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," says that the wreath left by Coolidge and Gillett was of red and white flowers. The wreath presented by Congress was authorized through a concurrent resolution of 3 November 1921: Unknown Soldier, S. Concurrent Res. 14, 42 Stat. 1810 (1921). ¹¹⁸² Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4.
- ¹¹⁸³ Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 4. In the footage of Pershing's presentation of this wreath, the title card states: "General Pershing, the 'Father' of the Unknown Boy is called upon to fill the role of the 'nearest relative'"; see *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, first additional reel, at 07:10.
- 1184 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 27.
- ¹¹⁸⁵ War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 27; Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 5.
- ¹¹⁸⁶ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 6; "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," *New York Times*. Other newspaper reports also stated that the white roses from the selection ceremony remained on the casket; see, e.g., Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier."
- ¹¹⁸⁷ War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 6.
- 1188 "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times.
- ¹¹⁸⁹ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, reel 2, around 01:04.

- ¹¹⁹⁰ Miriam Felt's letter, dated 13 November 1921, is reproduced in full in Tiffini Theisen, "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Military.com, 1 Nov 2011, https://www.military.com/veterans-day/tomb-of-the-unknowns.html; the letter originally appeared on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website, but this page has since been removed.
- ¹¹⁹¹ Theisen, "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier."
- ¹¹⁹² James A. Hollomon, "Thousands Pass Bier of Unknown Soldier," *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 Nov 1921.
- 1193 Hollomon, "Thousands Pass Bier of Unknown Soldier."
- 1194 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 345; McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 183; Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda"; Kirke Larue Simpson, "River of Humanity Passes Catafalque," 10 Nov 1921, *Service Bulletin of the Associated Press* 64 (December 1921): 8; "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," *New York Times*. The Associate Press's figure of ninety to ninety-five thousand came from the Capitol Police. George Rothwell Brown, however, stated that two hundred thousand people came to the Capitol Rotunda; see Brown, "Tribute to Unknown Soldier Stirs Whole Country," *Washington Post*, 11 Nov 1921. 1195 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 29.
- 1196 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 29.
- ¹¹⁹⁷ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 5, 7.
- 1198 Hollomon, "Thousands Pass Bier of Unknown Soldier."
- 1199 "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times.
- 1200 Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 8.
- ¹²⁰¹ Simpson, "River of Humanity Passes Catafalque," 9; see also "America Today Attests Valor of Her Unknown Fighting Men," San Francisco Chronicle, 11 Nov 1921.
- ¹²⁰² H. G. Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies," *Baltimore Sun*, 13 Nov 1921; see also *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "H.G. Wells," last updated 9 Aug 2025, https://www.britannica.com/biography/H-G-Wells. ¹²⁰³ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 6–7; see also "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," *New York Times*.
- 1204 Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 8.
- 1205 Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7–8.

sources cited in this paragraph do not specify cancelations or changes.

- ¹²⁰⁶ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7. The Hoboken war mothers are noted as having a ceremony slot at the Rotunda in the following sources as well: "National Holiday on Armistice Day," *New York Times*, 3 Nov 1921; War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921.
- ¹²⁰⁷ War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; see also War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Capitol," No. 3, 28 Oct 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC. According to a *New York Times* article ahead of the Rotunda ceremonies, all groups were to receive time allotments for their ceremonies of no more than fifteen minutes, except for the Grand Army of the Republic, which was allowed forty minutes. See "National Holiday on Armistice Day," *New York Times*.
- War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Capitol for Unknown Dead," No. 1, 2 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 344–45.
 War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Capitol for Unknown Dead," No. 1, 2 Nov 1921; War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921. Various sources from different dates contained lists of the organizations allotted slots in the Rotunda; the
- 1210 War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Capitol for Unknown Dead," No. 1, 2 Nov 1921; War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Rotunda of Capitol for Unknown Dead on November 10th," No. 1, 7 Nov 1921; "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times; "Burial of Unknown Soldier," New York Times Mid-Week Pictorial 14, no. 12 (17 Nov 1921), ANCHRC. The group from the British Embassy arrived via an automobile process that included two motor trucks to carry the flowers. It was led by Arthur J. Balfour, head of the British delegation to Washington and a former prime minister, and included British ambassador Sir Auckland Geddes. This group brought a wreath from King George (Lord Cavan acted for him), a wreath from Canada, a wreath from Prime Minister David Lloyd George, a wreath from India, and a wreath from Australia and New Zealand. All the wreaths were created out of flowers grown on British soil and brought over as living plants, except for the wreath from India. Earl Beatty, Air Vice-Marshal Higgins, and others were also in attendance. Simpson,

- "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 5–6. The wreath from the king of England was composed of "red English roses, crowned at the top with a bunch of flowers made up from all the Dominions." "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," *New York Times*.
- ¹²¹¹ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7.
- ¹²¹² "The March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (Dec 1921): 473. The other Marine officers present included Maj. Gen. Wendell C. Neville, Maj. Richard B. Creecy, Capt. Lemuel C. Shepherd, and others. Marines were also in attendance with the delegation from the Second Division Association.
- ¹²¹³ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7.
- 1214 "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times.
- 1215 "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," New York Times.
- ¹²¹⁶ "About Us," Veterans of Foreign Wars, https://www.vfw.org/about-us (accessed 5 Aug 2025).
- ¹²¹⁷ War Department press release, "Ceremonies at Capitol," No. 3, 28 Oct 1921.
- ¹²¹⁸ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 29. On an official list of gifts, this statue is noted as having been given by the "President of the Republic of China & Chinese Nation." Record of Floral Tributes, section 6 (Floral Tributes), box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹²¹⁹ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda," 7; "90,000 Pay Honor to Our Unknown Lying in State," *New York Times*.
- ¹²²⁰ Scrapbook, "The Unknown Soldier Memorial Tributes 1921," Museum Case 1, History Office, ANCHRC. The *New York Times* reported that the wreaths presented at the Capitol were taken to Arlington in twelve large army trucks immediately after the coffin was removed from the Rotunda, at 8:30 a.m. They were placed inside Memorial Amphitheater and can be seen in photos. "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*, 12 Nov 1921. In addition to this scrapbook, the National Archives' records related to the burial contain comprehensive lists of the flowers, wreaths, gifts, medals, and other tributes left in honor of the Unknown Soldier both in France and in the United States. At least twenty pages of such lists can be found in Record of Floral Tributes, section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹²²¹ Scrapbook, "The Unknown Soldier Memorial Tributes 1921." The tribute to Gozzett is also listed in the "Record of Floral Tributes," which notes that it was a "Chrysanthemum spray," though the document includes numerous misspellings and records this tribute as being "In Memory of Ray Lozzett and Comrads of the 'Alcido." Record of Floral Tributes, section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Edward R. Gozzett, memorial certificate, American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/print/certificate/52367 (accessed 27 Aug 2025).

 ¹²²² See Gozzett, memorial certificate; "Alcedo (S. P. 166)," Naval History and Heritage Command, https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/a/alcedo.html (accessed 5 Aug 2025).
- 1223 Scrapbook, "The Unknown Soldier Memorial Tributes 1921."
- ¹²²⁴ Essel M. Maxwell, memorial certificate, American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/print/certificate/24370 (accessed 27 Aug 2025).
- less wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies." An official list of tributes received also indicates that many families of the war dead, known and unknown, came to the ceremonies. These tributes included: a floral wreath from the family of 1st Lt. Frank Martin Thompson, buried at St. Mihiel American Cemetery; one chrysanthemum left in memory of Richard Meeche by his mother (likely a misspelling of "Richard Wesche," who died on the Alcedo and is memorialized on the Tablets of the Missing at Brookwood American Cemetery); and one chrysanthemum given in memory of John W. Brunhlardt by his mother (likely a misspelling of "John W. Brunkhardt" who died on the Alcedo and is memorialized on the Tablets of the Missing at Brookwood American Cemetery). The tributes that contained chrysanthemums may all have been given by the families of those lost on the Alcedo. The list also notes the numbers of unmarked tributes. Record of Floral Tributes, section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Frank M. Thompson, memorial certificate, American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/print/certificate/96696 (accessed 27 Aug 2025); Richard Wesche, memorial certificate, American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/print/certificate/98326 (accessed 27 Aug 2025); John W. Brunkhardt, memorial certificate, American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/print/certificate/38150 (accessed 27 Aug 2025).
- 1226 Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- 1227 Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- 1228 Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."

- ¹²²⁹ "A Soldier Home from the Wars," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/article/soldier-home-wars (accessed 5 Aug 2025); "Kirke L. Simpson of *Associated Press*," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/kirke-l-simpson (accessed 5 Aug 2025); "1922 Pulitzer Prizes," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year/1922 (accessed 5 Aug 2025). The other journalist to win the 1922 Pulitzer Prize for a piece about the Unknown Soldier was Frank M. O'Brien of the *New York Herald*, who won in the editorial writing category.
- ¹²³⁰ Simpson, "Thousands Mourn Dead in Capitol Rotunda" 8; Elsewhere, he pointed out how many Gold Star mothers came wearing their gold pins to demarcate their status. Simpson, "River of Humanity Passes Catafalque," 9. ¹²³¹ Scrapbook, "The Unknown Soldier Memorial Tributes 1921."
- ¹²³² B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 13; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," undated manuscript, 30, originally in the holdings of the Old Guard Museum, now in the collections of the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) (uploaded to Flickr by the Old Guard Museum, 8 Nov 2015,

https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldguardmuseum/albums/72157660990491415/).

- ¹²³³ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 30. Other reports that mentioned the early morning haze include: George Rothwell Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier," *Washington Post*, 12 Nov 1921; "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*, 12 Nov 1921; Tiffini Theisen, "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Military.com, 1 Nov 2011, https://www.military.com/veterans-day/tomb-of-the-unknowns.html.
- 1234 "Unfading Glory," Ashburn Guardian (New Zealand), 12 Nov 1921.
- ¹²³⁵ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, historical film n. 1137, ca. 1921–36, reel 2, around 5:30–6:00, Historical Films, Compiled ca. 1914–ca. 1936, RG 111 (Rcds of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860–1985), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP); "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 30; Kirke Larue Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 11 Nov 1921, Service Bulletin of the Associated Press 64 (December 1921): 15.
- Service Bulletin of the Associated Press 64 (December 1921): 15.

 1236 Memo, Adjutant Gen of the Army to the Commanding Gen, 3d Corps Area, Fort Howard, MD, "Troops to Participate in Ceremonies November 11, 1921 (H.J. No. 426)," 15 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, Record Group (RG) 407 (Reds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), NACP.
- ¹²³⁷ Memo, Adjutant Gen of the Army to the Commanding Gen, 3d Corps Area, 15 Sep 1921; Memo, Wm. Lassiter for the Quartermaster Gen, "Cost of Movement of Troops and Individuals Attending Ceremonies to Be Held in Connection with Burial of an Unidentified American Who Lost His Life in the World War," 16 Sep 1921, box 8, entry NM-81-1941 (Correspondence Relating to Cemeteries), RG 92 (Rcds of the Ofc of the Quartermaster Gen), NACP.
- 1238 Memo, War Department Office of the Chief of Staff for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Troops to Participate in Ceremonies November 11, 1921 (H.J. No. 426)," 29 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
 1239 See "Office of the Chief of Army Reserve," Army Reserve, https://www.usar.army.mil/OCAR/ (accessed 22 Aug 2025); homepage, Army Reserve, https://www.usar.army.mil/ (accessed 22 Aug 2025); "Guide to Federal Records: Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (World War I)," National Archives, https://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/120.html (accessed 22 Aug 2025); Brian Neumann, ed., *The U.S. Army in the World War I Era* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2017), 30. During World War I, what eventually evolved into the modern-day U.S. Army Reserve was known as the National Army and was part of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). With the passage of the National Defense Act of 1920, just one year before the Tomb's creation, it became the Organized Reserve.
- ¹²⁴⁰ Memo, Adjutant Gen of the Army to the Commanding Gen, 3d Corps Area, 15 Sep 1921.
- Memo, War Department Chief of Staff for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Funeral Escort, Burial of Unknown American, November 11, 1921," 18 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; Neil Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 346.
- 1242 Memo, War Department Office of the Chief of Staff for the Adjutant Gen, "Ceremonies for the Unknown Dead—November 11, 1921," 17 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. This memo details that troops sent to participate in ceremonies must be given reception, housing or camping, medical care, and \$10. It also details logistics for the participants and lists those who are invited at government expense (Medal of Honor recipients, etc.).

¹²⁵⁰ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13; "Annex No. 3 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies Pertaining to the Burial of an Unknown American," ca. 11 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, "Order of March, November 11th," ca. 14 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁵¹ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921. An article in the *Marine Corps Gazette* stated that one company from Quantico marched in the procession and that the procession included one officer and enlisted man from the "Line, Adjutant and Inspector's Department, Paymaster's Department Quartermaster Department, and Aviation." "March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (Dec 1921): 473.

¹²⁵² Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14. A press release from 9 November 1921 listed these units in a slightly different way, and indicated that the D.C. National Guard Engineer Battalion was part of the composite unit. The Last Salute also lists this in a chart (p. 14), but the format and spacing of the 9 November press release makes it unclear whether the composite unit also included the 2d Battalion, 3d Field Artillery, and the 2d Squadron, 3d Cavalry, or whether those units and the engineer battalion were separate from the composite unit. War Department press release, "Order of the Procession," No. 1, 9 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, Historical Research Collection, Arlington National Cemetery (ANCHRC). George S. Patton, then serving with the 3d Cavalry at Fort Myer, participated in some of the events on the day of the burial, although the exact details remain somewhat unclear. While our team pieced together as much information as we could (cited in this endnote), our team's contract historian, Kevin Hymel, was not able to find any firsthand accounts by Patton that might provide further clarification in his diaries or letters at the Library of Congress. What follows is a summary of the information we could obtain. Martin Blumenson's The Patton Papers: 1885-1940 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 755-56, states that Patton attended the burial while on duty the day of the funeral, and that he later received letters of appreciation regarding the 3d Cavalry's participation in the procession and the events of 9 November, but details are vague. According to The Patton Papers, Patton led the 3d Squadron of the 3d Cavalry at the time. However, other sources identify different squadrons of the 3d Cavalry as having taken part in the procession, and some even list Patton as commanding these different squadrons, making it difficult to determine both which squadron Patton led and which squadron took part in the procession. The timeline in the Library of Congress's Finding Aid to the Patton Papers (https://www.loc.gov/collections/george-s-patton-diaries/articles-and-essays/timeline/, accessed 20 Aug 2025) states that Patton commanded the 1st Squadron of the 3d Cavalry at the time of the funeral. But *The Last* Salute (p. 14) states that it was the "2d Squadron, 3d Cavalry, Fort Myer, Virginia" that participated in the procession, although it does not name a commander of that unit. A Washington Post article from 11 November 1921 ("Order of March in Hero Cortege") named "Maj. G.S. Patton" as commanding a squadron of cavalry in the procession, but did not specify which one, while the War Department press release "Order of the Procession," no. 1, 9 Nov 1921, states that Patton commanded the 2d Squadron, 3d Cavalry. We are thus reasonably certain that Patton participated in the procession, but it remains unclear which squadron he commanded.

1253 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14

¹²⁵³ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921; "A Finding Aid to the Morris S. Lazaron Papers, Manuscript Collection No. 71," American Jewish Archives, https://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/ms/ms0071/ms0071.html (accessed 20 Aug 2025);

¹²⁴³ Indeed, the Associated Press mentioned that the procession included motorcycle police who rode ahead of General Bandholtz (at the head of the procession), although it did not specify whether they were D.C. police. Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 15.

¹²⁴⁴ J. M. Wainwright to President, DC Board of Commissioners, 30 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁴⁵ Wainwright to President, DC Board of Commissioners, 30 Sep 1921.

¹²⁴⁶ Wainwright to President, DC Board of Commissioners, 30 Sep 1921.

^{1247 &}quot;100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," New York Times.

¹²⁴⁸ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 30.

¹²⁴⁹ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13; Kirke Larue Simpson, "Ceremonies at Capitol and March to Cemetery," 11 Nov 1921, *Service Bulletin of the Associated Press* 64 (December 1921): 12; "Plan for the Selection, Transportation, and Burial of an Unidentified American Soldier," n.d., 3, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 183. Another document noted that the casket was taken down the steps of the Capitol at 8:30 a.m.; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 30.

"Charles Henry Brent Papers, 1860–1991," Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/mm78023564/ (accessed 20 Aug 2025). Sources refer to Brent variously as "senior chaplain" and "chief chaplain."

¹²⁵⁴ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921; War Department press release, "Order of the Procession," No. 1, 9 Nov 1921.

¹²⁵⁵ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 31; Simpson, "Ceremonies at Capitol and March to Cemetery," 12.

¹²⁵⁶ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921.

¹²⁵⁷ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922; ltr, R. Adm. Simms to the War Department, 7 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Adjutant Gen of the Army to R. Adm. C. S. Williams, 5 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁵⁸ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922.

- ¹²⁵⁹ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 183; "Nation's Nameless Hero Now Rests in Arlington," *Standard Union Brooklyn*, 11 Nov 1921. Another source stated that Wilson's intended spot was to have been behind the vice president and ahead of the Supreme Court justices; ltr, John Weeks to George N. Christian Jr., ca. 24 Feb 24, 1922, section 12, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. The issue of Wilson's spot in the procession ended up becoming a source of controversy, with accusations that Wilson had been snubbed, a mistruth the War Department contested. Sources can be found in: section 12, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. ¹²⁶⁰ Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 16.
- ¹²⁶¹ "Unfading Glory," *Ashburn Guardian*. This article also claimed that Wilson "said he felt embarrassed that there should be applause on such an occasion."
- ¹²⁶² "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times, 12 Nov 1921.
- ¹²⁶³ "Burial of Unknown Soldier," *New York Times Mid-Week Pictorial* 14, no. 12 (17 Nov 1921), ANCHRC. The information about people going to Wilson's home was corroborated in "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*.

¹²⁶⁴ Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Attendance at the Ceremonies Connected with the Burial of the Unknown American, November 11, 1921.—Medal of Honor Holders," 17 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Since all living Medal of Honor recipients had initially been invited at the government's expense, a letter had to be sent to recall that invitation after the funding was reduced, a situation that the adjutant general later described as one that "created much dissatisfaction." Some holders did not receive the letter explaining that their expenses would not be paid and came under the assumption they would be reimbursed. After the funeral, the War Department explored repaying the expenses of the Medal of Honor recipients who paid their own way, since sufficient funds remained, but because that could cause anger among those who had declined because they could not pay their own way, that course of action was not approved, and only those men who came in good faith without receipt of the subsequent letter were ultimately repaid by the government; see memo, Adjutant Gen for the Chief of Staff, "Transportation of Medal of Honor Holders," 14 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, "Transportation of Medal of Honor Holders," 16 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Hanson, Unknown Soldiers, 347. ¹²⁶⁵ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 13–14; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921. In both a War Department press release and the invitation sent to the Medal of Honor recipients, they were described as being among "the official mourners who will follow the remains from the Capitol to Arlington Cemetery," indicating that most, if not all, of those in the procession were counted as being official mourners. War Department press release, "Attendance of Medal of Honor Men at Interment of Unknown Soldier at Arlington," 23 Sep 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Adjutant Gen of the Army to [Medal of Honor recipient], "Burial of an Unknown Dead at Arlington Cemetery," 7 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁶⁶ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 14–15; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921; ltr, John W. Weeks to Gov. Thomas E. Campbell of Arizona, 27 Sep 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Originally, the states could send one man for every ten thousand service members they provided during the war, but that changed to just three men per state by 4 October 1921; memo, Brig. Gen. J. H. McRae for the Adjutant Gen, 4 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

1267 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 14–15; memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921; memo for the Adjutant Gen, "Participation in Exercises—Burial of Unknown Dead," 11 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. The Georgetown University cadets were ROTC students under the leadership of William H. Hobson, professor of military science and tactics. Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to the Adjutant Gen, 20 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; see also "History," Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps, https://armyrotc.army.mil/history/ (accessed 22 Aug 2025); "The Hoya Battalion," Georgetown University, https://rotc.georgetown.edu/ (accessed 22 Aug 2025). The War Department provided specific points of assembly for each of the organizations in this part of the procession, indicating exactly where they were to report at 7:45 a.m.; War Department, "Assembling Points for Funeral Procession in Honor of Unknown," n.d., Unknown Soldier—WWI—Program, box 12, ANCHRC.

¹²⁶⁸ Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921.

¹²⁶⁹ H. G. Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies," *Baltimore Sun*, 13 Nov 1921.

¹²⁷⁰ Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921.

¹²⁷¹ Philip Kinsley, "Parade Throng Greets Wilson with Applause," San Francisco Chronicle, 12 Nov 1921.

¹²⁷² Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921.

¹²⁷³ Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921. The National War Mothers was most likely an incorrect name for the American War Mothers organization, which can be seen marching in the procession in Signal Corps photos.

¹²⁷⁴ "National Holiday on Armistice Day," New York Times, 3 Nov 1921.

1275 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.

¹²⁷⁶ Kinsley, "Parade Throng Greets Wilson with Applause."

¹²⁷⁷ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 14–16.

¹²⁷⁸ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922; "Program for the President and Distinguished Guests November 11," ca. 11 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 16; "Map of the Arlington, Va. National Cemetery Showing Drives," 1927, https://lccn.loc.gov/89692751.

¹²⁷⁹ Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 16; "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," New York Times; Merriam-Webster, s.v. "flivver," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/flivver (accessed 20 Aug 2025). For more on the traffic jam, see Harry N. Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb," Washington Post, 12 Nov 1921. Traffic and parking seemed to be an issue throughout the day of the funeral. In addition to the traffic jam that snarled the roads before the ceremony, traffic plagued the aftermath of the events at Arlington as well. In one notable example found in the National Archives, French premier Aristide Briand, accompanied by three members of the American Secret Service, arrived at the amphitheater in time for the funeral ceremony despite the congestion on the Highway Bridge, but his car had to be parked some distance away as the parking for dignitaries could not be located. After the ceremonies concluded, the Secret Service could not move his car because of the many cars and confusion surrounding it, and Briand, one Secret Service officer, and other members of Briand's delegation apparently decided to make their own way out and hitched a ride to the Willard Hotel in Washington with a private citizen. The embarrassing incident was brought to the attention of the War Department, and after an investigation, Brig. Gen. A. W. Brewster concluded that "there was great congestion of traffic from the approaches to the Highway Bridge through to Arlington. There appeared to be no system for parking automobiles in the cemetery, resulting in great confusion in locating cars upon the conclusion of the ceremonies." Ltr, John G. Muir to the Secretary of War, 12 Nov 1921, section 13, box 365, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo for Col. Barnhardt, G-3, 15 Nov 1921, section 13, box 365, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 17 Nov 1921, section 13, box 365, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; rpt, Brig. Gen. A. W. Brewster to War Department, 22 Nov 1921, section 13, box 365, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Apparently, the issue with Briand may not have been isolated, as one after-action report noted that several foreign delegations could not find their transportation after the funeral amid the chaos and were transported back to Washington by "disinterested civilians." Memo, Col. G. C. Barnhardt to Gen. Lassiter, "Observations November 10th and 11th, 1921, with Suggestions for Possible Improvements in Future," Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁸⁰ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922. The Associated Press wrote that Pershing had originally been planned to serve as grand marshal at the head of the funeral escort, but preferred to walk on foot near the casket and serve as the chief mourner once President Harding got into

his car to the cemetery. Simpson, "Ceremonies at Capitol and March to Cemetery," 12; Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 14.

locusted of "about 190 pieces (including 80 musics)." This article also noted that the Marine Band joined the procession at "Confederate Gate," which may have been an unofficial term for "West Gate," now known as Selfridge Gate. *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (Dec 1921): 473. However, it is unclear whether this account is accurate, as it contradicts other sources, such as "Annex No. 3 to Basic Plan for the Ceremonies," circa 11 October 1921, which stated that "the Marine Band will be in place, at the proper time at the Arlington Gate of the Cemetery, where it will join the procession when it reforms at that point." This is closer to the description in *The Last Salute* (p. 16), which says that the Marine Band replaced the Army Band at the Aqueduct Bridge and that the procession entered the cemetery at the "Arlington (Fort Myer) Gate." However, it is not clear from that document whether the Marine Band joined the procession at the entrance to the Aqueduct Bridge or at the terminus of that bridge once across the river on the Virginia side. As a result, it is difficult to definitively determine where the Marine Band joined the procession and which gate the procession used to enter the cemetery, although examination of the motion picture footage and sources in this chapter has led to the conclusion that the procession likely used the Arlington (Fort Myer) Gate. Today, this gate is interchangeably called Fort Myer Gate, Old Post Chapel Date, and Guard House Gate. "Fort Myer Gate and Guard House/Old Post Chapel Gate Cultural Resources Awareness Brief," n.d., ANC.

¹²⁸² Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 14–16. Several sources stated that at some point during or after the procession's arrival at Arlington National Cemetery, Chopin's Funeral March was played, but the exact timing of this moment is unclear; see, e.g., "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; "The March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette* 6, no. 4 (Dec 1921): 473.

¹²⁸³ The War Department received a steady stream of inquiries from people in search of tickets, many of whom it could not accommodate. Evidence of this in the form of numerous letters and telegrams can be found in folder 13 (Correspondence re Misc Matters Considered of Minor Importance), box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; see also Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier."

Ltr, Adjutant Gen to Rep. B. G. Lowrey, 25 Oct 1921, folder 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
 War Department press release, "Distinguished Guests, Burial of Unknown Soldier," No. 1, 15 Oct 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
 War Department press release, "Distinguished Guests, Burial of Unknown Soldier," No. 1, 15 Oct 1921. The commissioners of the District of Columbia also presented a floral tribute to the Unknown Soldier. Ltr, John Weeks

to D.C. Commissioners, ca. 11 Nov 1921, section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

New Department press release, "Invited Guests, Burial of Unknown Soldier," No. 1, 19 Oct 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC. Initially, the government had planned to pay the expenses of any Medal of Honor recipient who wished to attend the burial ceremony and invited them to do so. However, after a ruling by the comptroller of the Treasury, restrictions were placed on spending for the events, and plans had to be changed so that only Medal of Honor recipients from the recent war would be reimbursed if they attended the ceremonies. New letters were sent in October 1921 informing the invitees of the change and lack of reimbursement, but some Medal of Honor recipients from wars other than World War I still attended and wanted to be reimbursed, causing a headache for the War Department after the burial. Memo, Lassiter for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 17 Oct 1921; ltr, John W. Weeks to Senator Francis E. Warren, 23 Feb 1922, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Additionally, Rep. Melville Kelly introduced legislation (H. Joint Res. 214) into the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations in October 1921 "to provide for the expenses of veterans of the Civil War who have been awarded congressional medals of honor attending burial of unknown soldier in Arlington National Cemetery." The legislation does not appear to have moved forward as the policy did not change. Public Bills, Resolutions, and Memorials, 67th Cong., *Congressional Record* 61, pt. 7 (28 Oct 1921): H6977.

to the public, the War Department devised a complex, color-coded process for identifying the tickets themselves, arranging the audience in different sections of the amphitheater, and handling other details. Plans from October even indicated that those in the box seats would receive a special engraved ticket. Memo, George H. Penrose, Chief of the Cemeterial Division, to the Quartermaster Supply Office, Washington Intermediate Depot, "Tickets for Memorial Services for Unknown American Dead." 6 Oct 1921, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.

¹²⁸⁹ War Department press release, "Invited Guests," 19 Oct 1921; ltr, Weeks to Campbell, 27 Sep 1921; ltr, John Weeks to Gov. Thomas G. McRae of Arkansas, 27 Sep 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Similar letters written to other governors can also be found in this same folder (section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407). The change to three representatives per state was attributed to "unforeseen contingencies," but was likely due to the reduction in funds. A telegram was sent to each governor to convey this change. Weeks to Gov. Thomas E. Kilby of Alabama, 4 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, McRae for the Adjutant Gen, 4 Oct 1921.

¹²⁹⁰ War Department press release, "Invited Guests," 19 Oct 1921.

1291 Memo for the Chief of Staff, "Allotment of Seats in the Amphitheater for Ceremony on November 11, 1921," Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Adjutant Gen for Col. Barnhardt, 12 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 12 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; memo, Adjutant Gen of the Army for the Quartermaster Gen, "List of Relatives of Unknown Dead," 15 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. In other correspondence, these letters were indicated to be directed to the "relatives" of the unknown dead, not just the parents, and a form asked for those accepting tickets to indicate their relationship. The government could not pay the expenses for their attendance. Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "Nearest Relatives of Unknown Dead," 10 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; sample circular ltr from P. C. Harris for relatives of the unknown dead, 12 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, John W. Weeks to Carl Hayden, 30 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Carl Hayden to the Secretary of War, 22 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁹² Sample circular ltr from Harris, 12 Oct 1921.

1293 Ltr, Weeks to Hayden, 30 Nov 1921; ltr, Hayden to the Secretary of War, 22 Nov 1921.

1294 "At the Shrine of an Unknown Soldier," New York Tribune, 6 Nov 1921.

¹²⁹⁵ Frank M. O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier," *New York Herald*, 11 Nov 1921; see also "Frank M. O'Brien of *New York Herald*," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/frank-m-obrien (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "1922 Pulitzer Prizes," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year/1922 (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Unknown Soldier' Theme Wins Prizes," *New York Times*, 22 May 1922.

¹²⁹⁶ Memo for the Chief of Staff, "Allotment of Seats," Oct 1921; ltr, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Edwin Bettelheim Jr., Chairman, National Legislative Committee, Veterans of Foreign Wars, 18 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹²⁹⁷ War Department press release, "Representations of Veterans Societies at Burial of Unknown American," No. 3, 5 Oct 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC.

¹²⁹⁸ War Department press release, "Representations of Veterans Societies," No. 3, 5 Oct 1921. In a letter written shortly after the service, assistant secretary of War J. M. Wainwright described the process for inviting organizations to the ceremony by explaining that invitations were sent to the "more prominent war veteran and patriotic societies whose names and addresses were of record in the War Department. In addition, through the press, applications to have invitations extended were requested, thus giving all organizations an opportunity to state that they desired to participate." Ltr, J. M. Wainwright to E. L. Harvey, 18 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. One example of the War Department's outreach through the press can be found in the 23 October 1921 edition of the *New York Times*. At the end of an article describing the upcoming ceremonies, organizations interested in bestowing tributes to the Unknown were provided with the mailing address to which they should direct such inquiries. "Tribute Prepared for America's Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*, 23 Oct 1921.

1299 War Department press release, "Invited Guests," 19 Oct 1921; ltr, Lassiter to Bettelheim, 18 Oct 1921; ltr, John W. Weeks to Maj. John G. Emery, National Commander, American Legion, 18 Oct 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. While organizations like the American Legion received no limit on how many members could march in the procession, they did receive limited tickets to the amphitheater. Even so, the allotment for the American Legion, for example, was generous, with forty-nine tickets provided for members chosen by the organization as well as a box with sixteen seats for present and past commanders.

1300 Ltr, J. A. Gregg to Secretary Weeks, 17 Nov 1921, folder 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹³⁰¹ Ltr, John W. Weeks to J. A. Gregg, 29 Nov 1921, folder 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹³⁰² Ltr, Weeks to Gregg, 29 Nov 1921.

1303 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.

1304 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*. Civilian women supported the war effort in various ways in the United States and overseas through the numerous "Y" organizations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Young Women's Hebrew Association (YWHA). See David E. Kaufman, "Young Women's Hebrew Association," *The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, 20 Mar 2009, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/young-womens-hebrew-association; Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider, *Into the Breach: American Women Overseas in World War I* (New York: Viking, 1991); Lettie Gavin, *American Women on World War I: They also Served* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 1997); Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Nancy Marie Robertson, *Christian Sisterhood, Race Relations, and the YWCA, 1906–46* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

1305 "Plan for the Selection, Transportation, and Burial of an Unidentified American Soldier," n.d., 3. For a detailed analysis of the use of the amplification system at the funeral and Harding's speech in the context of American empire, the technology of sound, modernity, and communicative memory, see Shannon Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863–1921* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 275–300. According to the *Washington Post*, Albert E. Berry, president of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone, submitted the initial plans for the use of this system to President Harding. "Million May Hear Harding Address," *Washington Post*, 9 Oct 1921.

- 1306 "Amplifying the Voice," n.d., AT&T Archives and History Center, Warren, NJ.
- 1307 "Amplifying the Voice," n.d.
- 1308 "Million May Hear Harding Address," Washington Post.
- ¹³⁰⁹ Memo for the Adjutant Gen, "Restriction of Use of Aeroplanes during Ceremonies on November 11, 1921, at Arlington National Cemetery," 20 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹³¹⁰ "Bugle's Off-Key Note in Arlington Causes Blush in Far New York," Washington Post, 10 Nov 1921.
- ¹³¹¹ McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 185; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 350. Many photos of Memorial Amphitheater on the day of the funeral, as well as the motion picture footage of the event, show thick crowds surrounding the amphitheater. *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 3.
- ¹³¹² "Amplifying the Voice," n.d. New Zealand's *Ashburn Guardian* went so far as to claim that "the crowds overflowed the amphitheater to a distance of a mile." "Unfading Glory," *Ashburn Guardian*; see also Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 275. The *New York Times* noted that "tens of thousands were gathered around the amphitheater." "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; see also "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*.
- ¹³¹³ "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*. This article also noted that people had traveled to the ceremonies from areas beyond the immediate D.C. area, based on the license tags of the motorcars.
- the Voice," n.d.; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 275; Program, "Armistice Day Ceremonies under the Auspices of the American Legion and New York Patriotic and Civic Societies," 11 Nov 1921, AT&T Archives and History Center, Warren, NJ. The New York program explained that "accouchement will be made from Arlington over long distance telephone amplifiers," and it included an acknowledgments section that stated how "the patriotic zeal and scientific enterprise of the American Telephone and Telegraph company has made it possible for audiences in New York and San Francisco to hear all that takes place today at Arlington." Telephone wires were also mentioned in "Unfading Glory," *Ashburn Guardian*. Earlier newspaper reports from October 1921 included Chicago in the list of cities to receive the broadcast, but "Amplifying the Voice" and other sources do not mention Chicago. See "Million May Hear Harding Address," *Washington Post*; "Tribute Prepared for America's Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*.
- ¹³¹⁵ "Amplifying the Voice," n.d. Numbers for the audiences are estimates and cannot be definitively confirmed. Bontrager stated that fifty thousand people heard the ceremony at Madison Square Garden, and twenty-two thousand in San Francisco. Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 275.
- ¹³¹⁶ Associated Press, "New York Has Part in Rites for Hero," *Washington Post*, 12 Nov 1921; see also "Amplifying the Voice," n.d.; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 298.
- 1317 "San Francisco Heard Address of Harding," Parsons (KS) Daily Republican, 12 Nov 1921.
- ¹³¹⁸ "Bugle and Taps Were Heard in New York," Parsons (KS) Daily Republican, 12 Nov 1921.
- ¹³¹⁹ Program, "Armistice Day Ceremonies under the Auspices of the American Legion," 11 Nov 1921.

- 1325 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- 1326 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- ¹³²⁸ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 11; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*. One document says that the choir was gathered on the steps of the east entrance to the amphitheater; see "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 32. The choir was under the direction of Adolph Torovsky, who had served in the Naval Academy Band during World War I. Ltr, Brig. Gen William Lassiter to Adolf [*sic*] Torovsky, 14 Nov 1921, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Choir & Music," Church of the Epiphany, https://epiphanydc.org/choir-music/ (accessed 6 Sep 2025); "Church of the Epiphany Church," American Guild of Organists District of Columbia Chapter, http://www.dcago.org/epiphany.html (accessed 6 Sep 2025); "Naval Academy Band: History," United States Naval Academy, https://www.usna.edu/USNABand/about/history.php (accessed 6 Sep 2025).
- ¹³²⁹ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 16–17; "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 3; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; "The March of Events," <u>Marine Corps Gazette</u>, 473. These sources differ about which song the Marine Band played as the casket was lifted from the caisson and brought into the amphitheater. "The March of Events" said that it was "Our Illustrious Dead," while "Solemn Journey of the Dead" said that it was Chopin's Funeral March, which "The March of Events" had noted as being played as the military escort approached the amphitheater. The program for the funeral only stated that the Marine Band would play "appropriate music."
- 1330 "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 3.
- ¹³³¹ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922; "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 3; "The March of Events," *Marine Corps Gazette*, 473.
- 1332 Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17.
- 1333 "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 32.
- ¹³³⁴ Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier"; Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 18; Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb."
- ¹³³⁵ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17. According to the program, the president and First Lady were supposed to enter the amphitheater at 11:50 a.m. "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4.
- 1336 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- 1337 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- ¹³³⁸ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 3. The program described it as a "trumpet," but Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 18, called it a bugle. For more on the nationwide observance of the silence, see Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 348–49.
- ¹³³⁹ "Annex No. 4 to Basic Plan for Ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery on November 11, 1921," 7 Oct 1921, 2, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹³⁴⁰ Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 18.
- 1341 "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," New York Times.
- ¹³⁴² Logbook, USS *Olympia*, 11 Nov 1921, 774, Logbooks of U.S. Navy Ships, RG 24 (Rcds of the Bureau of Naval Personnel), National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB), https://catalog.archives.gov/id/148844639.
- ¹³⁴³ "Services for Unknown Soldier," *New York Times*, 17 Oct 1921. For more on the Keith-Albee circuit, see: M. Alison Kibler, "The Keith/Albee Collection: The Vaudeville Industry, 1894–1935, Iowa University Libraries Special Collections and Archives, https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/msc/tomsc400/msc356/kibler.htm

¹³²⁰ Program, "Armistice Day Ceremonies under the Auspices of the American Legion," 11 Nov 1921; see also Associated Press, "New York Has Part in Rites for Hero."

¹³²¹ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial of an Unknown and Unidentified American Soldier Who Lost His Life during the World War," n.d., 4, Unknown Soldier WWI Program, box 12, ANCHRC.

¹³²² War Department press release, "Program for the President and Distinguished Guests," No. 6, 7 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d., section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹³²³ Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17; "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d.

¹³²⁴ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 3.

(accessed 20 Aug 2025); Frank Cullen, Vaudeville Old & New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America, vol. 1 (New York: Routledge, 2007), 600.

- 1344 "Unfading Glory," Ashburn Guardian.
- 1345 "Whole City Pauses to Reverence Hero," Standard Union Brooklyn, 11 Nov 1921.
 1346 "Whole City Pauses to Reverence Hero," Standard Union Brooklyn. In New York City, an Americanization parade led by veterans also took place in the afternoon. Associated Press, "New York Has Part in Rites for Hero"; Bontrager, Death at the Edges of Empire, 294–95. For more on Wingate and Victory Hall, see the discussion in chapter 4.
- 1347 "City Pays Silent Tribute to Dead," New York Times, 12 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁴⁸ Associated Press, "New York Has Part in Rites for Hero."
- 1349 Mossman and Stark, The Last Salute, 17; War Department press release, "Program for the President and Distinguished Guests," No. 6, 7 Nov 1921; "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4. The program did not mention the two bugle blasts, but they were included in the plan for the funeral service in the press release cited here.
- ¹³⁵⁰ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 3.
- ¹³⁵¹ War Department press release, "The Secretary of War's Address at the Ceremonies in Honor of the Unknown Dead in the Amphitheater at Arlington, Introducing the President of the United States," No. 2, 10 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Program, box 12, ANCHRC.
- ¹³⁵² War Department press release, "The Secretary of War's Address at the Ceremonies," No. 2, 10 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁵³ War Department press release, "The Secretary of War's Address at the Ceremonies," No. 2, 10 Nov 1921.
- 1354 For an analysis of Harding's speech in the context of American imperialism, its allusions to the Lincolnian tradition, and communicative memory, see Bontrager, Death at the Edges of Empire, 275–300.
- 1355 Warren G. Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier at Arlington Cemetery, November 11, 1921 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 3.
- ¹³⁵⁶ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 3.
- ¹³⁵⁷ McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 184–85.
- 1358 "Era of Restriction," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, last updated 24 Jan 2025,

https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/explore-agency-history/overview-of-agency-history/era-of-restriction; "United States Immigration and Refugee Law, 1921–1980," Holocaust Encyclopedia,

https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/united-states-immigration-and-refugee-law-1921-1980 (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 3.

1359 "United States Immigration and Refugee Law, 1921–1980," Holocaust Encyclopedia; "The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)," Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State,

https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change through 2065 (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2015), chap. 1.

- ¹³⁶⁰ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 3.
- ¹³⁶¹ Memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁶² "Nation's Nameless Hero Now Rests in Arlington," Standard Union Brooklyn. The poppy served as a symbol of remembrance for the First World War, due to the many poppies that grew along the Western Front, and to the influence of Canadian John McCrae's 1915 poem "In Flanders Fields." See "Moina Michael," Women on Stamps, Smithsonian National Postal Museum, https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/women-on-stamps-part-2professionals-and-philanthropists-enhancing-lives/moina-michael (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Why We Wear Poppies on Remembrance Day," Imperial War Museums, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/why-we-wear-poppies-onremembrance-day (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹³⁶³ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 4.
- ¹³⁶⁴ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 5.
- ¹³⁶⁵ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 6.
- ¹³⁶⁶ Harding, Address of the President of the United States at the Burial, 4.
- 1367 McElya, The Politics of Mourning, 171.
- 1368 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times; see also Kirke Larue Simpson, "Bugles Sound Taps for Warrior's Requiem," 11 Nov 1921, Service Bulletin of the Associated Press 64 (December 1921): 23.
- ¹³⁶⁹ Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 290–92.

¹³⁷⁰ Associated Press, "New York Has Part in Rites for Hero."

- ¹³⁷¹ "Amplifying the Voice," n.d.
- ¹³⁷² Ltr, Warren G. Harding to Harry B. Thayer, 17 Nov 1921, AT&T Archives and History Center, Warren, NJ.
- 1373 Ltr, Harding to Thayer, 17 Nov 1921.
- 1374 Ltr, Harding to Thayer, 17 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁷⁵ Ltr, Harding to Thayer, 17 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁷⁶ Ltr, John W. Weeks to H. B. Thayer, ca. 15–16 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹³⁷⁷ Ltr, Weeks to Thayer, ca. 15–16 Nov 1921.
- ¹³⁷⁸ For more on the funeral and modern sound, see Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 288–91. For an analytical summary of the concept of a modern soundscape, see Emily Thompson, "Sound, Modernity, and History," in *The Sound Studies Reader*, ed. Jonathan Sterne (New York: Routledge, 2012), 117–19.
- ¹³⁷⁹ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; ltr, William Lassiter to Edward Ziegler, 25 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d. According to this program, the Metropolitan Opera quartet included: Rosa Ponselle, Jeanne Gordon, Morgan Kingston, and William Gustafson.
- ¹³⁸⁰ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; "Description of Medals," Military Awards for Valor—Top 3, https://valor.defense.gov/Description-of-Awards/ (accessed 5 Sep 2025); Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17. Authorization to award the Unknown Soldier both the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross "with appropriate ceremonies, military and civil" was provided by Congress on 24 August 1921, through a bill introduced by Rep. Hamilton Fish Jr.: An Act Authorizing Bestowal upon the Unknown Unidentified American to Be Buried in the Memorial Amphitheater of the National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia, the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross, H. R. 7255, 42 Stat. 191 (1921). The text of the original bill, dated 20 Jun 1921, is collected in section 8, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹³⁸¹ "Information for Those Who Are to Confer Decorations or Other Tributes on the Unknown American Soldier at the Memorial Amphitheatre at Arlington National Cemetery on November 11, 1921," 7 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; see also the sidebar "An Exchange of Honors: Bestowing the Medal of Honor on Foreign Unknowns" by Tim Frank in chapter 4.
- ¹³⁸² "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d.; "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times; ltr, Brig. Gen. Wm. Lassiter to Marshal Foch, 7 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. The names of the foreign awards are given either in translation or in their original language, following how they were listed in these sources. Several newspaper articles claimed that General Jacques presented a Belgian Croix de Guerre from his own breast to the Unknown Soldier at the funeral service. Even before the actual funeral, the New York Times ("War Chiefs Guests at the White House") reported in late October that Jacques planned to "take from his breast the Belgian Croix de Guerre conferred on him by King Albert and place it on the coffin." Two articles by Associated Press journalist Kirke Larue Simpson ("Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away" and "Bugles Sound Taps for Warrior's Requiem") described Jacques as actually doing this when he presented the medal during the funeral. However, an examination of the motion picture footage of the funeral ceremony does not show this event on camera, making it difficult to verify that this is what actually happened. In addition to the nations that presented awards to the Unknown Soldier during the funeral, others sent messages to show their respect and reverence to the Unknown, such as the Shaw of Persia: "A Tribute from Persia." New York Times, 12 Nov 1921. One account from the Washington Post (Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb") stated that when the earl of Cavan, representing the king of England, joined Earl Beatty during the presentation of the Victoria Cross, he bore a cluster of Easter lilies, "the flowers of resurrection," and placed them at the side of the catafalque. The footage is not clear enough to determine whether this definitely happened. The article also claimed that just before the casket was taken out of the apse ahead of the burial, Harding directed an aide to put the lilies from the king on the coffin, alongside the only other flowers on top of it, those from the president, Congress, and the Army. See also The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921– 36, reel 3.
- ¹³⁸³ Ltr, Lassiter to Foch, 7 Nov 1921; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 37; "Program for the President and Distinguished Guests November 11," ca. 11 Nov 1921
- ¹³⁸⁴ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; "Annex No. 4 to Basic Plan for Ceremonies," 7 Oct 1921, 2; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; War Department press release, "Words of Invocation and

Burial Services for Release Afternoon Papers Nov. 11th, 1921," No. 2, [day unreadable] Nov 1921, Press Releases—Burial of Unknown Soldier, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.

- ¹³⁸⁵ "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d.; "Annex No. 4 to Basic Plan for Ceremonies," 7 Oct 1921, 2; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*.
- ¹³⁸⁶ "Future Release War Department—Press Release No. 5—Nov. 8, 1921—for Release NOV. 11th, 1921," 8 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Press Releases, box 12, ANCHRC; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*. The latter two sources here both refer to the selected march from Sousa as "Our Honored Dead," but its actual name is "The Honored Dead"; see, e.g., Patrick Warfield, *Making the March King: John Philip Sousa's Washington Years*, 1854–1893 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 234. ¹³⁸⁷ *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 3; Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 20.
- ¹³⁸⁸ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 3.
- ¹³⁸⁹ The Unknown Soldier of the World War, ca. 1921–36, reel 3; Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 20.
- ¹³⁹⁰ "Programme for General Pershing and Officers Accompanying Him," 11 Nov 1921 or 18 Mar 1922; "Future Release War Department," 8 Nov 1921; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17; "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4–6; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," <u>New York Times</u>.
- ¹³⁹¹ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17.
- ¹³⁹² "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17; Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb."
- ¹³⁹³ Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb."
- ¹³⁹⁴ Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb"; see also ltr, J. M. Wainwright, Acting Secretary of War, to Hamilton Fish, n.d., section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; and also other related correspondence in this folder (section 6, box 564) dating from late October and early November 1921.
- ¹³⁹⁵ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 4; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 17; "Unfading Glory," *Ashburn Guardian*; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 351; Hamilton Fish, *Memoir of an American Patriot* (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 1991), 54; Anthony C. Troncone, "Hamilton Fish, Sr. and the Politics of American Nationalism, 1912–1945" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1993), 79; "Program Ceremonies at Memorial Amphitheater November 11, 1921," n.d.; "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 25 Oct 1921, 1, folder 2, box 87, entry 40, RG 117 (Rcds of the American Battle Monuments Commission), NACP. ¹³⁹⁶ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 6; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 18.
- 1397 Ltr, Wm. Lassiter to Chief Plenty Coups, c/o Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 Nov 1921, Plenty Coups, box 4, ANCHRC; Simpson, "Services at Tomb as Heroic Dead Is Laid Away," 17; Card Files Relating to Indians in World War I, n.d., cards 26–31, RG 75 (Rcds of the Bureau of Indian Affairs), https://catalog.archives.gov/id/134605627; "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; "Indians Will Honor the Unknown Hero," *Washington Post*, 7 Nov 1921; "Indians to Decorate Unknown Hero's Bier," *Wilmington (DE) News Journal*, 15 Nov 1921. According to the National Archives card file listed above, in addition to Chief Plenty Coups, the delegation included Whirlwind Soldier (South Dakota Sioux), Clement Soldier (Carlisle School), Lone Wolf (Kiowa Chief), Stranger Horse (Rosebud Sioux), and Red Owl (Pine Ridge Sioux).
- 1398 Various sources found during research for this book provide conflicting evidence about whether Plenty Coups made remarks as he presented his war bonnet, coup stick, and lance. An exact determination of what occurred cannot be made based on the archival record. Ltr, Lassiter to Chief Plenty Coups, 7 Nov. 1921; ltr, Robert F. Higgins to John C. Ewers, 26 Jan 1966, Plenty Coups, box 4, ANCHRC; ltr, John C. Ewers to Jesse D. Myers, 15 Feb 1966, Plenty Coups, box 4, ANCHRC; ltr, Robert F. Higgins to John C. Ewers, 8 Mar 1966, Plenty Coups, box 4, ANCHRC; D. P. Haugen, "Flag Presentation Recalls Past Friendship, Patriotism," *Pentagram*, 24 Oct 1974, Plenty Coups, box 4, ANCHRC; "100,000 Gathered on Arlington Hills," *New York Times*; "Solemn Journey of the Dead," *New York Times*; Card Files Relating to Indians in World War I, n.d., card 12; Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb"; Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier"; Simpson, "Bugles Sound Taps for Warrior's Requiem"; *The Unknown Soldier of the World War*, ca. 1921–36, reel 3. See also McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 188; Bontrager, *Death at the Edges of Empire*, 299.
- ¹³⁹⁹ Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 351. Harry N. Price, writing for the *Washington Post*, claimed that the casket was lowered into the crypt at "precisely 1:15 o'clock." Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb."

- ¹⁴⁰⁰ "Program of the Ceremonies Attending the Burial," n.d., 6; Mossman and Stark, *The Last Salute*, 18; Frank Witchey Retirement Orders, 30 May 1938, personal collection of Jari Villanueva. Kirke Larue Simpson of the Associated Press claimed that the white roses used for the selection ceremony were to be buried with the Unknown Soldier. Simpson, "Body of 'the Unknown Soldier' Arrives Home," 9 Nov 1921, *Service Bulletin of the Associated Press* 64 (December 1921): 3.
- ¹⁴⁰¹ Price, "End All War, Pleads Harding over Tomb."
- ¹⁴⁰² War Department press release, "Program for the President and Distinguished Guests," No. 6, 7 Nov 1921; "Annex No. 4 to Basic Plan for Ceremonies," 7 Oct 1921, 2.
- ¹⁴⁰³ "Our Unknown Dead in Capitol Rotunda," *New York Times*, 10 Nov 1921; memo, F. N. Inman for H. L. Ward, 18 Oct 1921, folder 1, box 87, entry 40, RG 117, NACP; Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 301, 341; "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 22. Official documents noted that the soil came from Suresnes American Cemetery, near Paris. Memo, Inman for Ward, 18 Oct 1921; "France's Farewell to the Unknown American Soldier," *Journal du Havre*, 4–7.
- ¹⁴⁰⁴ "Calvin Bailey Remembers," *Pentagram*, Nov 18, 1971, Press Articles, box 4, ANCHRC. Bailey attended the fiftieth anniversary of the Tomb and even received a personal greeting from President Richard M. Nixon. ¹⁴⁰⁵ "Calvin Bailey Remembers," *Pentagram*.
- ¹⁴⁰⁶ "Calvin Bailey Remembers," *Pentagram*. Another *Pentagram* article also recorded Bailey's recollection about the crowds rushing toward the Tomb once the chain holding them back was removed: George Post, "Unknown Soldier Buried 50 Years Ago Today," *Pentagram*, 11 Nov 1971, Press Articles, box 4, ANCHRC. That said, footage does not show such a chain around the Tomb, so it is unclear whether it was actually used and whether Bailey's memories can be trusted on that topic, so long after the events in question.
- ¹⁴⁰⁷ McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 189.
- ¹⁴⁰⁸ "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times, 11 Nov 1921.
- 1409 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- 1410 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- 1411 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- ¹⁴¹² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 9, and see 9–13.
- 1413 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- ¹⁴¹⁴ George Rothwell Brown, "Tribute to Unknown Soldier Stirs Whole Country."
- ¹⁴¹⁵ O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier."
- ¹⁴¹⁶ O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier."
- ¹⁴¹⁷ O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier"; he quotes from John 11:25.
- ¹⁴¹⁸ O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier."
- ¹⁴¹⁹ Michael Kazin, *War against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914–1918* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017), xii–xvi; Saladin Ambar, "Woodrow Wilson: Campaigns and Elections," University of Virginia Miller Center, https://millercenter.org/president/wilson/campaigns-and-elections (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁴²⁰ "Palmer Raids: Topics in Chronicling America," Library of Congress, https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-palmer-raids (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Red Summer: The Race Riots of 1919," National WWI Museum and Memorial, https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/about-wwi/red-summer (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Kazin, *War against War*, 276–79; "The League of Nations, 1920," Office of the Historian,
- https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/league (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁴²¹ John Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps," *Parsons (KS) Daily Republican*, 12 Nov 1921
- ¹⁴²² Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- ¹⁴²³ Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- ¹⁴²⁴ Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- ¹⁴²⁵ Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- 1426 Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier."
- 1427 Brown, "Hope Tempers Sorrow of Whole People at Tomb of Humble Dead Soldier."
- 1428 Brown, "Tribute to Unknown Soldier Stirs Whole Country."
- 1429 "Solemn Journey of the Dead," New York Times.
- ¹⁴³⁰ Simpson, "Bugles Sound Taps for Warrior's Requiem," 21.

- ¹⁴³¹ Simpson, "Bugles Sound Taps for Warrior's Requiem," 21.
- ¹⁴³² Ltr, Col. W. M. Cruikshank to Bishop Charles H. Brent, 17 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴³³ Eberhard Demm, "Censorship," *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, last updated 29 Mar 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/censorship.
- ¹⁴³⁴ Lt. Col. Repington, "Finds Pilgrim Echo in Honors to Dead," *New York Times*, 12 Nov 1921, originally in *London Daily Telegram*, 11 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴³⁵ Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies"; see also *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "H.G. Wells," last updated 9 Aug 2025, https://www.britannica.com/biography/H-G-Wells.
- ¹⁴³⁶ Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- ¹⁴³⁷ Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- ¹⁴³⁸ Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- 1439 Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- 1440 Wells, "Arlington Unlike Other Ceremonies."
- ¹⁴⁴¹ Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- 1442 Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- ¹⁴⁴³ Glessner, "At Rest in Arlington the Unknown Soldier Sleeps."
- 1444 "The Unknown Soldier," New York Times.
- 1445 O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier."
- ¹⁴⁴⁶ Ltr, Newton D. Baker to Francis Holley, ca. 24 Feb 1921, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP; ltr, Francis Holley to Newton Baker, 21 Feb 1921, box 141 or 142, entry 1889, RG 92, NACP.
- 1447 Ltr, Baker to Holley, ca. 24 Feb 1921.
- ¹⁴⁴⁸ See "History," *American Israelite*, https://americanisraelite.com/history/ (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Ellen Eisenberg, "Jonah B. Wise (1881–1959)," *Oregon Encyclopedia*, last updated 8 Jun 2023,
- https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/wise_rabbi_jonah_b/; "Wise, Jonah Bondi," Encyclopedia.com, https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/wise-jonah-bondi (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁴⁴⁹ Jonah B. Wise, "The Unknown Soldier," *American Israelite*, 15 Dec 1921.
- ¹⁴⁵⁰ Wise, "The Unknown Soldier"; see also Associated Negro Press, "The 'Unknown Soldier' May Be Colored American," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 5 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴⁵¹ Wise, "The Unknown Soldier."
- ¹⁴⁵² Ltr, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Bishop Charles H. Brent, 12 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴⁵³ Ltr, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Bishop Charles H. Brent, 28 Sep 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴⁵⁴ Ltr, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Bishop Charles H. Brent, 4 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. The details of who invited Rabbi Voorsanger and when are not clear in the records.
- ¹⁴⁵⁵ Jessica Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for Democracy: World War I and the Origins of Religious Pluralism* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 105–6; "Profile: Elkan Voorsanger," National Museum of American Jewish Military History, https://nmajmh.org/education/individual-profiles/elkan-voorsanger (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁴⁵⁶ Ltr, Lassiter to Brent, 4 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁴⁵⁷ Ltr, Lassiter to Brent, 4 Oct 1921.
- ¹⁴⁵⁸ Ltr, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron, 10 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴⁵⁹ See Cooperman, *Making Judaism Safe for Democracy*, 144–45; "A Finding Aid to the Morris S. Lazaron Papers, Manuscript Collection No. 71," American Jewish Archives; "Morris Samuel Lazaron," Jewish Virtual Library, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lazaron-morris-samuel (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁴⁶⁰ Bishop Charles H. Brent to Brig. Gen. William Lassiter, 21 Oct 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Dr. Moody Resigns Middlebury Post," *New York Times*, 25 Mar 1942.
- ¹⁴⁶¹ Bishop Charles H. Brent to Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron, 1 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴⁶² Brent to Lazaron, 1 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴⁶³ Brent to Lazaron, 1 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Brent to Lazaron, 1 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Record of Floral Tributes, section 6 (Floral Tributes), box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Veterans Organizations in the United States," n.d., 2, section 5, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. On this list of veterans' organizations, the two organizations of Black veterans were listed separately under the heading "Veterans Organizations of Negroes in the United States." The Grand Army of Americans was founded in Washington after the war; it leaned more conservative and was open to working with white veterans' organizations. See Chad L. Williams, "Vanguards of the New Negro: African American Veterans and Post-World War I Racial Militancy," Journal of African American History 92, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 357, 369. It is unclear from the sources whether the Grand Army of Americans marched in the procession. See memo for the Commanding Gen, District of Washington, ca. 14 Nov 1921; Steven Trout, On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919-1941 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 127-28. While these two organizations are listed as participating in the march in various documents, it is unclear from the archival record whether they definitely did so. The day before the ceremony, General Lassiter told J. R. Hawkins, secretary of finance of the AME Church, that while the two groups had been invited to lay a wreath at the Capitol, march in the procession, and be given five seats each at Memorial Amphitheater, no replies had been received. Ltr. Brig. Gen. William Lassiter to Mr. J. R. Hawkins, 10 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. This same folder contains numerous documents listing these organizations as participants in the procession.

1467 Ltr, Lassiter to Hawkins, 10 Nov 1921; see also Barbara L. Green, "Emmett Jay Scott: Influential Black Author and Civic Leader," Texas State Historical Association, updated 28 Sep 2020,

https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/scott-emmett-jay; "Scott, Emmett J.," Encyclopedia.com, https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/scott-emmett-j (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Emmett J. Scott, Scott's Official History of the American Negro in the World War (n.p.: n.p., 1919). ¹⁴⁶⁸ Ltr, Lassiter to Hawkins, 10 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Ltr, Lassiter to Hawkins, 10 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Ltr, E. D. W. Jones to John Weeks, 11 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; G. Kurt Piehler, Remembering War the American Way (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 1995), 120.

¹⁴⁷¹ Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921; see also John W. Cromwell, The First Negro Churches in the District of Columbia (Lancaster, PA: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1917).

¹⁴⁷² Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷³ Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Ltr, Jones to Weeks, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁴⁷⁷ Ltr, John Weeks to E. D. W. Jones, 17 Nov 1921, section 13, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Associated Negro Press, "The 'Unknown Soldier' May Be Colored American"; see also Lawrence Daniel Hogan, "Associated Negro Press," Encyclopedia of Chicago,

http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1734.html (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Our History," Philadelphia Tribune, https://www.phillytrib.com/site/about.html (accessed 20 Aug 2025).

1479 Associated Negro Press, "The 'Unknown Soldier' May Be Colored American." 1480 Associated Negro Press, "The 'Unknown Soldier' May Be Colored American." 1481 Associated Negro Press, "The 'Unknown Soldier' May Be Colored American."

¹⁴⁸² On Weldon, see "James Weldon Johnson," NAACP, https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/civilrights-leaders/james-weldon-johnson (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "About James Weldon Johnson," Emory University, James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference,

https://jamesweldonjohnson.emory.edu/about/about-james-weldon-johnson.html (accessed 20 Aug 2025). See Trout, On the Battlefield of Memory, 132-34, for a detailed literary analysis of the poem in question, which is beyond the scope of this book. Johnson was not the only writer to reflect on the identity of the Unknown Soldier and doubt the sincerity of the War Department's intention for him to be representative of all Americans. John Dos Passos did as

¹⁴⁶⁵ Ltr, Adjutant Gen to S. R. Stearns, 12 Nov 1921, section 13, entry 37, box 565, RG 407, NACP. The adjutant general was responding to a telegram from Stearns of the day before, in which he asked, "why bury the unknown dead hero with a cross." Telg, S. R. Stearns to President Harding, 10 Nov 1921, section 13, entry 37, box 565, RG 407, NACP.

well, in his 1932 novel *Nineteen Nineteen*; see Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory*, 38, 147–50; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 121.

- ¹⁴⁸³ James Weldon Johnson, "Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day," Poetry Nook, https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/saint-peter-relates-incident-resurrection-day (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory*, 132–34.
- ¹⁴⁸⁴ Johnson, "Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day."
- ¹⁴⁸⁵ Johnson, "Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day."
- ¹⁴⁸⁶ Johnson, "Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day."
- ¹⁴⁸⁷ Numerous secondary sources that discuss the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier argue that it was far less inclusive and diverse than it could have been. While there is truth in that argument, my research into the War Department has led me to conclude that for that time, the War Department made a substantial effort to be inclusive and diverse, though it was inherently limited by segregation, the blatantly Christian service, and other factors. See, e.g., Hanson, *Unknown Soldiers*, 351; Lisa M. Budreau, Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919–1933 (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 101–2; Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 121–22; McElya, *The Politics of Mourning*, 185–90.
- ¹⁴⁸⁸ Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, "Disposition of Decorations Conferred upon the Unknown Soldier," 15 Nov 1921, Unknown Soldier—WWI—Program, box 12, ANCHRC.
- ¹⁴⁸⁹ Memo, Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, 15 Nov 1921. This plan to display the collection of tribute items in the Memorial Amphitheater's museum was also mentioned in an anonymous account of the events related to the Unknown Soldier. The author notes that these artifacts, described as "works of artistry wrought by loving and skillful hands, everlasting emblems of kindly thoughts . . . will be preserved for all time in specially prepared glass cases, and then placed under guard in the Museum of the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery, another shrine to lure those who daily make pilgrimage to the Nation's Capitol and historic places surrounding." "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 38.
- ¹⁴⁹⁰ Memo, Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, 15 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴⁹¹ Memo, Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, 15 Nov 1921 (original emphasis, appears as underlining in memo). Until the cases could be constructed, the items were to be turned over to the Quartermaster Corps for safekeeping.
- ¹⁴⁹² Memo, Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, 15 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴⁹³ Memo, Lassiter for the Chief of Staff, 15 Nov 1921.
- ¹⁴⁹⁴ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 38.
- ¹⁴⁹⁵ "Selection and Burial of the Unknown American Soldier," 38.
- ¹⁴⁹⁶ Today, the ANC History Office, of which this author is a member, continues this duty of interpreting the history of the Tomb.
- ¹⁴⁹⁷ Memo, Brig. Gen. Wm. Lassiter to the Adjutant Gen of the Army, "G-3 Files on Ceremonies of Unknown Soldier (G-3/200)," 10 Jan 1922, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁴⁹⁸ Memo, Lassiter to the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 10 Jan 1922.
- ¹⁴⁹⁹ Memo, Lassiter to the Adjutant Gen of the Army, 10 Jan 1922. In a separate memo to the members of the Committee on Plans for Ceremonies, Lassiter also directed that each member of the General Staff committee should submit a report of observations related to the events, including suggested improvements. Memo, Brig. Gen. Wm. Lassiter to Members of the Committee on Plans for Ceremonies, "Ceremonies November 10th and 11th, 1921," 11 Nov 1921, section 4, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁵⁰⁰ The National Archives was established by an act of Congress; see "National Archives History," National Archives, https://www.archives.gov/about/history (accessed 20 Aug 2025).
- ¹⁵⁰¹ Memo, Brig. Gen. William Lassiter for G-6, Nov 1921 (no day listed), section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP.
- ¹⁵⁰² Ltr, John Weeks to Gov. Thos. E. Kilby, n.d., section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; untitled list of governors' addresses, n.d., section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; "Tributes to Unknown Soldier to Be Acknowledged by Secretary of War," 23 Nov 1921, section 6, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, John W. Weeks to Le Conseil General de la Marne, ca. 30 Nov 1921, section 8, box 564, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. Numerous examples can be found in this last folder (section 8, box 564).
- ¹⁵⁰³ "Festival of Light to Be Magnificent," *Evening Star* (Washington, DC), 11 Nov 1921, 34; "Tomb of the Unknowns, November 1921," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 11 May 2015,

https://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/tombacct.asp (page discontinued; accessed 29 Nov 2023; "Will Test Jewel Arch at 10 Tonight," *Evening Star*, 10 Nov 1921.

- ¹⁵⁰⁴ "Tomb of the Unknowns, November 1921," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; "Will Test Jewel Arch at 10 Tonight," *Evening Star*.
- ¹⁵⁰⁵ "Festival of Light to Be Magnificent," *Evening Star*; image, "Tower of Jewels," Pacific Novelty Co., ca. 1915, Calisphere, https://calisphere.org/item/e920ba9d4dd37f406b69a5923af0f815/ (accessed 8 Sep 2025); "Greetings from the Smithsonian: A Postcard History," Smithsonian Institution Archives,
- https://siarchives.si.edu/history/featured-topics/postcard/expositions (accessed 20 Aug 2025); John Winthrop Hammond, "Lighting the Panama–Pacific International Exposition, Museum of the City of San Francisco, https://sfmuseum.org/hist10/scint.html (accessed 20 Aug 2025); image, "H433. [Tower of Jewels (Thomas Hastings, Architect), from Colonnade, Palace of Horticulture.]," 1915, Calisphere,
- https://oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf9p3011bz/ (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Thomas Hastings (Architect)," Pacific Coast Architecture Database, https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/829/ (accessed 20 Aug 2025); Jan-Carlos Kucharek, "Lighting the Fantastic: Thomas Hastings," *RIBA Journal*, 24 Oct 2018, https://www.ribaj.com/buildings/thomas-hastings-riba-gold-medal-tower-of-jewels-panama-pacific-international-exposition-san-francisco.
- ¹⁵⁰⁶ "Will Test Jewel Arch at 10 Tonight," *Evening Star*; "The Washington Naval Conference, 1921–1922," Office of the Historian, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/naval-conference (accessed 20 Aug 2025). ¹⁵⁰⁷ "Will Test Jewel Arch at 10 Tonight," *Evening Star*; "Tomb of the Unknowns, November 1921," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- 1508 "Tomb of the Unknowns, November 1921," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- ¹⁵⁰⁹ George Rothwell Brown, "Nation Bows at Bier of Unknown Soldier," Washington Post, 10 Nov 1921.
- 1510 The other journalist was Kirke L. Simpson of the Associated Press. "Frank M. O'Brien of *New York Herald*," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/frank-m-obrien (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "1922 Pulitzer Prizes," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year/1922 (accessed 20 Aug 2025); "Kirke L. Simpson of *Associated Press*," Pulitzer Prizes, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/kirke-l-simpson (accessed 10 Sep 2025).
 1511 Frank M. O'Brien, "The Unknown Soldier," *New York Herald*, 11 Nov 1921; see also "Unknown Soldier' Theme Wins Prizes," *New York Times*, 22 May 1922.
- ¹⁵¹² See chapter 8 for an account of Hastings's work on the project. Detailed correspondence about the drawn-out fight between Hastings and the War Department over his design can be found in the folder Project Files Arlington National Cemetery—Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, box 23, entry 17, RG (Record Group) 66 (Rcds of the Commission of Fine Arts), National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB).
- ¹⁵¹³ Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," HABS Rpt No. VA-1348-G, April 2020, 37–39. Sources related to the design competition can be found in box 24, entry 17, RG 66, NAB.
- ¹⁵¹⁴ HABS, "Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater," 37–42; John Auwaerter and Anna Tiburzi, "Cultural Landscape Report: Memorial Amphitheater Grounds," unpublished draft, Feb 2023, 158–60, 195.
- ¹⁵¹⁵ Examples of many ceremonies held at the Tomb in the 1920s can be found in section 6 (Floral Tributes—at Ceremonies and Since), box 564, entry 37, RG 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP).
- ¹⁵¹⁶ Allison S. Finkelstein, Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials: How American Women Commemorated the Great War, 1917–1945 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021), 118.
- ¹⁵¹⁷ See the sidebar "Silence and Respect: Guarding the Tomb" by Tim Frank.
- ¹⁵¹⁸ Different sources provide slightly different numbers for how many American service members remain missing or unaccounted for as a result of World War II. "World War II Accounting," Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaFamWebWWII (accessed 10 Sep 2025); "World War II: Europe-Mediterranean Directorate," Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency,
- https://www.dpaa.mil/Portals/85/EM%20World%20War%20II.pdf (accessed 10 Sep 2025); "Burial and Memorialization Directory," American Battle Monuments Commission, https://weremember.abmc.gov/ (accessed 10 Sep 2025) (site has an "advanced search" option that allows filtering by war/conflict, missing status, and more).

 1519 B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921–1969* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991), 93.
- 1520 Mossman and Stark. The Last Salute, 93–124.

- ¹⁵²¹ The book team did extensive research on tombs of unknown soldiers in other nations and could not find an example of a tomb where unknown soldiers from multiple wars were all buried at the same site.
- ¹⁵²² Sarah E. Wagner, *What Remains: Bringing America's Missing Home from the Vietnam War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 39–48; see also Sarah Wagner, "The Making and Unmaking of an Unknown Soldier," *Social Studies of Science* 43, no. 5 (2013): 631–56; interv, Allison S. Finkelstein and Kevin M. Hymel with Johnie Webb, 10 Dec 2020, Arlington National Cemetery.
- ¹⁵²³ "Remarks by President Jimmy Carter, Veterans Day National Ceremony, Arlington National Cemetery," 11 Nov 1978, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, last updated 10 Nov 2009,

https://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/speakers/1978remarks.asp.

- 1524 Wagner, What Remains, 39–48.
- ¹⁵²⁵ Wagner, *What Remains*, 48–53; Wagner, "The Making and Unmaking of an Unknown Soldier," 635–49; interv, Finkelstein and Hymel with Webb, 10 Dec 2020.
- ¹⁵²⁶ "History: A Brief Timeline of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," *A Century of Honor: The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery*, U.S. Army, https://www.army.mil/tomb/pages/history.html (accessed 10 Sep 2025); Jim Garamone, "Tomb Inscription Dedicated," Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, 16 Sep 1999, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/528386/.
- ¹⁵²⁷ Wagner, What Remains, 51; Wagner, "The Making and Unmaking of an Unknown Soldier," 649.
- ¹⁵²⁸ Kera Collective, "Report: Audience Research: Walk-In Visitors to Arlington National Cemetery," Sep 2023, 5, Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) internal files.
- ¹⁵²⁹ The numbers provided here are estimates that came from official Arlington National Cemetery data retained by the ANC G2 Security Forces Directorate and G3 Operations Directorate, as well as their associated contractor teams. In 2024, there were 2,398 public wreath ceremonies at the Tomb.
- ¹⁵³⁰ Laura Boone, "Civil-Military Gap in the United States," EBSCO Knowledge Advantage, 2025, https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/sociology/civil-military-gap-united-states; "Bridging the Military-Civilian Divide: Thoughts from Those Who Have Been on the Front Line," WilmerHale Legal Services Center, Harvard Law School, 22 Dec 2022, https://legalservicescenter.org/bridging.
- 1531 "About Us," Honor Flight Network, https://www.honorflight.org/about-us/ (accessed 10 Sep 2025).
- ¹⁵³² As of this writing, most Honor Flight veterans are those who served in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, as World War II veterans are now often too elderly to participate, although the earlier years of the program focused on them. The Honor Flight organization keeps yearly statistics of how many veterans from each war participated in the program. In 2023, it hosted 390 World War II veterans, 2,340 Korean War veterans, 18,357 Vietnam War veterans, and 1,157 veterans of other wars. Homepage, Honor Flight Network, https://www.honorflight.org (accessed 10 Sep 2025). According to official Arlington National Cemetery data, there were 407 Honor Flight visits (each with multiple veterans) in total in 2024.
- ¹⁵³³ Interv, Allison S. Finkelstein with Sfc. Andrew D. Jay, 41st Sgt. of the Guard, 8 Jul 2024, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
- ¹⁵³⁴ "The Society of the Honor Guard," Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, https://tombguard.org/society (accessed 10 Sep 2025); telecon interv, Allison S. Finkelstein with Richard Azzaro, 1 Mar 2024. According to society cofounder Azzaro, the main membership of the society—its voting membership—is composed of current and former Tomb Guards, although there are some special other membership options that are not part of the main voting membership of Tomb Guards, such as legacy members, associate members, and children of deceased Tomb Guards.
- ¹⁵³⁵ Interv, Finkelstein with Azzaro, 1 Mar 2024.
- ¹⁵³⁶ Interv, Finkelstein with Azzaro, 1 Mar 2024.
- ¹⁵³⁷ For more on service-based memorials during the interwar period, see Finkelstein, *Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials*.
- ¹⁵³⁸ National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, Pub. L. No. 114-328, 130 Stat. 2000 (2016), sec. 1093, "Program to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier"; also discussed in interv, Finkelstein with Azzaro, 1 Mar 2024.
- ¹⁵³⁹ Arlington National Cemetery Public Affairs Office, *Resource Guide: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemoration* (Sep 2021), 10, https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/Tomb100/Resource-Guide.
- ¹⁵⁴⁰ "Centennial Commemoration Events: Monthly Programs," Arlington National Cemetery, https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Tomb100/Centennial-Events/2021-Monthly-Programs (accessed 10 Sep 2025).

¹⁵⁴¹ "Education Program: The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Arlington National Cemetery, https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Themes/Tomb-of-the-Unknown-Soldier (accessed 10 Sep 2025).

¹⁵⁴² Arlington National Cemetery Public Affairs Office, *Resource Guide*, 32–34.

- ¹⁵⁴³ To see the full collection of materials created for the Tomb centennial, see "Commemorating a Century of Honor: The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, 1921–2021," Arlington National Cemetery, https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/Tomb100 (accessed 10 Sep 2025).
- Arlington National Cemetery History Office, *A Century of Honor: A Commemorative Guide to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* (Arlington, VA: Arlington National Cemetery, 2021), https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Tomb100/Commemorative-Guide.
- ¹⁵⁴⁵ Email, Scott Slindee to Allison Finkelstein, 9 May 2022; Arlington National Cemetery Public Affairs Office, *Resource Guide*, 23–24.
- ¹⁵⁴⁶ "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemoration Lecture Series," Arlington National Cemetery, https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Tomb100/Centennial-Events/TUS-Centennial-Lecture-Series (accessed 10 Sep 2025).
- ¹⁵⁴⁷ Arlington National Cemetery Public Affairs Office, *Resource Guide*, 10, 23–25. Video of the procession can be viewed here: "Procession Commemorates 100th Anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, 11 Nov 2021, https://www.dvidshub.net/video/821530/. The ANC History Office won the Society for History in the Federal Government's 2023 Excellence in New Media Award for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier centennial commemoration offerings. "2023 Award Winners," Society for History in the Federal Government, https://shfg.wildapricot.org/page-18380 (accessed 10 Sep 2025).
- ¹⁵⁴⁸ "Arlington National Cemetery Announces Inaugural Flowers of Remembrance Day," Arlington National Cemetery, 12 May 2022, https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Media/News/Post/12434/; Allison S. Finkelstein, "Flowers of Remembrance Day: Inaugurating a New Tradition at Arlington National Cemetery," Arlington National Cemetery (blog), 20 May 2022, https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/Blog/Post/12455/; see chapter 1 for more on this tradition.
- ¹⁵⁴⁹ Harry F. Rethers, *Selection of Unknown Soldier: Broadcasted from San Francisco, November 11, 1931* (San Francisco: Recorder Printing, 1931), 3. On Rethers and the selection ceremony, see chapter 6.
- 1550 Ltr, H. H. Bandholtz to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 23 Oct 1922, section 10 (Guard for the Tomb), box 565, entry 37, record group (RG) 407 (Rcds of the Adjutant Gen Ofc), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP). The District of Washington was not called the Military District of Washington in early correspondence. For calls for a military guard, see, e.g., ltr, Col. John D. Martz Jr. to Richard Ober, 3 Dec 1953, Tomb Guard History and Timeline, box 4 (Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier), Historical Research Collection, Arlington National Cemetery (ANCHRC); ltr, R. H. Fletcher Jr. to Adjutant Gen of the Army, 27 Sep 1922, section 10, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Mabel S. Brown to John J. Pershing, 15 Feb 1923, section 10, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr to the editor, "Irreverence at Arlington," *Washington Post*, 15 Feb 1923; ltr, W. H. Hart to Deputy Chief of Staff, 30 Aug 1923, section 10, box 565, RG 407, NACP.
- 1551 "Honor Guard at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington Memorial Amphitheater, Arlington National Cemetery," 28 Jan 1975, Tomb Guard History and Timeline, box 4, ANCHRC; ltr, H. C. Bonnycastle to ANC Superintendent, "Visitors at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," 15 Feb 1923, section 10, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Brown to Pershing, 15 Feb 1923; ltr, Hart to the Deputy Chief of Staff, 30 Aug 1923; ltr, F. B. Swank to John W. Weeks, 2 Oct 1925, section 10, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. LaMont Williams, ANC superintendent from 1 Apr 1942 through 30 Jun 1945, also noted in his records that "the first civilian guard was established" on 17 November 1925, although he does not identify his source for that date. "Guard—Tomb of Unknown Soldier," ANCHRC.
- ¹⁵⁵² "Guard to Watch over Unknown Soldier's Tomb," *Washington Herald*, 9 Mar 1926; ltr, H. H. Tebbetts to Commanding Gen, District of Washington, 24 Mar 1926, section 10, box 565, entry 37, RG 407, NACP. ¹⁵⁵³ Statistics quoted in Burke Davis, "Historic Unknown Soldier's Tomb Reflects Feelings and Foibles of Our Modern Times," *Charlotte News*, 12 Mar 1948.
- ¹⁵⁵⁴ Memo, Fox Conner, for the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, "Guard for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," 24 Mar 1926, section 10, box 1271, entry 37H, RG 407, NACP; ltr, H. H. Tebbetts to Commanding Gen, District of Washington, "Guard for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," 22 Apr 1926, section 10, box 1271, entry 37H, RG 407, NACP; memo, Malin Craig for the Adjutant Gen, "Guard for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," 22 Apr 1926, section 10, box 1271, entry 37H, RG 407, NACP; ltr, Martz to Ober, 3 Dec 1953.

1555 Ltr, Martz to Ober, 3 Dec 1953; orders, Capt. David Barr (Adjutant, Washington Provisional Brigade, Office of the Brigade Commander) to Commanding Ofcr, Fort Myer, VA, "Guard at Tomb of Unknown Soldier," 1 Jul 1937, Tomb Guard Binder, box 11 (Memorial Amphitheater and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier), ANCHRC. On 6 December 1940, Brig. Gen. John N. Greely revoked the portion of the 1926 directive calling for guards from Fort Humphreys; he directed that effective 16 January 1941, the commanding officers of the 3rd Cavalry of Fort Myer and the 12th Infantry of the Arlington Cantonment would provide guards from specially selected squads for fifteenday assignments. John N. Greely to Commanding Ofcr, 12th Infantry Arlington Cantonment, Fort Myer, VA, 6 Dec 1940, section 10, box 1271, entry 37H, RG 407, NACP.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Joint Task Force—National Capital Region and the U.S. Army Military District of Washington, "The Old Guard," fact sheet, https://jtfncr.mdw.army.mil/Portals/136/Forms/TOG/tog-facts.pdf (accessed 18 Sep 2025).
 ¹⁵⁵⁷ See, e.g., Roy H. Parker, "For the Guardians of the Unknown Soldier, Every Day Is—Memorial Day," Washington Times Herald, 25 May 1952; William McGaffin, "Drama Today at Unknown Yank's Tomb: Veterans Day amid War Fears," Des Moines Register, 11 Nov 1956.

¹⁵⁵⁸ "Honor Badge," *Army Times*, 22 Feb 1958, 46.

1559 Email, Sfc. Jesse A. Zafft, Sergeant of the Guard, to Allison Finkelstein, 24 Sep 2025.

¹⁵⁶⁰ The president was authorized to "to purchase cemetery grounds, and cause them to be securely enclosed, to be used as a national cemetery for the soldiers who shall die in the service of the country." An Act to Define the Pay and Emoluments of Certain Officers of the Army, and for Other Purposes, 12 Stat. 594 (1862),

https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/37th-congress/session-2/c37s2ch200.pdf. See ch. 200, sec. 18, 596.

1561 "American's Wars," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Nov 2019,

https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf, 1. Total killed in battle and in theater: 364, 511.

¹⁵⁶² These numbers come from Army inspection reports of 1869, 1870, and 1874 (copies in National Cemetery Administration [NCA] History Files, Washington, DC), as analyzed in John Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), app. A, 243.

¹⁵⁶³ An Act to Establish and to Protect National Cemeteries, 14 Stat. 399 (1867),

https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/39th-congress/session-2/c39s2ch61.pdf.

¹⁵⁶⁴ Rpt, Lt. Col. E. B. Whitman, Superintendent, National Cemeteries, Department of the Cumberland, Louisville, KY, 10 May 1869, 27–28, entry 646, Rcds of the Ofc of the Quartermaster Gen (QMG), Record Group (RG) 92, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NACP).

¹⁵⁶⁵ Ofc Asst Quartermaster in Charge of Cemeteries and Mortuary Reds, Mil Div of the Tennessee Cir, Jan 1866, in app. D to Rpt, Lt. Col. E. B. Whitman, 10 May 1869, 30.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Ltr, William W. Belknap to QMG Montgomery C. Meigs, 23 Jun 1873, box 75, entry 576, RG 92, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC (NADC). These specs were modified by Memo, Mack/Belknap for Meigs, 30 Jun 1874, sub: Headstones, box 75, entry 576, RG 92, NADC.

¹⁵⁶⁷ The "General" style of headstone was authorized for veterans of World War I to distinguish their service from that of nineteenth-century war veterans. These headstones are larger and thicker, and for the first time, an "emblem of belief" was authorized. For more information, see Sara Amy Leach, "World War I Veterans and Their Federal Burial Benefits," *AGS Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (Winter 2017), 36–41,

https://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/pdf/AGS_Quarterly_War_Monuments_WWI_2018.pdf. War Department (WD) QMG Form, Cir 22–54, Proposal for Headstones, n. d. (ca.1923), in Miscellaneous–Plaques & Tablets, Commission of Fine Arts, RG 66, NACP; Issuance to bidders, Dep QMG J. G. Chandler, 18 Apr 1888, "Specifications for Headstones Required for Soldiers Graves under the Provisions of the Acts of Congress of March 3rd, 1873, February 3rd, 1879, and March 30th, 1888," box 785, NM–81, Consolidated Correspondence File 1794–1915, entry 225, RG 92, NADC.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Rpt, Burial Operations Support System, from VA Quantico Information Technology Center, Jul 2018, sub: "Unknowns," NCA History Files.

¹⁵⁶⁹ Rpt, Description, Ofc of the QMG, ca. 1894, "Cold Harbor, Virginia, National Cemetery (Third Class)," photocopy, NCA History Files; "Vermont News," *Express and Standard* (Newport, VT), 29 May 1877; "Domestic Secular News, Rutland County," *Vermont Chronicle* (Bellows, VT), 2 Jun 1877.

¹⁵⁷⁰ An Act Authorizing the Secretary of War to Have a Monument Erected at Salisbury, North Carolina, to the Memory of the Soldiers Who Died in Prison and Are There Buried, 17 Stat. 625 (1873),

https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/42nd-congress/session-3/c42s3ch320.pdf. The number of dead was

stated as 12,000 in the legislation. For a contemporary analysis, see Louis A. Brown, *The Salisbury Prison: A Case Study of Confederate Military Prisons 1861–1865, Revised and Enlarged* (Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing, 1992). Appendix V contains a list, developed from a variety of sources, of more than 3,800 deaths in the Salisbury Prison. See also Lonnie R. Speer, *Portals to Hell: Military Prisons of the Civil War* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1997). Appendix C lists the maximum capacity of Salisbury Prison as 2,000; the most held at a single time as 10,321; and deaths at 3,700.

¹⁵⁷¹ WD, QMC Form 117, "Florence National Cemetery Records," Rcds of the Department of Veterans Affairs, RG 15, NADC, photocopy, n.d., post-1958, 3, NCA History Files; Drawing, Memorial Div Ofc of the QMG, "Special Marker for Civil War Trench Burial MM-9 1954 11," NCA History Files.

¹⁵⁷² "Saint Augustine National Cemetery," NCA, n.d., https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/staugustine.asp (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁵⁷³ For example, Alexandria National Cemetery in Louisiana contains monuments, installed in 1911, that mark the graves of soldiers disinterred from Brownsville National Cemetery and Fort Ringgold Post Cemetery in Texas.

¹⁵⁷⁴ Katie Lange, "Dog Tag History: How the Tradition & Nickname Started," Inside DOD | Know Your Military, 9 Sep 2020, https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Inside-DOD/Blog/Article/2340760/dog-tag-history-how-the-tradition-nickname-started/ (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁵⁷⁵ Memo, Dep Sec Def for Secs Mil Departments, 14 Apr 2015, sub: Disinterment of Unknowns from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific,

https://archive.defense.gov/pubs/DSD_Memo_Disinterment_of_Unknowns_from_the_National_Memorial_Cemeter y_of_the_Pacific.pdf; Carrie Brown, "The USS Oklahoma Identification Project," Case Report, *Forensic Anthropology* 2, no 2 (2019) 1–11; Email, Lt. Col. Tamara Fischer Carter to Allison Finkelstein, 20 May 2021, NCA History Files, Washington DC. The project involved USS *Oklahoma* unknowns reburied in sixty-two caskets in 1949 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. The first casket was removed for testing in 2007, and the rest beginning in 2015. See also the DPAA (Defense POW/MIA [Prisoner of War/Missing in Action] Accounting Agency) website, https://dpaa-il.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaFamWebKoreanWarDisinternments (accessed 9 Feb 2021). In 2019, DPAA began disinterring 652 sets of unknown remains associated with the Korean War for an identification project that could last up to ten years.

- ¹⁵⁷⁷ On the early history of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), see Chapter 1, pages x–x.
- ¹⁵⁷⁸ Burial Ledger, 13 May 1865 to Dec 1865, Interments in Arlington National Cemetery, ANC Historical Research Collection (ANCHRC), Arlington, VA.
- ¹⁵⁷⁹ "The Union Dead on the Battle-Fields of Virginia," *New York Times*, 8 Apr 1866, reprinted from the *Washington Star*.
- 1580 "The Union Dead on the Battle-Fields of Virginia."
- ¹⁵⁸¹ "Proposals For Construction of Vault At Arlington, VA," Evening Star (Washington, DC), 20 Apr 1866.
- ¹⁵⁸² Cultural Resources Condition Assessment Rpt, ANC, n.d., sub: Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns (Memorial Grave), 1, Author's Files, ANC, Arlington, VA.
- ¹⁵⁸³ "Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns," ANC, n.d., https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Monuments-and-Memorials/Civil-War-Unknowns (accessed 15 Mar 2021).
- ¹⁵⁸⁴ "The National Cemeteries," *Daily Intelligencer* (Washington, DC), 15 Nov 1866.
- ¹⁵⁸⁵ Note cards, Superintendent LaMont A. Williams, 1 Apr 1942–30 Jun 194, ANCHRC; Ltr, M. I. Ludington to Montgomery Meigs, 21 Sep 1866, box 49, entry 225, Rcds of the Ofc of the Quartermaster Gen (QMG), Record Group (RG) 92, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC (NADC).
- ¹⁵⁸⁶ Ltr, Montgomery Meigs to Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol, 25 Sep 1866, box 6, entry 576, Rcds of the Ofc of the QMG, RG 92, NADC.
- ¹⁵⁸⁷ Ltr, Montgomery Meigs to Edward Stanton, 13 Oct 1866, folder: Arlington, VA, box 49, entry 225, RG 92, NADC.
- ¹⁵⁸⁸ "Proposals For Granite And Granite Work," National Republican (Washington, DC), 8 Nov 1866.
- ¹⁵⁸⁹ Rpt, [issuing entity unknown] to Edwin M. Stanton, 10 Jun 1867, box 7 (Archives I), entry 576, RG 92, NADC. ¹⁵⁹⁰ "Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns," n.d.
- ¹⁵⁹¹ George Aaron Cleveland and Robert E. Campbell, *American Landmarks: A Collection of Pictures of Our Country's Historic Shrines* (Boston: Balch Brothers, 1893), 90; Charles Graham, illustration, *Harper's Weekly*, 29 May 1886, 349.

1596 Accounts of the number of Americans who died on board the *Lusitania* vary, but numerous sources state it was 128, including the 1922 report to the Senate from the secretary of state regarding the American passengers on board when the ship sunk. See Secretary of State Charles E. Hughes, *Claims by American Citizens as Result of Loss of the Lusitania*, Rpt to Cong., doc. 176, 67th Cong. (31 Mar 1922), 2–4, copy in Author's Files, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA; Eisenhower, *Yanks*, 5; David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 54–57, 67–69; Margaret Wagner, *America and the Great War* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2017), 78–79; S. L. A. Marshall, *World War I* (New York: American Heritage, 1964), 166; Robert H. Ziegler, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 22; Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 1, *The United States Army and the Forging of a Nation*, 1775–1917, Army Historical Series, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2009), 379; Alan Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (London: The Free Press, 1984), 321.

1597 Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 1, 386; Eisenhower, *Yanks*, 5; Telg, The Ambassador in Germany (Gerard) to the Secretary of State, 8 Jul 1915, doc. 672, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915, Supplement, The World War* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1928), (hereinafter cited as *FRUS*), 463–66, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1915Supp/d672; Telg, The German Ambassador (Bernstorff) to the Secretary of State, 1 Sep 1915, doc. 767, in *FRUS*, 530–31, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1915Supp/d767.

¹⁵⁹⁸ Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 7; Wagner, *America and the Great War*, 147. Rodney Carlisle, "The Attacks on U.S. Shipping that Precipitated American Entry into World War I," n.d. https://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol17/tnm_17_3_41-66.pdf (accessed 8 Jun 2021).

¹⁵⁹⁹ Wagner, America and the Great War, 77–78; Stewart, American Military History, vol. 2, 7.

¹⁶⁰⁰ Wagner, America and the Great War, 156–57.

¹⁶⁰¹ Wagner, America and the Great War, 147–48, 156–57; Eisenhower, Yanks, 8–9.

¹⁶⁰² For more on General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition, see Julie Irene Prieto, *The Mexican Expedition*, 1916–1917, The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War I (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2016). On U.S. relations with Mexico during World War I, see John Mason Hart, *Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico since the Civil War* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 305–42. ¹⁶⁰³ Eisenhower, *Yanks*, 9–10; "U.S. Entry into World War I, 1917," Milestones: 1914–1920, Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, n.d., https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/wwi (accessed 31 Mar 2021); "World War I Declarations: Topics in Chronicling America," Library of Congress, n.d.,

https://www.loc.gov/rr/news/topics/ww1declarations.html (accessed 31 Mar 2021).

¹⁶⁰⁴ The phrase "war to end all wars" was popularized by British author Herbert George "H. G." Wells in his 1914 work, *The War That Will End War*, a compilation of newspaper articles he wrote in the months after fighting commenced. The term has been commonly, though mistakenly, attributed to President Woodrow Wilson. See H. G. Wells, *The War That Will End War* (London: Frank & Cecil Palmer, 1914).

¹⁶⁰⁵ "A Memorial to Liberty and Peace," Kansas City Star, 11 Nov 1926.

¹⁶⁰⁶ "Give From Joy and Sorrow: A War Saddened Father, Widow and Grateful Soldiers Add to Fund," *Kansas City Star*, 2 Nov 1919.

¹⁶⁰⁷ "Liberty Memorial Campaign Success Depends on Women," *Kansas City Post*, 13 Oct 1919; "Children to Play Big Part in Campaign," *Kansas City Journal*, 19 Oct 1919.

¹⁵⁹² National Capital Region Cultural Landscape Program, National Park Service, *Arlington House: The Robert E. Lee Memorial Cultural Landscape Report History*, *Vol. 1* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2001), 96–97.

¹⁵⁹³ Historic American Building Survey (HABS) Rpt No. VA-1348-I, n.d., sub: Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns, 1, Author's Files, ANC.

¹⁵⁹⁴ Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 2, *The United States Army in a Global Era*, 1917–2008, Army Historical Series, 2nd ed. (Washington DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2010), 1.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Stewart, *American Military History*, vol. 2, 1; Jürgen Melzer, "Warfare 1914–1918 (Japan)," 1914–1918 Online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 19 Oct 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/warfare_1914-1918_japan; John S. D. Eisenhower, *Yanks: The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 1, 68. Russia withdrew from the war in March 1918, following the Bolshevik Revolution.

14%20%28Memorial%20Designation%20Signed%20by%20President%20Press%20Release%29-1.pdf.

1616 An Act for the Creation of an American Battle Monuments Commission to Erect Suitable Memorials

Commemorating the Services of the American Soldier in Europe, and for Other Purposes, PL 534, 42 Stat. 1509

(1923), https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/67th-congress/Session%204/c67s4ch283.pdf. The act initially
called for the commission to oversee the design and construction of memorial monuments and buildings, including
works of art, within the cemeteries. In 1934, an executive order transferred formal and permanent responsibility for
the cemeteries to the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). See Maj. Gen. Thomas North, "History of
the American Battle Monuments Commission" (unpublished manuscript, American Battle Monuments Commission,
1989), I-31, Historical Services, American Battle Monuments Commission, Arlington, VA.

¹⁶¹⁷ North, "History of the American Battle Monuments Commission," I-19.

These numbers are taken from the inscriptions on the World War I and World War II panels erected at Suresnes American Cemetery after World War II, and reflect the numbers at the end of each war. They include those unknowns who have been identified and are marked with rosettes in addition to those who are still missing. The number of WWI names on the Walls of the Missing has increased by one since the Suresnes panels were installed, with the addition of Seaman Herbert H. Renshaw, who was initially omitted by error, to the wall at Brookwood American Cemetery. "World War I Burials and Memorializations," American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), n.d., https://www.abmc.gov/node/533509 (accessed 22 Jun 2021). For the inscriptions on the headstones of unknowns, see Memo, Robert G. Woodside for Sec War, 10 Nov 1925, folder 49, box 4, Arlington National Cemetery Historical Research Collection (ANCHRC); Conner, *War and Remembrance*, 201. For the inscription on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington, according to research conducted by the Office of the Chief of Military History in 1956, "there appears to be some obscurity regarding the person or persons responsible for the selection. There were probably numerous conferences within OQMG before the final decision was made. However, the inscription which was finally selected was identical with the one which originated in ABMC in 1925." Memo, I. Wice, Chief, General Reference Office, for Col. Thomason, 17 Apr 1956, folder 49, box 4, ANCHRC.

¹⁶²⁰ Numbers for Korea and Vietnam obtained from the ABMC database, https://www.abmc.gov.

¹⁶⁰⁸ Liberty Memorial Association, *Roster of Subscribers: The Liberty Memorial*, 2 vols. (Kansas City, MO: Liberty Memorial Association, 1919).

¹⁶⁰⁹ "Flame Alight! A Crowd of 100,000 Views Solemn Ceremony at the Memorial Site," *Kansas City Star*, 1 Nov 1921.

¹⁶¹⁰ "Kansas War Missing Unlisted: State Has No Record of Number of Sons Among Unidentified," *Kansas City Star*, 11 Nov 1921.

¹⁶¹¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Speech in Kansas City on 11 Nov. 1961," Eisenhower Library, https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/file/post_presidential_speeches.pdf (accessed 26 Sept. 2025); Derek Donovan, *Lest the Ages Forget: Kansas City's Liberty Memorial* (Kansas City: Kansas City Star Books: 2001), 122-127.

¹⁶¹² Recognizing the Liberty Memorial Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, as "America's National World War I Museum," and for Other Purposes, H.R. Res. 421, 108th Cong., 12 May 2004, https://www.congress.gov/bill/108th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/421/text (accessed 7 May 2021).

¹⁶¹³ National Historical Landmark plaque, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2006, displayed at the National WWI Museum and Memorial, Kansas City, MO, https://theworldwar-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/s3fs-public/nhl2006 8717478725 o.jpg (accessed 4 Jun 2021).

¹⁶¹⁴ This is the inscription on the base of the Liberty Memorial Tower. "Elements of the Museum and Memorial," National WWI Museum and Memorial, n.d., https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/museum-and-memorial/elements-museum-and-memorial (accessed 21 Jun 2021).

¹⁶¹⁵ News Release, "President Barack Obama Signs Bill Officially Recognizing National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial," National WWI Museum and Memorial, 20 Dec 2014, https://theworldwar-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/s3fs-public/12-20-

¹⁶¹⁸ Once again, approximately 40 percent of families chose to inter their fallen loved ones overseas. Thomas H. Conner, *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018), 196.

¹⁶²¹ This total reflects 26 identified from World War I, 1,314 from World War II, 493 from the Korean War, and 942 from the Vietnam War. Number of rosettes obtained from the ABMC database, https://www.abmc.gov, as of 14 Aug 2020.

- ¹⁶²² Sarah Wagner and Thomas Matyok, "Monumental Change: The Shifting Politics of Obligation at the Tomb of the Unknowns," *History and Memory* 30, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2018), 40.
- ¹⁶²³ Chris Dickon, *The Foreign Burial of American War Dead: A History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2011), 35.
- ¹⁶²⁴ Dickon, Foreign Burial of American War Dead, 35.
- ¹⁶²⁵ Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919–1933* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 22.
- ¹⁶²⁶ Edward Steere, *The Graves Registration Service in World War II* (Washington, DC: Historical Section, Office of the Quartermaster General, 1951).
- ¹⁶²⁷ "World War II Accounting," Defense POW/MIA [Prisoner of War/Missing in Action] Accounting Agency (DPAA), n.d., https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/World-War-II/ (accessed 1 Feb 2021).
- ¹⁶²⁸ "Korean War Accounting," DPAA, n.d., https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/Korean-War/ (accessed 1 Feb 2021).
- 1629 "World War II Accounting," n.d.; Steere, Graves Registration Service in World War II, 30.
- 1630 "World War II Accounting," n.d.
- ¹⁶³¹ "President Clinton Site Excavation Visit: Socialist Republic of Vietnam," White House, Nov 2000, https://clintonwhitehouse4.archives.gov/WH/New/november2000/excavation.html.
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