American Military Cemeteries:

Temples of Nationalism and Civic Religion

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Abstract:

A crusader in soldier armor sculpted on the cemetery chapel of the Aisne-Marne American Military Cemetery designed by Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) testifies of a larger purpose to American military death. Inside the chapel, there are three stained glass windows depicting St. Louis the Crusader, St. Michael conquering evil, and the patron saint of France which flanks the non-sectarian altar at its center. Throughout the grounds rest the remains of 2,289 American soldiers, with an additional 1,060 names engraved on the wall of the missing as part of the chapel. The Aisne-Marne American Cemetery is one of eight World War 1 specific cemeteries on foreign soil dedicated to be the final resting place of soldier crusaders. Why were American soldiers depicted as crusaders? Why do these cemeteries exist in the first place as it is highly unusual to have cemeteries on foreign soil? Questions such as these have yet to be fully explored, but crusaders were the perfect representation for what American soldiers characterized. World War 1 was not a prototypical crusade as a military conquest of the holy land or even for direct religious purposes; and yet, for American soldiers it was a secular crusade against enemies of universal principles of civic religion.

American military cemeteries are unique compared to their global counterparts because they have a dualistic objective in their purpose. Beginning with Abraham Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address, American military cemeteries were designed to honor nationalism and the sacrifice of soldiers as well as to expand principles of American “civic religion.” Defined by political sociologist Anthony Squires as the “politics of the sacred” it consists of “the attempt to define and dictate what is in accord with the civil religious sacred and what is not. It is a battle to define what can and cannot be and

what should and should not be tolerated and accepted in the community, based on its relation to that which is sacred for that community."[1] In another description, civic religion is the common ground in the venn diagram of politics and religion in their respective spheres. Thus, recognizing the balance between toleration and progressive principles becomes one of the biggest challenges of societies and military cemeteries are excellent representations of how American society has interpreted that balance.

Genevan philosopher Jean-Jacquees Rousseau (1712-1788) developed the terminology of “civil religion” in *The Social Contract* (1762) and has become the origin authority for the topic. The pertinent connection to his teaching with the crusader aspect of military cemeteries is that virtue is rewarded and vice is punished.[2] American soldiers were both defenders and crusaders for universal ideals such as equality, liberty, progressivism and patriotism. They were to be rewarded as they fought against opponents who threatened civic religion. While enemies were punished, they were also afforded opportunities to repent, convert, and embrace those principles of civic religion for which the crusaders died in an effort to expand those same principles.

In addition to the chapel at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, other monuments located in military cemeteries include rhetoric to promote American civic religion. The Soldiers’ National Monument dedicated in 1869 at Gettysburg includes the statue “Genius of Liberty” on the main shaft which overlooks the graves and represents one of the earliest references to the dualistic purpose of American military cemeteries.[3] These

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[1] Squiers, Anthony, *The Politics of the Sacred in America: The Role of Civil Religion in Political Practice*, New York: Springer International Publishing, (2018), 20. Another leading scholar in the field of civic religion is Philip Gorski, a disciple of Robert Bellah who coined the phrase “American civic religion” in the 1960’s; see Gorski, Philip. *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present.* United States: Princeton University Press, (2019).

[2] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques., Trans., Walter, Edward Lorraine, *The Social Contract: Or, The Principles of Political Rights*, United States: G. P. Putnam's sons, (1893).

[3] See “Soldiers’ Monument”, Gettysburg National Cemetery, dedicated 1869.

ideals and universal principles are best found in the history, development, and implementation of American military cemeteries as they expanded in terms of implementation within the United States and geographically beyond its borders.

Over the course of one hundred years between 1860 and 1960, the United States established military cemeteries both domestically and on foreign soil as geographic “temples” of nationalism and civic religion. One note regarding the usage of religious language and terminology to describe components of the argument is worth mentioning from the onset. By using language such as temples, martyrs, crusaders, heretics and others within the dialogue, it is not intended to be a perfect description or to be taken literally. They are intended to help streamline the narrative and represent the quasi-religious sacredness of military cemeteries.[4] Once again the crusade which American soldiers were pursuing was not a purely religious one, but rather secular purposes described as being sacred.

This methodology is preferable over attempting to coin new jargon or phrases to push forward the narrative. For example, temples are places of worship, reflection, and ponder; military cemeteries express concepts of worship, reflection, and ponder to the larger causes of civic religion. Martyrs are individuals who gave their life in the name and cause of religion. American soldiers are an expression of martyrs in the name and cause of civic religion. The argument is premised on American civic religion and how military cemeteries are an expression of those universalist ideals. Expression, not literal interpretation, is the key to understanding the terminology used.

Throughout the dissertation, arguments will be made that although not perfect in their implementation, American military cemeteries were on the forefront of societal

[4] I.e. Arlington National Cemetery utilizing the moniker “America’s Most Sacred Shrine”.

progressive movements towards equality. That abolitionist Reconstruction was not the extreme failure as interpreted by most of today's scholars. The plagues of society, including an emphasized continued racial tension, and the retreat from Reconstruction so often cited by scholars were much less prevalent in military cemeteries and therefore a success of Lincoln's abolitionist visions.

Beginning with the Civil War era cemeteries, soldiers of all colors and creeds were buried with humanistic equality, to be discussed at greater detail throughout the dissertation. The majority of those burials/ reburials, including the ones at Gettysburg, were performed by African-American soldiers serving under the Graves Registration Service. Thus setting an early example that although not perfect, American military cemeteries were on the forefront of social change under the banner of civic religion. Former Confederate soldiers were granted access to national cemeteries after a period of reunification plus a military conflict where both North and South fought under one flag for the basic principles of American civic religion. Showing that repentance and conversion to civic religion would ensure all soldiers access to the dualistic objectives of military cemeteries.

World War 1 presented opportunities to expand these civic religion temples throughout Europe; as well as other nations following suit in creating their own military cemeteries with the United States as a forerunner example. Even though there are commonalities in aesthetics and ceremonies (i.e. Unknown Soldiers), the dualistic objective was far more prevalent at American cemeteries. Other nations were however influenced over time and thus have created similar modern day cemetery objectives to the original objectives found in American cemeteries. With the Second World War, an

opportunity to then further expand these civic religion temples was realized as America took on the responsibility of global defender and spreader of civic religious principles. Therefore, depicting American soldiers as crusaders is valid as will be shown through the creation and development of military cemeteries; crusaders of a secular but sacred motivation to honor nationalism and expand civic religion.

Introduction: Called to a Martyr's Grave

Following a last minute formal invitation from the delegated organizer of ceremonies, Abraham Lincoln boarded a train out of Washington D.C. on his way to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It was November 1863, and the purpose of that gathering was to dedicate the newly established soldier cemetery on a portion of the battlefield. Since the conclusion of the battle in early July; citizens, politicians, state representatives, hired artisans, and mourning relatives had meticulously worked to create and establish an honorable final resting place for the dead. Due to the warm summer climate of Pennsylvania, the work of reburying the dead had been temporarily paused and therefore was not finished by the time of the dedication. However, enough had been accomplished to have an appropriate ceremony to honor the fallen before the fullness of winter set in.

The keynote speaker that dedication day was Edward Everett (1794-1865), the nation's foremost respected orator and former Secretary of State. It was his message that was to be the main draw that day, not Lincoln's. Only after a rescheduling request on Everett's part, for more time to prepare his remarks, did Lincoln receive the formal invitation to conclude the ceremonies. Lincoln had only two weeks to consider what his message was to be focused towards. On one hand the message was for those in attendance and had personal connection to Gettysburg. While the other larger message was for the nation despairing through a bloody civil war. Lincoln felt that both could be addressed, but what was the desired message? What did Lincoln view as the purpose behind the bloodshed?

David Wills (1831-1894), a Gettysburg attorney and head overseer of the cemetery's creation, provided Lincoln with the foundational elements to begin shifting the conversation about the war itself and the war dead. The language of the invitation provided Lincoln with part of the inspiration and one of the reasons for gathering that day. Among other logistical items and background information, Wills stated to President Lincoln that:

> “It will be a source of great gratification to the many widows and orphans that have been made almost friendless by the Great Battle here, to have you here personally; and it will kindle anew in the breasts of the Comrades of these brave dead, who are now in the tented field or nobly meeting the foe in the front, a confidence that they who sleep in death on the Battle Field are not forgotten by those highest in Authority; and they will feel that, should their fate be the same, their remains will not be uncared for.”[5]

An early recognition that soldiers were to be rewarded, even in death, for their virtue. That the ideals of civic religion were being adhered to when society honored the dead, which was expected and tolerated amongst its citizens.

Lincoln embraced this charge and ultimately provided the United States with one of its most memorable speeches in history. Yet, far too often the context of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address is overlooked. Whether it is school age children memorizing the immortal words as part of a classroom assignment, or the millions of tourists who read them when visiting the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.; few remember what the occasion was and why the message resonates so deeply. It was the unification of a new phenomenon in romanticized cemeteries with American civic religion that formed

[5] Lincoln, Abraham. Abraham Lincoln papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833 to 1916: *David Wills to Abraham Lincoln, Monday,Invitation to attend the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg and make a "few appropriate remarks"*. (November 2, 1863).

military cemeteries in the United States and therefore represents the true message of the Gettysburg Address given by Lincoln in November 1863.

Military specific cemeteries prior to the one in Gettysburg were sporadic efforts of necessity with little context to larger causes at play or government intervention. Prior to the American Civil War (1861-1865), military deaths in battle were handled on individual circumstances most often by well-to-do citizens of the nearest town or battle survivors. Ultimately and in historical reality, the dead were at the mercy of the living. People realized that something had to be done with deceased bodies on the battlefield, but few actually did something and those that did act only performed an expected bare minimum. Yet the carnage of the American Civil War forever changed the outlook of military death both on the battlefield and in the hearts of mourners.[6]

The United States was the first modern nation to federalize the responsibility of burying its military dead beginning in 1862.[7] Meaning the government would exercise control over the process of reburying the dead in government owned and maintained cemeteries. By the end of that year, America had seen tens of thousands of soldiers killed and thus initiated foundational efforts to appropriately honor the dead. The Roman poet Horace (65 BC- 8 BC), simply stated that “it’s sweet and fitting to die for one’s country” but the problem remained that the sweetness of the sacrifice was often quickly overshadowed by the bitterness of death.[8] How Americans handled death as a cultural

[6] Such as Schantz, Mark S., *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death*, United States: Cornell University Press, (2011); Wills, Brian Steel, *Inglorious Passages: Noncombat Deaths in the American Civil War*, United States: University Press of Kansas, (2017).
[7] There are examples in ancient history, particularly with the Greek Empire that scholars refer to, but in modern history it was the United States that initiated the federalizing of military death.
[8] Horace, *Odes,* book 3, ode 2, line 13, as quoted in *The Works of Horace*, translated by J.C. Elgood, (1893), 58.

event as well as a reality of war was a central component of the Civil War.[9] The country was at a crossroad between nationalism and civic religious principles and military cemeteries were an important part of the destination which was to be achieved.

Established in 1862 at locations labeled as “accidents of geography”[10] were fourteen military cemeteries, simply because they were where soldiers congregated in the early phases of the war. These pre-Gettysburg cemeteries served the purpose of America’s first organized attempt to do something for soldiers' sacrifices beyond the necessity of simply burying them. Little has been done in terms of scholarly research on these pre-Gettysburg cemeteries. Yet to better understand Gettysburg and its role in the development of military cemeteries, a brief historical backdrop is needed. The unanticipated level of carnage from both sides of the war became the number one factor in creating military cemeteries. There were simply too many soldiers to be left to chance and to the private sector. Something had to be done with deceased bodies and those early actions of 1861-1862 were done in haste, with no specific oversight.

Then in November 1863, Lincoln changed the dialogue of expectations on how and where to bury soldiers to a higher and holier plane. No longer were military cemeteries to be done out of unprincipled necessity, they were to represent larger American civic religious ideals set forth “four score and seven years ago” as a “new birth of freedom”. It was a clear signal to the Union that the dialogue was centered on universal abolitionist causes. No longer was the war simply about reunification and national preservation. Lincoln made the war about principles of civic religion and would

[9] See Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War.* United Kingdom: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, (2009).
[10] Holt, Dean W., *American Military Cemeteries, 2d Ed.,* United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010). Preface.

himself become a martyr for those ideals in 1865 as they became more explicit. From its beginning, The United States stood for universal civic principles as a beacon for other nations to follow. Yet, military cemeteries have been neglected by Reconstruction scholars as a representation of those civic religious ideals being implemented. One of the overall themes of this dissertation is to shed light on military cemeteries as important temples of American nationalism and civic religion.

In his brilliantly presented *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith* (2012), Andrew Preston provides a sweeping account of how civic religion has been a key component of foreign policy with the United States, and "As a result, U.S. foreign policy has often acquired the tenor of a moral crusade."[11] Soldiers fighting under the colors of the United States therefore should be considered crusaders defending and spreading American ideals. Although not perfect in their implementation due to human frailty, military cemeteries have shown that morals of equality have largely been adhered to. Yet scholars have missed the connection between military cemeteries as sacred expressions of that American civic religion. Graves of American soldiers at home and abroad are the best geographical representations of a growing civic religion of democracy, human rights, freedom, progressivism, and other universal principles. Therefore, analyzing the relationship between military cemeteries and civic religion becomes the academic omission to which this study will attempt to fill.

[11] Preston, Andrew. *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy*, United States: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, (2012), 5. Other scholars who have progressed the historiography of American civic religion include; Rosenberg, Emily. *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945*. United States: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, (2011).; Gardella, Peter. *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred.* United Kingdom: OUP USA, (2014).; and Ebel, Jonathan H.. *G.I. Messiahs: Soldiering, War, and American Civil Religion*. United Kingdom: Yale University Press, (2015).

In the mind of Lincoln, American military cemeteries were to become important "temples" of that American civic religion. American soldiers were to become "martyrs" and "crusaders" for American civic religion at home and abroad, not merely defenders of nationalist pride. Other nations followed suit in federalizing soldier death but American military cemeteries are distinct and separate thanks to the vision Lincoln initiated at Gettysburg. The similarity of all military cemeteries regardless of nationality and date of origin is that each attempts to increase patriotism as its central message. Yet American military cemeteries have a dualistic purpose; (1) engendering American patriotism/ nationalism and (2) expanding American civic religion by honoring defenders and safeguarders of it from "heretics" and "evildoers" through the process of conversion.[12]

Following the Civil War, American deaths were put into the context of how those deaths moved American civic religion both forward and outward. The first fifty years of military cemeteries dealt with this dual purpose domestically as temples were being established on its own soil. This includes the development of National/ Union cemeteries, Confederate specific cemeteries that usually lacked any reference to universalistic ideals, and additional cemeteries for American soldiers under a unified flag during the Spanish-American War. Upon American entry in the world wars that ravaged the globe during the mid-twentieth century, these cemeteries of sacrifice would be constructed overseas and forever establish foreign temples for the world to honor. Their locations and creation stories at home and abroad are America's best geographical representations of civic religion. They were intended to be both inward memorials to the dead and outward representations for the living.

[12] For the purpose of streamlining definitions within the dissertation, this dualistic objective will be labeled as "Lincoln's vision".

Those that gave the “last full measure of devotion” did so not only as American soldiers protecting nationalistic pride, but they more importantly represented American civic religion and the shining beacon of mankind. American soldier sacrifices were designed and determined to be different by raising the purpose above nationalist and imperialist notions. Their lives were offered as martyrs to a universal inherently religious cause, and it was the Gettysburg Address that contextualized this new higher and holier way of commemorating military dead. Simply stated, Lincoln’s vision of dualistic purposed military cemeteries was that America was to be a nation worthy of emulation and military cemeteries would become the centerpiece of why other nations should follow.

There is a glaring hole in the historiography of American civic religion studies and a crucial missing link in commemoration, memory, religious, and cemetery methodologies. This is the lack of analysis, treatment, and study of military cemeteries. Civic religion scholars have missed how military cemeteries are an important expression of those universalist ideals. While those who have studied the various methodologies of remembrance have not made the connection between civic religion and military cemeteries. Even with brief additional studies specifically towards military death and burial locations, there is still much to be discovered.[13] Those discoveries would include cemeteries and grave sites from every military conflict spanning from colonial wars

[13] I.e., Malloy, Tom and Melinda, “Gravemarkers and Memorials of King Philip’s War”, *Markers XXI,* Annual Journal of the Association of Gravestone Studies, Greenfield, Massachusetts, (2004); which provides one of the only examples of research conducted for King Philip’s War and how it was memorialized within the same time frame of the romantic cemetery movement of the 1830s.

through modern times of which there are over two hundred within the United States and its territories, as well as the battlefields of global conflicts.[14]

Ultimately, American military cemeteries are the best memorial and reminder to the world that it is the responsibility of the living to see through the "unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."[15] Many advancements of universal civic principles were first experimented at military cemeteries and three components taken together form the temple-like sacredness found within American military cemeteries, and represent the framework of the study.

First was the growing romanticized sentiments not only experienced at cemeteries themselves, but also within society as a whole. The Second Great Awakening of the early 19th century became a catalyst for religious reform as well as social reforms. It was during this era when abolitionism, women's reform, and the temperance movements gained foundational footing as part of the American fabric. Directly correlating with universal principles of civic religion, individuals living through the Second Great Awakening saw opportunities to raise death to higher and holier planes. As Protestant America began to emphasize emotion, the idealization of nature, and ennobling the past; military cemeteries would become the early testing grounds to how these movements would affect the day to day experiences of Americans. Lincoln at Gettysburg beautifully intertwined numerous threads of societal life and therefore formalized the dualistic objective of military cemeteries.

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[14] As of the end of 2021, there were 155 National Cemeteries in the United States under the jurisdiction of the National Cemetery Administration, an additional 34 soldier's lots, and 26 foreign cemeteries managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission.

[15] *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, edited by Roy P. Basler and others. "Bliss Copy", (November 1869).

Second is the concept of moral diplomacy between nations in the creation of military cemeteries around the globe following World War 1. As well as the idea that American cemeteries are the beacon of hope to distill American civic religion principles of freedom, democracy and human rights. Even though history with military cemeteries have taken a distinct individual national overtone (Great Britain's are uniquely British, France's are French, and so forth), each nation had to work with one another regarding the death of soldiers. Those relationships were not perfect and had moments of disconnect but ultimately the dead had too much of a symbolic voice. Therefore, agreements were made so that each nation could honor their own dead and the warrior ethos common amongst soldiers exhibited respect to military cemeteries regardless of nationality. Civic religious morals outweighed and affected diplomacy and military cemeteries were the result.

Lastly was the fair treatment of military death at home and abroad, with comrades or combatants under the reality of a warrior ethos towards pragmatism. This could also be described as the expectation of fair treatment between mankind in the context of death. This factor is the most challenging to fit into the overall argument and yet it belongs. Challenges to the thesis premise would point to the human frailties dealing particularly with race and American history. How could it be described as fair and humanistic to segregate dead soldiers? How could it be fair and humanistic to bury Confederate soldiers next to Union soldiers in the same cemetery? Do former enemies "deserve" places of honor? Questions such as these provide the exact context as to why pragmatism belongs as part of the dialogue. The ability to engage with those questions shows a willingness to make progress towards equality. Certain decisions

were done by pragmatic firm believers in American civic religion for ultimate conversion. It might not happen immediately, but conversion was the goal and therefore crusaders could not be viewed as cruel or fanatical.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address provided the higher and holier vision of what American cemeteries could and ultimately would express; romanticized places of beauty and progress, moral diplomacy, and military pragmatism. Taken in totality, these three themes represented the contributing factors to achieve Lincoln's vision. During the one hundred year timeframe of 1860 and 1960, American military cemeteries would achieve Lincoln's vision but it would come in phases. With each successive military conflict came new opportunities to learn from the past and expand civic religion towards fulfilling Lincoln's vision.

To set the stage for historiographical defense, a methodological summary of cemetery studies and military death is needed to comprehend Lincoln's vision presented at Gettysburg. However, a challenge occurs when putting cemeteries at the forefront of a study, one that cemetery historian Richard E. Meyer observed when editing *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery* (1993), he decided "to leave intact the sometimes disparate methodologies and mind sets… for to do so… is to acknowledge and indeed emphasize the fact that the study of cemeteries and gravemarkers,.... Belongs properly within no one area of knowledge but is truly best served through the encouragement of multidisciplinary inquiry."[16] Emphasizing cemeteries therefore by nature becomes a cross section of methodologies. A cross section that has historically been overlooked regardless of the larger methodology employed by the scholar.

[16] Meyer, Richard E., "Strangers in a Strange Land", *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery.* United States: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, (1993), 3.

Historian James J. Farrell began his summative narrative *Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830- 1920* (1980) with this observation, “Death is a cultural event and societies as well as individuals reveal themselves in their treatment of death. Historians, therefore, can profitably discover important patterns of social and cultural life by examining ideas and institutions associated with death.”[17] Perhaps the single most influential voice for cemetery studies belongs to Richard E. Meyer who continues the call for expanded cemetery research by declaring, “cemeteries are far more than merely elements of space sectioned off and set aside for the burial of the dead: they are, in effect, open cultural texts, there to be read and appreciated by anyone who takes the time to learn a bit of their special language.”[18] Military cemeteries have a special and distinctive language, the connective fusion between American civic religion and memorializing military death.

This study is not intended to be a military history, religious history, or diplomatic history. However, the higher and holier purposes of American military cemeteries include all of those components. This particular emphasis does not focus specifically on cemetery studies or even cultural and social studies. Yet, there are angles at which those play a necessary part. Therefore, in a macroscopic view, Lincoln’s higher and holier purposes of military cemeteries most closely align with the growing historical field of memory and reflection studies. The creation, beautification, and continued development of military cemeteries were designed to be reflective in nature. There was a message for the dead and from the dead in military cemeteries. That message being

[17] Farrell, James J.. *Inventing the American way of death, 1830-1920*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, (1980), 3.
[18] Meyer, Richard E., “Strangers in a Strange Land”, *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery.* United States: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, (1993), 3.

soldiers were always crusaders for nationalism and civic religion and military cemeteries solidified those sentiments as temples to their sacrifice.

Perhaps French historian Pierre Nora said it best when describing the uniquely challenging relationship between history and memory, particularly in the context of cemeteries; “Memory and history, far from being synonymous, are thus in many respects opposed…. Memory, being a phenomenon of emotion and magic, accommodates only those facts that suit it…. History, being an intellectual, non-religious activity, calls for analysis and critical discourse. Memory situates remembrance in a sacred context. History ferrets it out; it turns whatever it touches into prose.”[19] For Lincoln at Gettysburg, the history of civic religion was anything but prose. There was to be nothing ordinary about military cemeteries. Yet counter arguing Nora, Lincoln saw the future of civic religion as sacred context not necessarily the remembered past. The division which led to the Civil War was anti civic religion, but the future would be an expansion of those ideals.

One of the leading voices of not only historical memory but also the Civil War is David Blight. His *Race and Reunion* (2001) has become a seminal study for Reconstruction in terms of civic religion. His interpretation is a prime example of a scholar who has exaggerated the failures of Reconstruction due to neglecting military cemeteries. However, to argue that Blight, and others in the neo-Reconstruction historiography camp, completely ignore military cemeteries would be irrational. Yet they do not analyze their roles to the fullest extent which creates an exaggerated interpretation. One of the premises of this dissertation is to examine military cemeteries

[19] Quoted in Blair, Carole., Ott, Brian L.., Dickinson, Greg. *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials.* United States: University of Alabama Press, (2010), 8.

as the focal point, as a key historical phenomenon to understand American nationalism and civic religion. This is to be done not only through the eyes of Reconstruction but also American imperialism to enhance scholarly research for a number of historiographies.

One way to consider and understand the origins of military cemeteries is to recognize the intended audience. Coexisting with Lincoln's dualistic objective, the audience of American military cemeteries was always intended for both Americans and a global community. Lincoln sacrificed the sacred birthright of American military cemeteries in order for the world to experience American civic religion. America's military crusaders have come from every walk of life, every geographic region, and represent a wide cross-section of that global community. Their gravesites within military cemeteries mirror that diversity as examples of Lincoln's vision being accomplished. It is the universal sacred meanings and stories of America's war dead and how they became the adopted sons and daughters of all global citizens desiring freedom and democracy to which answers will be given. These temple cemeteries are monuments for the world and American soldiers are martyrs placed on the altar of American civic religion.

As part of his essay "the Modern Cult of Monuments" written in 1903, Austrian art historian Alois Riegl declared that "A monument in its oldest and most original sense is a human creation, erected for the specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events (or a combination thereof) alive in the minds of future generations."[20] Not unlike mnemonic devices, military cemeteries are monuments designed to be memory aids. The big picture question remains however, what is to be remembered and implemented

[20] Lamprakos, Michele. "Riegl's "Modern Cult of Monuments" and The Problem of Value." *Change Over Time 4,* no. 2 (2014): 418-435.

in the future? For Lincoln it was the larger political ideals of 1776, it was American civic religion and sacred sacrifices of soldiers. Future generations would keep alive and expand American civic religion by honoring those who died defending those ideals both at home and abroad.

When finished, it will be clear that Lincoln's vision of higher and holier objectives were not always executed perfectly but were ultimately achieved. There were times when the flaws of men pushed a more secular agenda driven by political necessity rather than moral obligation. However, even within the flaws of history, American military cemeteries should be viewed as the uplifting universal light that they provide to all nations. It would not be an immediate or complete conversion process, but pragmatic decisions made the process attainable. This is a direct pushback to current trends in the historiography of Reconstruction and even beyond into the World Wars.

Many scholars have been emphasizing the negative components inherent in the eras; none the least the continued racism which drives the historical narrative. Even though American military cemeteries are not immune to the flaws that ended Reconstruction, they do not fall under the same historical judgment. Not every component of the historical experience of Reconstruction sheds forth negative light and military cemeteries are a great example of counteracting historical trends. Reconstruction was never completely overthrown and military cemeteries and their implementation of principles of civic religion is just one specific area which proves the premise.

Recent developments in the field of social histories, in part, have given cemeteries attention but tend to lean heavily in one of two methodologies. First is the

big picture historical development of the American cemetery system. These studies look at cemeteries from a chronological, geographical, and cultural perspective and trace American attitudes toward the necessity of having them in society. Architectural historian Meg Greene has produced a general and brief overview in *Rest in Peace* (2008) of cemetery practices in the United States; including attention given to Native American and ethnic burial grounds.[21] More in depth analysis has been provided by cemetery historian expert David Charles Sloane when he chronicled the development, trends, and evolutions of American cemeteries in his work titled *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (1995). Particular strengths in Sloane's analysis is the process Americans went from embracing the necessity to a sense of embellishing the economics of cemeteries.[22] This included the financial obligations of funerals, headstones, and increasing the aesthetics of the grounds. Rather than just having cemeteries, Americans developed a sense of entitlement and pride in their cemeteries. They became places of gathering and not solely for mourning.

Another scholar that has begun to put focus on cemeteries and their developments in America is Marilyn Yalom who published *The American Resting Place Four Hundred Years of History Through our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds* (2008) which provides an excellent regional study of cemeteries. After overviewing early colonial relationships with Native Americans, Yalom details the process of marking graves and then gives geographical case studies on cemeteries throughout the nation. Putting emphasis on how society engaged with the cemetery itself, including varying

[21] Greene, Meg. *Rest in Peace: A History of American Cemeteries.* United States: Twenty-First Century Books, (2008).
[22] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1995).

religions and nationalities, her work is one of the leading publications for introductory information for American cemeteries. One aspect of Yalom's work that is also noteworthy is her inclusion of an entire chapter dedicated to military cemeteries. The information presented is a basic historical overview but it does suggest that military cemeteries are beginning to be part of the scholarly radar.[23]

Along with chronological studies, historians have also considered the geographic development of cemeteries from urban to rural locations. Colonial cemeteries were most often part of the town square, adjacent to the community church building. Then beginning in the 1830's Americans began to move cemeteries to the outskirts of the population centers.[24] There were many reasons for the move, but ultimately Americans began to redefine the role that the cemetery played in their everyday experiences. As cemeteries moved away from the population center, they also became ethnic and cultural representations of the society they served.[25] In other words, the location might have moved away from the population, but the role of the cemetery moved closer to the heart of the population.

This original methodology of studying cemeteries through a chronological, geographical, or cultural perspective paved the way for the rise of localized community studies. Cemetery specific studies is the second methodology which scholars have studied and provided historical surveys. The classic example of this second, cemetery

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[23] Yalom, Marilyn, *The American Resting Place: Four Hundred Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds*, United States: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, (2008).
[24] For example, Smith, Jeffrey. *The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America.* United States: Lexington Books, (2017). Attention and credit is given to Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts as being the first "rural" cemetery in the United States; *Mt. Auburn Cemetery.* United States: Creative Media Partners, LLC, (2018).
[25] Examples of scholarly work included Meyer, Richard. E. Ed. *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery*. United States: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, (1993); and Dedek, Peter B.. *The Cemeteries of New Orleans: A Cultural History.* United States: Louisiana State University Press, (2017).

specific approach is the attention scholars have given to Arlington National Cemetery, just across the Potomac River from the national monuments of Washington D.C.. Established in 1864 during the final stages of the Civil War, Arlington has come to represent the standard bearer of American military cemeteries. Proclaiming itself as "America's most sacred shrine", the history of Arlington has provided ample opportunities for research. From the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the eternal flame adjoining President John F. Kennedy's grave, to the Confederate Section and everything in-between, Arlington has been a favorite amongst scholars and historians.[26]

Ultimately, this dissertation is a bridge between the two cemetery specific methodologies. Scholars who fall under the umbrella of chronological, geographical, and cultural perspective have largely missed military cemeteries as part of the cemetery story. They detail how Americans came to embrace romantic cemeteries, but neglect to connect military cemeteries as part of the romantic movement as well as to civic religion. For those localized studies, scholars have overlooked the romanticized aesthetics of military cemeteries and more importantly the civic religion objective. Most recognize nationalism as a central mission of military cemeteries but a gap still exists in the historiography. Those gaps will be filled by showing that Abraham Lincoln intentionally fused romantic cemeteries with American civic religion in the form of military cemeteries. This fusion originated at Gettysburg but would be expanded to cover the breadth of the United States and eventually nations abroad.

[26] A selected bibliography of Arlington National Cemetery studies would include; Atkinson, Rick. *Where Valor Rests: Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: National Geographic Society, (2015); Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010); McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016); Historical staff at Arlington are also set to release a new publication specifically on the Tomb of the Unknown in 2021 to commemorate its centennial anniversary.

Specifically with military cemeteries, scholars tend to either completely ignore them or brush over them as reference points with no intention of interpretation. One such example comes from historian Erika Doss and her masterfully written *Memorial Mania* (2010) where she describes the emotional sentiments behind the United States desire to memorialize and yet only has a single reference to military cemeteries.[27] Most of her work deals with death in varying circumstances, and although not entirely wrong in her findings, the missing components of military cemeteries allows for more to be desired in how Americans memorialize. Another scholar who has looked at the role monuments and memorials have played in creating a national identity is G. Kurt Piehler. His *Remembering War the American Way* suggests that the "federal government, by creating and preserving the memory of past wars, has played a crucial role in defining the national identity and the obligations of citizenship."[28] Piehler does include more dialogue on how cemeteries in general should be considered as monuments/ memorials themselves, but is limited in his analysis because he only focuses on nationalistic objectives. Therefore, missing on how military cemeteries advocate for civic religion.

Historians have considered each of America's wars from near every angle, but once again cemeteries have been overlooked. Where historians have done an excellent job in describing the facets of military death is the attention given to reconciliation and memorial building. As mentioned briefly previously, the most noteworthy publication in recent years dealing with the notion of reconstruction, reconciliation, and reunion is David Blight's *Race and Reunion* (2001) where he argues that the deepest meaning of

[27] Doss, Erika, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America,* United Kingdom: University of Chicago Press, (2012).
[28] Piehler, G. Kurt, *Remembering War the American Way*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., (1995), 2.

the war and reconciliation was how to honor soldiers; that the North forgot that soldiers fought for universalistic abolitionist equality in addition to preserving the nation. To Blight, Reconstruction failed because reconciliation and reunion overpowered civic religion.[29] Blight's argument has established the historical interpretation of Civil War memory, reconciliation, and framing Reconstruction by how the war was remembered and the lack of long term radical change.

Along with Blight, other noteworthy studies of cultural memory during the Reconstruction era have also been produced by Thomas Brown, Drew Gilpin Faust, and Caroline Janney.[30] Overall military cemeteries have received little attention by scholars in all methodologies, but in terms of Civil War memory and monument writings they have been argued to obscure Lincoln's universal sacred vision. If and when military cemeteries are discussed, it is done with no interpretative purpose. Many scholars within the neo-reconstructive school of thought consider the era as a failure mostly due to the "retreat"; meaning that Reconstruction did not go far enough to alter American society. There is debate as to the purpose and objectives of both the war and the aftermath under abolitionist terms, therefore commemorating military dead from the war has also been misinterpreted. Military cemeteries were the result of carnage on the battlefield, political legislation of necessity, and society embracing Lincoln's sacred vision. They are not just another example of Reconstruction's mishaps, but rather quite the opposite. Military cemeteries have always had a purpose to progress society

[29] Blight, David W.. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory.* United Kingdom: Harvard University Press, (2001).

[30] Each of these authors add to the discussion of how the war was not only memorialized but also how society reconciled through death and mourning: See Brown, Thomas J.. *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America.* United States: University of North Carolina Press, (2019); Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2009): Janney, Caroline E.. *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause.* United States: University of North Carolina Press, (2012).

through honoring the dead. Thanks to Lincoln, military cemeteries would become temples of righteousness spreading forth American civic religion principles despite their imperfections in implementation.

One scholar who has begun the process of telling the story of military cemeteries is historian Shannon Bontrager. His *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation* (2020) argues that American politics used military deaths to further imperialism and nationalism.[31] Although centered on the politics of cultural memory of storage, retrieval, and communicating military death, Bontrager fails to connect his analysis to American civic religion. His emphasis is on the concept of nation building, imperialistic visions, and patriotism by using military death as a political tool. Even though his work has provided a useful analysis of the first objective of military cemeteries in recent years, it neglects the second and more important characteristic of American military cemeteries as honoring the crusaders of American civic religion.

Ultimately, the historiography of military cemeteries is wide ranging but lacks specific depth. Scholars have mentioned and considered American military cemeteries but few have interpreted them. One truth stands important, few studies have placed military cemeteries directly at the center of focus. Even the Association of Gravestone Studies which has published a yearly academic journal since 1980 has seen very little military specific articles since its inception.[32] Over one million American soldiers have given their lives in the line of duty, and their sacrifices are expressed throughout the

[31] Bontrager, Shannon. *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921.* United States: University of Nebraska Press, (2020).
[32] See *Markers*, the yearly academic journal of the Association of Gravestone Studies, article subject index published by the organization.

globe in temple-like cemeteries. The process and development of honoring their lives is the core of this study, a study to show the gratitude of their fellow Americans left behind to ensure "time does not dim the glory of their deeds."[33] Yet, what is the glory of their deeds? What cause did they offer the last full measure of devotion? The individual war might suggest answers to those questions but for this study the cause is bigger than any individual war. With cemeteries spanning both chronology and geography the cause of crusade was universal and sacred, the spreading forth of American civic religion.

To better understand this universal cause, points of emphasis are to be done in the three major themes already discussed regarding the treatment of military dead. Individual chapters will fall under the larger emphasis of commemoration, diplomacy, and pragmatism. The first theme will cover a general chronological approach with particular attention given to the creation of the American Cemetery System both domestically and internationally. Much of this history has already been told through the lens of Arlington National Cemetery, but there is so much more to be explored. This theme will also include conversations regarding American mores in the desire to memorialize soldiers in the creation of military cemeteries.

The second theme will deal with the diplomacy behind those systems. The establishment of national cemeteries as a diplomatic necessity as a result of Civil War carnage; the conversations and agreements with foreign nations for the establishment of overseas cemeteries; the values, purposes and objectives of the American cemetery system; and the international rules of war. The chronology and geography will expand as American military cemeteries were developed post World War 1 in numerous

[33] Motto and purpose of the American Battle Monuments Commission who oversee, control, and maintain the overseas cemeteries from the world wars.

European countries. Diplomacy discussions, debates, and decisions will take center stage as Lincoln's vision will expand beyond American soil.

Finally the third theme will provide examples of how Americans have treated military death with specific examples of experiences when pragmatism, sensible and practical decisions were presented as an opportunity to be embraced. Whether it was the treatment of their own military dead or examples of Americans giving honorable last acts of service to the dead of belligerents, the purpose was higher and holier from the American perspective. This theme will also show the increasing tension between the warrior ethos and American civic religion. Topics of interest included herein will be the shared global acknowledgement of unknown soldiers and where future scholars could continue to expand military cemetery studies.

Each individual chapter within the larger themes will provide the argumentative points to support the universal ambitions of human ideals of freedom found at military cemeteries. Chapter 2 will provide a basic overview of the American cemetery system and its movement towards rural and romantic sentiments. It will also cover the development of a growing sense of nationalistic pride with the passing of the revolutionary generation, and how the Mexican-American War represents the first example of spreading American civic religion beyond its borders. Then will conclude with particular attention to the military cemeteries established prior to the Gettysburg Address and what lessons can be learned from these prelude cemeteries. Chapter 3 will introduce the early history of the domestic military cemeteries with particular emphasis on Gettysburg and other early cemeteries established during the Civil War. Why the shift towards expressionistic military cemeteries, what challenges the Civil War exhibited to

cultural norms of death, and what role Lincoln had in laying the framework for the sacred nature of military cemeteries will be considered.

The fourth chapter will cover Reconstruction through the Spanish-American War and new challenges presented to military cemeteries. Between 1865 and 1900 military cemeteries doubled in number, when the moral questions of Reconstruction were continually being challenged. The critical component of chapter 4 in terms of the overall argument is that the moralistic crusade regressed during the era but not defeated. It is clear that abolitionists' dreams of equality were not fully met during the labeled “Jim Crow” era but labeling the entire era as a failure is misguided. Decisions were made in the context of raw emotions and military cemeteries are an example that even with steps backward, the overall progress of civic religion was forward.

Chapter 5 will be an in-depth analysis of Arlington National Cemetery and how it transformed into the flagship military cemetery, arguably in the world. As the figurehead military cemetery in the United States, how does it compare with other military cemeteries in its expression of civic religion? What made and makes Arlington different? Specific focus on the secondary literature on Arlington will be emphasized within this chapter as much has been written on the story of Arlington. The sixth chapter will extend Arlington’s role as America’s figurehead cemetery with the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. With the centennial anniversary of World War 1, a newfound emphasis of historical research has coincided. Causes, courses, and consequences of the war have seen historical challenges to the established interpretations by scholars and the role of unknown soldiers is part of that refound emphasis.

This sixth chapter will also add to that centennial increase of study by analyzing the global introduction of memorials and recognition of unknown soldiers. Many are familiar with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, but few realize that the United States borrowed the idea from Great Britain and France and made the memorial their own.[34] Thus once again showing that American military cemeteries are unique and different from their international counterparts. The process of how unknown monuments came to be will be the central focus; and how in extension and expansion unknown soldiers have come to represent the ultimate example of sacrifice in the expansion of civic religion.

As attention is shifted overseas, the moral diplomacy components of military cemeteries provide unique and valuable insight into how the United States has navigated international relationships literally on the battlefields of life and war. Chapter 7 will specifically look at foreign cemeteries and the diplomatic relationships that the United States developed with nations around the world where American cemeteries were to be established. Questions to be considered during this chapter will be a comparison analysis of the First World War on a global military cemetery system and the American version of the Civil War. Others to be discussed will be how nations interacted with each other on the topic of military death; what were the considerations discussed, what were the international agreements, and how belligerent nations were treated comparative to allies.

The eighth chapter will continue the chronology beyond World War 1 into an era of commemoration, pilgrimage, and new opportunities to honor the dead due to a

[34] The United States was the only nation to add remains from subsequent conflicts and therefore solidifying the uniqueness of the American cemeteries. Any similarities in aesthetics and so forth are due to emulation of the American ideological and dualistic objective.

second global conflict. Discussion points will be considered as to how the cemeteries from the two world wars are similar and yet different. Looking at the lessons learned and how those affected decisions both on a federal government level as well as the individual mourners. The language of politicians and others while at dedication ceremonies will be a valuable insight into how cemetery temples were partially created by the power of words. Then considering how an immediate Cold War greatly affected relationships between nations and the messages each desired to portray through their cemeteries.

Arguments will be made that the United States made certain pragmatic decisions and or accommodations to help push forward the crusade of American civic religion. However there will also be a recognition of another religious principle inherent in these examples of honoring the enemy; that principle being the "golden rule" of human interaction. Some might consider America honoring "the enemy", as anti-nationalistic and contradictory to the thesis. Yet, treating others as desired to be treated only solidifies Lincoln's vision presented at Gettysburg. Brief examples not included at length in the narrative include the protection and monument of British General Edward Braddock's gravesite on the battlefield at Fort Necessity, and the honorable burial at sea of a Japanese pilot who crashed into the U.S.S. Missouri near the completion of World War 2.[35]

One of the most undervalued components of military personnel is the recognition of a warrior ethos among their own as well as within their opponents. Military cemeteries

[35] Tradition indicates that burials at sea include the body being wrapped in the national flag. When the decision was made to give the Japanese pilot an honorable burial at sea, American sailors spent the night hand sewing a Japanese flag to be used during the funeral. Information gathered from the U.S.S. Missouri Memorial, Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii.

are a less appreciated and overlooked geographic representation of honoring the warrior ethos but more so as a location of expanding civic religion. On the surface, the dualistic objectives of military cemeteries are in fact in tension one with another. It is difficult to have them coexist and grow at the same rate of speed. However, the premise of the thesis is that the nationalistic/ warrior ethos aspect has been declining in reverence to civic religion. Not a surrender of the first objective of military cemeteries but a voluntary resignation in favor of the more important, higher and holier objective of expanding civic religion.

The epilogue chapter will then provide suggestions as to where the study of military cemeteries could continue to develop both within the United States and throughout the world. Examples include the Cold War politics of militarized Germany and locating battlefield deaths, the mix of nations who have cemeteries in the same geographical region, and comparing nations emphasis on commemorating military death. This concluding chapter will also foreshadow how society and culture have continuously distanced the notion of warrior ethos in favor of civic religion.

Even before the United States officially began the process of memorializing dead soldiers in military cemeteries, citizens of the United States showcased the desire to do so based on individual circumstances. The destruction and death of the Civil War propelled the process into the political arenas alongside the societal ones. When war broke out on the European continent in the early 20th century, military cemeteries grew to include not only domestic decisions but also international agreements. The universal dualistic objectives of military cemeteries provides at least one clarion call to the poignant and somber words of George Washington in his first inaugural address: “... the

propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: And since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."[36] The civic religion experiment had yet to fully be embraced by the time Lincoln stood at Gettysburg. Those eternal rules of order and rights referenced by Washington would continue to be challenged throughout society but military cemeteries would be among the first to implement them through direct and conscience approach.

Abraham Lincoln with the Gettysburg Address gave meaning to military death and military cemeteries. They were to be geographic temples of American civic religion representing the global universal principles of freedom and equality. Military cemeteries were not perfect in their implementation of these civic religion principles. However, it is clear that military cemeteries were on the leading edge of progress. The following is an American national narrative of what military death and military cemeteries mean to a global citizenry; and how they were made to express sacred universal principles to be tolerated and accepted by societies and communities at home and abroad.

[36] Washington, George, "Washington's Inaugural Address of 1789", a transcription, (April 30, 1789), National Archives and Records Administration.

Chapter 2: On Fame's Eternal Camping-ground

Of the many historical locations along Boston's famous tourist attraction succinctly named the Freedom Trail, burial grounds are among the most unique. Visitors are introduced to no less than three of the most prominent Puritan and colonial graveyards in the heart of the bustling city. Their location is historically telling in how graveyards were just as central to colonial towns as were the church and town squares with their government and education buildings. The burial ground was specifically designed to be present and near. Therefore, when death occurred it was not a far or difficult final journey for the living or dead. Cemeteries were designed to be a constant presence and a constant reminder during the colonial and early republic years.

Boston would become the heartbeat of the revolutionary fever during the late eighteenth century and the city represents the best earliest example of the relationship developed between society and death. One specific graveyard along the Freedom Trail is the Old Granary Burial Ground where the remains of Paul Revere, Samuel Adams, the victims of the Boston Massacre in March 1770, and the parents of Benjamin Franklin all reside. Even though the cemetery is only an approximate two acres, the history found within is telling. As the most visited of Boston's colonial burial grounds, it allows glimpses into the past and how society experienced death. The story of American public cemeteries from their earliest origins produces a fascinating foundation for military cemeteries later on. Regardless of time and place, death was part of life and Americans have had a unique narrative with death and cemeteries.

The creation of military cemeteries would take root within a chronological timeline where cemeteries were in a period of change across the United States. From its earliest experiences, American cemeteries connected the realities of existence to when individual existence became part of history. Cemeteries and the field of history have a natural relationship. In basic definition, history is a compilation of moments prior to the immediate present, but what happens when it is a person that transitions from the present to the past? Historian Mark A. Peterson stated in his essay "Stone Witnesses, Dumb Pictures, and Voices from the Grave" that there is a required relationship between death and history: "The dawning of historical consciousness begins with the awareness of death; with the passing of particular individuals, and with the general realization of human mortality. The act of thinking historically, of remembering the past, always means thinking about the dead and coming to terms with death."[37] Peterson utilizes Boston as his case study city and suggests that early Americans were cognisant of giving meaning to life within the confines of death. Thinking historically in the context of death is a unique historiographic subfield. As discussed in the introduction chapter, research about death and dying is relatively new; yet researching dead characters in history is not. Recognizing the connection between history and death provides some of the foundational bricks which Lincoln was able to build his universal vision of military cemeteries.

From the onset of Puritan/ Protestant beginnings, cemeteries were connected to the individual community but more specifically with the church. Graveyards adjacent to church houses and public squares were the norm. This was typical for the first two

[37] Peterson, Mark A. "Stone Witnesses, Dumb Pictures, and Voices from the Grave", in *Commemoration in America: Essays on Monuments, Memorialization, and Memory.* United States: University of Virginia Press, (2013).

hundred years of European existence in America as cemeteries went through little change during that time period. Necessity governed communities and individuals in terms of cemetery principles. Then the citizens of Boston shifted the conversation of death and cemeteries in the 1830's with the creation of a new rural cemetery outside of city limits. This physical location shift was the first cemetery development in America beyond necessity and military cemeteries would follow suit. Location would now play a vital role in the creation and message of cemeteries beyond simple necessity.

Numerous historical factors aided the development of rural cemeteries, and the shift away from grim reminders to romanticized remembrances. Most pressing was population and urban growth which required new conversations as to how, and more importantly where, to appropriately memorialize the dead. Other contributing factors included The Second Great Awakening where a revival of church adherence brought notions of mortality and the eternal soul into question; Westward migration and expansion bringing new uncharted opportunities for growth; and the continued entrenchment of slavery among the Southern states which would widen the gap of American sectionalism. As America was changing, so too were cemeteries in a process to match the newness of opportunities.

Cemetery historian David Charles Sloan summarized the changing cultural landscape as such, "It is difficult today to understand the experimental nature of the cemetery plan. New Englanders had been burying their dead on town commons for two centuries…. Only the social dislocation caused by the migration westward from New England, the appearance of new religious ideas, the rise of industrial manufacturing, and the other changes rocking the region could have shaken the cultural underpinnings

of New England to allow dramatic new burial habits."[38] To argue that cemeteries would never have evolved outside drastic social changes would be shortsided but there is direct correlation to cemetery adaptation to larger American history timelines. Yet within this ever evolving American existence, death continued to shape mindsets on the appropriate relationship between the living and the dead.

The rural cemetery movement has been extensively researched and interpreted by scholars in recent decades. Nearly all are in agreement that the movement began in Boston with physician and botanist Jacob Bigelow (1787-1879) and the desire to create a burial ground that "might at once lead to a cessation of the burial of the dead in the city, rob death of a portion of its terrors, and afford to afflicted survivors some relief amid their bitterest sorrows."[39] Following his dedicated efforts, Bigelow saw his vision come to fruition. Beginning with Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery (1831) cities began to place newfound importance on romanticized aesthetically beautiful landscaped cemeteries.

Recognition and imitation designs were given to Pere La Chaise, a Parisian cemetery established in the early nineteenth century with the same objectives of romanticizing cemetery beauty. Zebedee Cook Jr. who served as the vice-President of the Horticulture Society which oversaw the cemeteries development, stated that the overarching goal of the new Mount Auburn Cemetery was to be a place of natural beauty and "the improvement and embellishment of grounds devoted to public uses is deserving of especial consideration, and should interest the ingenious, the liberal, and tasteful in devising ways and means for the accomplishment of so desirable an

[38] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1991), 45.
[39] Bigelow, Jacob, Massachusetts Horticultural Society and Manning, *History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*, 69.

object;..."[40] For the first time, Americans were attempting to memorialize death with the beauty of life and nature rather than the despair and mourning of mortality.

Even the term cemetery was new in the American dialogue in the 1830's. Previous terms emphasized the finality of death; the most common were burial ground and graveyard. In conjunction with the Second Great Awakening, the rural cemetery movement wanted to instill a notion of a temporary resting place for the dead. Burial grounds were a place of necessity but a temporary one. The word cemetery was derived from the Greek word for resting place or chamber, signifying a spiritual belief in resurrection and hope of another life. Therefore, even the terminology of the rural cemetery movement was a philosophical shift in American sentiments towards death.

With nature, communion, spiritualism, romanticism, and reflection as underlying objectives of rural cemeteries, these newly established commodities would become tourist attractions for visitors of the cities. American citizen and European traveler Nathaniel Hazeltine Carter reflected on his visit to the Pere LaChaise Cemetery in Paris and helped establish the touristy sentiments of newly established rural cemeteries: "Were it possible for the inhabitants of New-York, en masse, to pay a single visit to this (Pere LaChaise) cemetery, I am persuaded they would at once surrender every lingering prejudice, and be unanimously in favour of adopting a similar plan;" Carter continues the thought with the realization that cemeteries can raise individual thought about self and nation to higher and holier levels, the cemetery has become "a great monument of national taste and national feeling, inviting the stranger, as well as the citizen who is attracted by more sacred ties to resort frequently to its rural retired, and consecrated walks, where the body is refreshed by a pure air, the mind meets with

[40] Cook Jr., Zebedee, Quoted in *History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society,* 75.

themes for serious meditation, and the heart cannot fail to be improved."[41] As pre-established negative and finality rituals of death were being challenged, the rural cemetery movement helped formulate a higher and holier way of memorializing. Cemeteries were always places designed for the dead, but now they were being designed for the living as well.

In a newly established rural cemetery, visitors would be introduced to a place designed with beauty, resurrection, and reflection of their place in the larger community. Cemeteries truly became a place for living and the dead. "The most important purpose of the new type of cemetery was its intended function as a cultural institution" states historian Stanley French, which he then connects to the religious connotations of the movement, "After the inception of the rural cemetery movement the moral instructional purpose of the new institution was stressed by the conservative religious, educational, and Whiggish elements of American society which sought to mitigate what they considered to be the unfortunate social effects of an emerging mass society and culture."[42] It is clear to historians that one of the greatest underlying purposes of the rural cemetery movement was to go beyond necessity into the realms of memorialization. Cemeteries were designed to help recall the beauty of life and not only the harshness of death experienced by all. Newly established cemeteries would literally become a sought after location, as the citizenry made it a point to visit cemeteries for their own benefits.

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[41] Carter, Nathaniel H., *Letters from Europe: Comprising the Journal of a Tour Through Ireland, England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Switzerland in the Years 1825, '26, and '27,* Vol. 1, New York: G. & C. Carvill, (1827),

[42] French, Stanley, "The Cemetery as Cultural Institution: The Establishment of Mount Auburn and the 'Rural Cemetery' Movement", in *Death in America,* United States: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, (2017).

Historian Blanche Linden-Ward described the tourist and leisure components of the early rural cemetery movement, "(Mount Auburn) presented visitors with a programmed sequence of sensory experiences, primarily visual, intended to elicit specific emotions, especially the so-called pleasures of melancholy that particularly appealed to contemporary romantic sensibilities." Rural cemeteries were designed to be visited and help instill an internalization sentiment within the grounds. Ward continues by emphasizing the individuals who strongly encouraged visits to the cemetery, "Prime publicists of the cemetery, therefore, were ministers and moralists…, religious liberals who argued that pastoral cemeteries served as schools of moral philosophy and catalysts for civic virtue."[43] There was a distinct and purposeful attempt to connect rural cemeteries to virtuous living and the principles of American civic religion.

Cemeteries in general were becoming more sought after locations of romanticism and expressions of American civic religion. Between 1830-1860, cemeteries in America were being created with new purposes beyond necessity. Abraham Lincoln would extend and solidify those expressions onto military cemeteries starting at Gettysburg but they would go beyond to all military cemeteries. They were to be places where it was expected to visit, to contemplate, and improve yourself and thus improve society around you. Military cemeteries were not to be another harsh reality of war, but rather a romantic reality of sacred sacrifices. Lincoln simply extended what society was already in the process of doing in the public and private fields of citizen cemeteries.

One of the leading literary voices of the romanticized movement towards rural cemeteries was author Washington Irving (1783-1859), famous for his tale of the

[43] Linden-Ward, Blanche, "Strange but Genteel Pleasure Grounds: Tourist and Leisure Uses of Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemeteries", in *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers Voices of American Culture*, edited by Richard E. Meyer, Utah State University Press, Logan, UT, (1989).

headless horsemen, Ichabod Crane, and the Legend of Sleepy Hollow. However, according to scholar Thomas G. Connors there is more to the story. He argues that Irving's creation of Sleepy Hollow has roots in his desire to romanticize death.[44] Irving lays out his perspective by asking, "Why should we thus seek to clothe death with unnecessary terrors, and to spread horrors round the tomb of those we love? The grave should be surrounded by every thing that might inspire tenderness and veneration for the dead; or that might win the living to virtue. It is a place, not of disgust and dismay, but of sorrow and meditation."[45] For a period of nearly fifty years, American cemeteries became increasingly rural on the outskirts of population centers and equally as romanticized. They truly became locations of virtue for both the living and the dead. This veneration and virtue of the dead through beautiful cemeteries was another principle that military cemeteries would later attempt to portray.

Once Mount Auburn was dedicated in 1831, other cities around the nation recognized its aesthetic appeal and put into motion their own rural cemeteries.[46] Examples span from the old established coastal commerce centers of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore to the outskirts of American civilization. The movement may have started in Boston, but the immediate success of Mount Auburn in its natural beauty objectives meant that by the end of the 1830's, rural cemeteries were the norm in every geographic region of the United States. One unique case study of how quickly the rural cemetery movement caught on is found in northwest Missouri,

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[44] Connors, Thomas G., "The Romantic Landscape: Washington Irving, Sleepy Hollow, and the Rural Cemetery Movement", *Mortal Remains Death in Early America,* United States: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, (2012).
[45] Irving, Washington, "Westminster Abbey", in *The Sketch Book,* 138.
[46] See, Cothran, James R., and Danylchak, Erica, *Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemetery Movement*, United States: University of South Carolina Press, (2018). Chapter 3 particularly discusses the rural cemetery movement and provides overview historical information not only for Mount Auburn but also numerous other early examples spanning 1831-1864.

where a group of persecuted religionists were attempting to create a safe haven to worship according to the dictates of their own conscience.

Beginning in 1836, the newly founded Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints established a city called Far West in Northern Missouri. Church founder and organizer, Joseph Smith (1805-1844), had roots in New England Puritanism and one of the first components of the newly established community was a rural cemetery outside of the city limits. The example at Far West shows that the concept of cemeteries outside of the population center had quickly gained a foothold in the minds of community builders across the nation. Yet Far West also provides an interesting connecting thread with Lincoln's universal vision for military cemeteries spoken in 1863 which deserves further attention. At its height Far West had approximately five thousand inhabitants and provides an excellent case study of how American history, cemeteries, and military commemoration all intertwined in the years leading up to the Civil War.

All that remains of the church's community at Far West are four cornerstones of an anticipated temple, a modest monument built in the 1960's commemorating the site, and memories of a distant past. For a brief nine month period from March to November 1838, Far West represented church headquarters and became a "holy and consecrated land" for nearly 5,000 church members who were seeking religious peace.[47] Following persecution in upstate New York, Kirtland, Ohio and Jackson County, Missouri, Joseph Smith and the remaining church leadership set their eyes on a day when religion and American ideals of freedom and liberty could once again be aligned in their lives.

[47] Allen, James B. and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976, reprint 1992), 116–17.

While Smith was still residing in Ohio, church members living at Far West began the process to build and dedicate a temple wherein they could worship and be endowed with spiritual power. In one day's work on July 3, 1837, a group of Saints dug a 110 x 80 foot "cellar" for the foundation of the building. However, construction halted shortly thereafter until further guidance was given.[48] That direction came in the form of a revelation to Smith in April, 1838 where it was stated, "Therefore, I command you to build a house unto me, for the gathering together of my saints, that they may worship me. And let there be a beginning of this work, and a foundation, and a preparatory work, this following summer; And let the beginning be made on the fourth day of July next; and from that time forth let my people labor diligently to build a house unto my name;."[49] The Saints now could move forward with their plans, and July 4 became a critical connecting thread between them and the sacred spirit of commemorating American soldiers past, present, and future.

In what has been described as the political motto of the church written in 1838, Smith declared among other items that "the blood of our Fathers may not cry from the ground against us. Sacred is the memory of the blood which bought for us our Liberty."[50] Sacredness to Smith represented moments and memories where the divine was present, including his reported vision where he claimed that God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him in a grove of trees in answer to prayer.[51] In referring to something as sacred, Smith purposefully raised the mindset of his audience to a higher

[48] *History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties, Missouri, Written and Compiled from the Most Authentic Official and Private Sources*, St. Louis: National Historical Co., (1886). 120-144.
[49] *Revelation, Far West, Caldwell Co., MO, 26 Apr. 1838.* Featured version copied [ca. 26 Apr. 1838] in JS, Journal, Mar.–Sept. 1838, pp. 32–34; handwriting of George W. Robinson; CHL. Includes use marks. For more complete source information, see the source note for JS, Journal, Mar.–Sept. 1838.
[50] *Documentary History of the Church* 3:9, see also *Joseph Smith Journal* (1838), 17.
[51] See Roberts, B.H., *Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, Salt Lake City, (1930).

and holier way of thinking. Similar to Lincoln at Gettysburg, there was an immediate purpose, or reason for gathering, but the larger purposes were of greater importance.

Prior to the temple site dedication ceremonies, members of the community added to the patriotism narrative of Far West by getting “the largest tree we could and made a liberty pole,... Early in the morning we raised the pole, raised the Stars and Stripes and then laid the cornerstone of our temple.”[52] Elder Parley P. Pratt (1807-1857), an advocate and friend of Smith, described the raising of a liberty pole with these poignant words, “On the Fourth of July, 1838, many thousands of our people assembled at the city of Far West,... erected a liberty pole, and hoisted the bald eagle, with its stars and stripes, upon the top of the same. Under the colors of our country we laid the corner stone of a house of worship,...”[53] This liberty pole symbolically watched over the site dedication ceremonies held on the fourth of July 1838, a ceremony which was concluded with a hymn written by Levi Hancock the night before and performed by his brother Solomon:

Come lovers of freedom, to gather,
    And hear what we now have to say.
For surely we ought to remember
    The cause that produced this great day.
Oh, may we remember while singing
    The pains and distresses once born
By those who have fought for our freedom
    And often for friends called to mourn.

The lives and the fortunes together
    And honors all sacred and dear
Were solemnly all pledged forever
    By our honored Forefathers here.
Including the great and the noble
    Who in our behalf were so brave

[52] *Shurtliff, Luman Andros, 1807-1884. Autobiography, circa 1852-1876.*
[53] Mormon Redress Petitions, *Parley Pratt History of Persecution,* 74.

They offered their lives for our freedom
When called for our country to save.

To celebrate this day of freedom
Don't let it ever be lost.
Remember the wars of our Fathers
And also the blood they have cost.
Go children, and tell the same story
To your children's children unborn,
How English lords, tyrants, and Tories,
Have once caused your fathers to mourn.

Exalt then the standard of Freedom,
And don't leave upon it a stain.
Be firm and determined forever
Your freedom and rights to maintain.
Remember the God of your Fathers.
Ye Sons and ye Daughters give ear;
Then with you 'twill be well hereafter,
And nothing you'll then have to fear.[54]

Even though the objective for the day was to dedicate the grounds for a temple to worship therein, the spiritual purpose was equally matched by the patriotic remembrance of the blood spilt in defense of American ideals. References to the blood of revolutionary soldiers hallowing American soil, and a symbolic show of patriotism at a religious ceremony represents the universal spirit Americans held towards the connecting threads of spiritualism, patriotism, and calls to remember military dead.

Another summative example comes from the most analyzed historical event of that day in Far West, Missouri. A fiery speech orated by a member of the church's first presidency, Sydney Rigdon (1793-1876), called upon church members to stand up for their religious liberties, to recall that "We have been taught from our cradles, to reverence the fathers of the Revolution, and venerate the very urns which contain the ashes of those who sleep; and every feeling of our hearts responds in perfect unison to

[54] Hancock, Mosiah Lyman, 1834-1907. *Mosiah L. Hancock autobiography*, Courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

the precept. Our country and its institutions, are written on the tablet of our hearts, as with the blood of the heroes who offered their lives in sacrifice, to redeem us from oppression."[55] Once again, the purpose was to gather as a religious community and dedicate the building of a temple; nevertheless, the theme of the day was soldier commemoration and public displays of reverence to those who sacrificed their lives for principles of civic religion.

Although the United States was still developing as a young fledgling nation, it is clear that this group of American citizens had reverence for soldier sacrifices. The writings and actions taken by church members at Far West show one example of a series of occurrences which Americans have considered the relationship between soldiers and commemoration as sacred. Their actions coincide with the larger movements occurring within the United States; rural cemeteries, the quasi-religious sacredness of memorials, and a growing patriotism of America's role in global affairs. The realities of the Civil War and Lincoln's vision of military cemeteries expanded the depth and breadth of a movement already in progress. There is evidence that military cemeteries were not new when considering individual pieces of their construction, but what makes them unique is that never before had the individual pieces been constructed in that manner.

Rural cemeteries, also known as garden cemeteries to instill the romanticized image of beauty, shifted Americans' perception and process of how to memorialize the dead. Historian Robert V. Wells described this new process as a three folded recognition of "preparation, separation, and restoration"[56] in regard to the timeline of

[55] Oration Delivered by Mr. S. Rigdon, July 4, Far West, Caldwell Co., MO, 1838.
[56] Wells, Robert V. "A Tale of Two Cities: Epidemics and the Rituals of Death in Eighteenth-Century Boston and Philadelphia", *Mortal Remains Death in Early America,* 58.

events with death. His article specifically looks at how epidemics alter norms of death rituals, but solidifies the notion that Americans had established traditions with death. The commonality of death would intertwine with social norms and created death rituals throughout the United States. No matter the arena of preparation, separation, or restoration, the nineteenth century was an era of evolving sentiments. Military cemeteries would become part of that larger narrative and context which was being altered during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the context of military commemoration, the United States would also see a unique shift in mindset that would ultimately be merged under Lincoln's universal vision of what American military cemeteries would represent. The first half of the nineteenth century saw the United States not only double in size with the Louisiana Purchase and other westward expansion, but it also saw the revolutionary generation pass away. Beginning with the passing of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington in 1790 and 1799 respectively, the United States began the process of formulating a national remembrance. Specifically with Washington, American citizens and historians alike spent the first decades of the nineteenth century answering the question of appropriate memorialization for those who fought and died on the original battlefields for American civic religion.[57]

Washington's original tomb had deteriorated by the 1830's and a national movement to improve the grave ensued. It was clear that Washington desired to be buried on his property at Mount Vernon, but his death in 1799 was during an era of

[57] Kurt Piehler suggests that the first national war memorial built in Washington D.C. was a monument dedicated to sailors lost in the attack at Tripoli during the undeclared war against the Barbary powers that was funded privately by naval officers who wanted to honor their fallen comrades. The monument included an urn which contained ashes from those killed in action. See Piehler, G. Kurt. *Remembering War the American Way.* United States: Smithsonian, (2014), 23.

burial necessity. There were brief conversations as to how and where to bury Washington but in reality it would not be until thirty years after his passing that the burial would be reconsidered in different contexts. Historian David Sloan connected this movement with the larger rural cemetery movement: “The desire to enshrine Washington securely and permanently was part of the same impulse that led communities to found rural cemeteries: to ensure the security of the grave sites for generations.”[58] Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Joseph Story (1779-1845) forged a connection with Washington’s tomb at his dedicatory remarks at Mount Auburn; “Who, that has stood by the tomb of Washington on the quiet Potomac, has not felt his heart more pure, his wishes more aspiring, his gratitude more warm, and his love of country touched by a holier flame?”[59] No longer was death and cemeteries viewed as a come and go bygone conclusion of life. There was a growing desire to provide purpose to the living through the locations and motives of final resting places of the dead. There was also a growing sense of nationalism, patriotism, and revolutionary remembrance within the context of rural cemeteries.

The establishment of Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831 would come only five years after the passing of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson within a few hours of each other on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It can be argued that the thirty year period between 1830- 1860 and the onset of the Civil War engendered the relationship between the military, religious morals within the context of history, and cemeteries. Secretary of State Daniel Webster (1782-1852) eulogized Jefferson and Adams by expanding the view of their work to a more global audience:

[58] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1991), 80.
[59] *The Picturesque Pocket Companion and Guide to Mount Auburn,* 76.

"This lovely land, this glorious liberty, these benign institutions, the dear purchase of our fathers, are ours; ours to enjoy, ours to preserve, ours to transmit. Generations past, and generations to come, hold us responsible for this sacred trust."[60] American civic religion, the tenets of American democracy had been in the hands of the "founding fathers", and now with their passing the torch had to be symbolically passed to the next generation. One obstacle however was in the way, "Americans needed such symbolism (patriarchy patriotism) to defeat their fears regarding the ultimate instability of the republic, as it headed toward further political division and civil war."[61] As the chasm of sectionalism was widening, the nation looked to quasi-religious patriotism to help bind together its people and history. Cemeteries were a natural expression of honoring the past by giving the future a unified patriotic vision.

To help contextualize the relationship between cemeteries and nationalism prior to the Civil War, a more in depth analysis is needed. Doing so will allow for Lincoln's universal message of American military cemeteries to have a stronger foundation within the context of history. Although developed distinctly, the changes of cemetery practices and nationalistic passion would come together in November 1863 on the Gettysburg battlefield. Lincoln was not responsible for either movement in of itself, yet his remarks and vision at Gettysburg was the creation moment of multi-purposed American cemeteries: honoring the patriotism of defending the homeland, and preserving the universal rights of global citizens by defeating their enemies.

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[60] Webster, Daniel, "Eulogy, Pronounced in Boston, Massachusetts, August 2, 1826", in *A Selection of Eulogies: Pronounced in the Several States, in Honor of Those Illustrious Patriots and Statesmen, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.* United States: D. F. Robinson & Company, (1826), 230-231.
[61] Burstein, Andrew, "Immortalizing the Founding Fathers", *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America.* United States: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, (2012), 106.

Many scholars have argued and defended the growth of nationalism during the early nineteenth century, and yet few have considered that impact on cemeteries and the military. The generally accepted argument is that both the changing landscape, literally and figuratively, of cemeteries and the nations borders were responsible for a universal mindset. Justice Joseph Story declared that “Those feelings of our nature… which are more strong and universal than all others (were) the desire to die in the arms of our friends; to have the last sad offices to our remains performed by their affections; to repose in the land of our nativity; to be gathered to the sepulchres of our fathers.” He continued, “We derive solace, nay pleasure, from the reflection, that when the hour of separation comes, these earthly remains will still retain the tender regard of those whom we leave behind (and) our place of burial will be remembered for generations.”[62] There was something universal and humanistic about the desire to be remembered. That is particularly true when considering military deaths and the causes for which they gave their lives.

In an era when patriotism was being defined through the lens of expansion and the founding generation of Americans passing away, one unique set of documents has helped connect fibers between death and the military. Described as the “founders’ eulogists" by scholar Andrew Burstein, these documents and sentiments show that the nation was attempting to place itself on a higher and holier plane during the decades leading up to the Civil War. Burstein stated, “the new nation required a superhuman fabrication. And so, not surprisingly, after their decease, the defining characters of the republic continued to ‘speak’ paternalistically, or pantheisticically, urging citizens to

[62] Story, Joseph, “Judge Story’s Address”, in *Picturesque Mount Auburn,* 65-67.

understand the nation as something sacred, diffusive, and enduring."[63] He continued by recalling the ideals of Puritans and the hope of what the new world could become: "The Puritans had imagined North America as a holy refuge and pastoral garden. From the time of the Revolutionary crisis, newspapers and pamphlets carried forward a millennial promise: in American history God's moral ends would be realized."[64] There was a sacredness attached to American history, and Lincoln would use those same adhesive fibers when giving purpose to military death. Realizing and embracing that "God's moral ends" included the universal principles of civic religion.

One scholar who has researched the connection between memorialization, military death, and the growing definition of American nationalism has been Sarah J. Purcell with her *Sealed with Blood War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America* (2002). She argues that "Self-sacrifice, military heroism, love of liberty, benevolence, fear of centralized power, and a reverence for the common good merged to form a republican ideology that helped to organize American thought and action."[65] Purcell embraces the term "usable national memory" multiple times throughout the discourse as she defends the notion that Americans have always desired to attach meaning and purpose to military death. There had to be a sentiment of remembrance, martyrdom, and spirituality for soldiers to voluntarily offer their lives in service. Even though military cemeteries would not be officially organized until the Civil War, Purcell furthers the argument that Americans have always held military death in higher and holier realms.

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[63] Burstein, Andrew, "Immortalizing the Founding Fathers: The Excesses of Public Eulogy", in *Mortal Remains Death in Early America,* 94.
[64] Burstein, Andrew, "Immortalizing the Founding Fathers: The Excesses of Public Eulogy", in *Mortal Remains Death in Early America,* 94.
[65] Purcell, Sarah J., *Sealed with Blood War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America,* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, (2002), 2.

Another example of patriotically recognizing the connection between American history, cemeteries, and the military came from the Tammany Society of New York during the early nineteenth century when they executed a reinterment ceremony for the remains of approximately eleven thousand American lives that were lost on British prison ships in New York Harbor. Historian Matthew Dennis has done extensive research on the events surrounding these soldiers and declares: “These remains became holy objects, which served to promote patriotic memory and national feeling. That is, nationalism was in the process of democratizing through the reverential treatment of thousands of undistinguished bones representing ordinary American patriot-martyrs.” Dennis continues connecting soldier remains to patriotism, “In various ways, the remains of common soldiers and sailors- both identified and unidentifiable- would continue to cultivate memory, nationalism, patriotism, and the particular political agendas of memorializers,...”[66] The years leading up to the Civil War provide fascinating insights into how the United States was developing the relationship between American civic religion, the military, and cemeteries.

When war broke out between the United States and Mexico in 1848, American soldiers were called upon to defend the motherland for the first time on foreign soil. The conflict over Texas created a unified clarion call to “remember the Alamo” and the brave soldiers who died protecting it. President James K. Polk initiated war nearly a decade after the attack at the Catholic mission and the brief conflict resulted in an expanded American civic religion. Historian Kirt Piehler summarized: “In justifying territorial expansion and Manifest Destiny, they (supporters of the war) claimed that the United

[66] Dennis, Matthew, “Patriotic Remains: Bones of Contention in the Early Republic”, *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America*. United States: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, (2012), 137.

States could best promote the principles of liberty and democracy by annexing more territory."[67] Cemeteries would become part of that expansionist theory not only for the Mexican-War but especially in later wars where battlefields spread across the globe.

Military death during the Mexican- American War totaled just over 13,000 with the majority of them dying from disease while stationed at frontier forts. The reality of military dead being buried on foreign soil was not lost on many of the commanding officers as argued by historian Steven Butler in "The Forgotten Soldiers: Deceased U.S. Military Personnel in the War with Mexico" (1999).[68] Yet, the majority of military dead from the Mexican- American War were buried where they fell. However, there were unique circumstances where family, friends, and communities would repatriate the remains and return them back home. Butler goes into greater detail on how the military dead from the Mexican- American War were treated and provides valuable insight into how romanticized cemeteries, military patriotism, and American civic religion were being established as one in the years leading up to the Civil War.

Even though the federal government did not get directly involved with military death until the Civil War, private organizations and even state governments did take dramatic efforts at times to honor the dead. Kentucky was one such state. In 1847 state officials from Kentucky authorized at the expense of citizens for soldiers who died during the conflict to be repatriated back to the state capital of Frankfurt. Sculptor Robert Launitz designed the monument and Senator John C. Breckenridge (1821-1875) was the keynote speaker for the dedication ceremonies. Breckenridge opened his remarks by connecting patriotism with military death: "We are assembled on a mission

[67] Piehler, Kurt, *Remembering War the American Way*. United States: Smithsonian, (2014), 40.
[68] Butler, Steven R. "The Forgotten Soldiers: Deceased U.S. Military Personnel in the War with Mexico". Master's thesis, The University of Texas at Arlington, (1999).

of gratitude, to honor the memory of those who evinced the loftiest patriotism by giving their lives for their country."[69] He then proceeds to give accounts of individual histories of soldiers killed and brought back to "the protection of their country." Breckenridge then concludes his remarks by suggesting another aspect of the dualistic purposes of military cemeteries: "To these solemn ceremonies belong a two-fold motive. While they honor the dead, and acknowledge the obligations of gratitude, they teach the living that this people will preserve the memory of heroic deeds. The nation that rewards the devotion of her sons will never want defenders. To the patriot, no consolation can be more precious than the assurance that he will be remembered by his country."[70] Those similar sentiments would be utilized by Lincoln at Gettysburg to help establish military cemeteries on the federal level. The dead were to be honored, and the living were to be taught the principles of civic religion.

Following the conclusion of the Mexican-American War, President Millard Fillmore in 1850 authorized legislation for the creation of a federally overseen military cemetery in Mexico City. In part the legislation reads: that "a piece of land near the city of Mexico, for a cemetery or burial ground, for such of the officers and soldiers of our army, in our late war with Mexico, as fell in battle, or died in and around said city."[71] This legislation pre-dates the Civil War cemetery legislation by twelve years, and was the only significant government action to care for soldiers who gave their lives during that particular conflict. It was the furthest step towards a federalized government intervention

[69] Breckenridge, John C., "An address on the occasion of the burial of the Kentucky volunteers, who fell at Buena Vista: delivered at Frankfort, on Tuesday, the 20th of July, 1847. With the remarks of the Rev. John H. Brown on the same occasion, Lexington, Ky.: Printed at the Observer and reporter office, (1847).
[70] Breckenridge, John C., "An address on the occasion of the burial of the Kentucky volunteers, who fell at Buena Vista", 13-14.
[71] Butler, Steven R. "The Forgotten Soldiers: Deceased U.S. Military Personnel in the War with Mexico". Master's thesis, The University of Texas at Arlington, (1999).

regarding military death than had ever occurred within the United States. Albeit, according to records summarized by historian John Neff, “only 750 bodies- little more than 5 percent of the soldiers killed- were found and reinterred in the new grounds all of them unidentified.”[72] Although lost to the obscurities of history, the Mexican- American War and President Fillmore’s legislation does provide numerous examples of embers which Lincoln would later ignite. Military death was once again a reality, but challenging the necessity of burial to a higher and holier thought process was entering into the equation. Therefore it is clear that citizens and politicians in the United States were beginning to attempt to answer the question of how to properly memorialize soldier martyrs, but the results were still a work in progress.

One concluding example, which also has ties to the Mexican- American War, before turning attention to the development of military cemeteries themselves comes from a Confederate Colonel better known for his poetry. Born the son of Irish immigrants in 1820, Theodore O’Hara (1820-1867) would experience a life that coincided with the larger events occurring in American history. Biographers Nathan Hughes and Thomas Ware meticulously attempted to retrace the life path of O’Hara in their 1998 work published as *Theodore O’Hara Poet Soldier of the Old South* and concluded that his “life and career led him into some of the most exciting and important events of his time- and by extension, some of the most dramatic and consequential occasions of the history of the United States in the mid-nineteenth century.”[73] O’Hara experienced westward expansion, frontier conflicts, and military action in the Mexican-American and

[72] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation.* United States: University Press of Kansas, (2005), 28.
[73] Hughes, Nathaniel Cheairs., and Ware, Thomas Clayton. *Theodore O'Hara: poet-soldier of the Old South*. United States: University of Tennessee Press, (1998), Preface.

Civil Wars. Yet he is most well known for a poem he composed in 1847 to honor soldiers killed from his home state of Kentucky during the Mexican-American War. As with most poets, his work was not fully appreciated until after his death in 1867, and Hughes and Ware argue that the poem has always been more recognizable than his name.

“On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead…

No vision of the morrow's strife
The warrior's dream alarms;
No braying horn nor screaming fife
At dawn shall call to arms…

Twas in that hour his stern command
Called to a martyr's grave
The flower of his beloved land,
The nation's flag to save…

Your own proud land's heroic soil
Shall be your fitter grave;
She claims from war his richest spoil --
The ashes of her brave.

Thus 'neath their parent turf they rest,
Far from the gory field,
Borne to a Spartan mother's breast
On many a bloody shield;

The sunshine of their native sky
Smiles sadly on them here,
And kindred eyes and hearts watch by
The heroes sepulcher.

Rest on embalmed and sainted dead!
Dear as the blood ye gave;
No impious footstep shall here tread
The herbage of your grave;

Nor shall your glory be forgot
While fame her records keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot
Where Valor proudly sleeps…

Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor Time's remorseless doom,
Shall dim one ray of glory's light
That gilds your deathless tomb."[74]

Usage of the poem would take on another life of its own during and post Civil War in national cemeteries but context matters in regards to chronology.[75] O'Hara composed the reflective message during an era of patriotic, nationalistic, and cemetery development. The tenets of American civic religion were being re-interpreted by what might be labeled as second-generation Americans. Not in pure genealogy terms but rather as the descendents of the founding generation. O'Hara's masterpiece fits perfectly into the larger movement towards nationalism, civic religion, and cemeteries.

When the Civil War began in April, 1861 at Fort Sumter, few people would have imagined the death toll approaching three quarters of a million in a span of four short years. Battlefields would hastily turn into graveyards as the pace of the war would not allow for any meditated memorialization of the dead. The necessity of new burial, identification, and cemetery protocols within the military became an unexpected consequence of the war. American nationalism and cemetery evolution was being put to the test for the first time. Traditionally, military death was dealt with by the private sector with little interference from government representatives: "Burying the dead after a Civil

[74] O'Hara, Theodore, "Bivouac of the Dead", original poem, (1847).
[75] Many National Cemeteries throughout the United States use stanzas of O'Hara's poem on plaques and memorials throughout the grounds: "By 1890, one visitor to a number of cemeteries observed 'Quotations from this one poem are repeated over and over, at the gateways and on painted boards at the turns of the avenues among the graves. In Antietam cemetery one might pick up and put together almost the entire production from these inscriptions.'"; as quoted from Johnson, Rossiter. "Martial Epitaphs.", *The Century, a Popular Quarterly,* Vol. 40, No.1 (May 1890): 156-57.

War battle seemed always to be an act of improvisation, one that called upon the particular resources of the movement and circumstance: available troops to be detailed, prisoners of war to be deployed, civilians to be enlisted."[76] However, the realities of the Civil War gave the United States the opportunity to be the first nation to change the narrative and federalize military death.

With Gettysburg being the hinge point, there are two distinct eras of Civil War military cemeteries; those that came prior to Gettysburg and those that were developed afterwards. Particular attention will be paid to the Gettysburg Cemetery and those that followed suit in the following chapters, but the purpose of this final section of chapter 2 is to provide the foundational building blocks which Lincoln used to construct his higher and holier vision of military cemeteries. The American cemetery system and its evolution during the nineteenth century and the growth of "America's emerging optimistic religion and exuberant nationalism."[77] are two building blocks already discussed which allows attention to now be given to the first attempts at federalizing military cemeteries.

The war was now a year old and many were surprised at the lack of progress on either side. Arguably the only thing to show for the military's efforts was the growing death toll. Historian David Sloane argues that "Although the Civil War had only an indirect impact on American attitudes toward death, it created a new category of sacred spot: the war battlefield…. Larger war memorials, the major battle sites with their vast cemeteries, became among the first of America's historical places."[78] Pushing back

[76] Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War.* United Kingdom: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, (2009*),* 65.
[77] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1991), 55.
[78] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. 113.

against Sloane's reasoning briefly allows recognition that the war did ultimately have a direct impact on Americans attitudes towards death. The additional context of military death as civic religion crusaders shifted how society attempted to memorialize soldier sacrifice.

Unfortunately the number of deaths would only exponentially grow as the war marched on, but by 1862 politicians were looking beyond the immediate war. Preserving the Union turned into preserving the Union dead. Scholar Bruce Elliot noted "The war also occasioned the government's acknowledgement of the necessity to recognize the democracy of sacrifice by marking the graves of all who fought for the Union, regardless of wealth or status. It was no longer acceptable to leave the dead strewn on the field of battle or to bury them anonymously in trenches or common graves, and erect public monuments merely to the generals."[79] The democracy of sacrifice through military service was a clear connection between military death and American civic religion.

Two examples of how the connection continued to be interpreted came in 1889 by Senator John James Ingalls (1833-1900) who stated that "In the democracy of the dead all men at last are equal. There is neither rank nor station nor prerogative in the republic of the grave."[80] The second by John C. Breckenridge at the dedication ceremonies for the Kentucky Mexican-American War cemetery in Frankfurt: "Beside the bodies of the officers lie those of the private soldiers. The spirit of our people is illustrated in the equal tribute paid to the memories of all these patriots. The distinctions of rank exist no longer. Upon them all, death has set the seal of equality."[81] All soldiers

[79] Nassaney, Michael S.., Baugher, Sherene., Veit, Richard F.. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers.* United States: University Press of Florida, (2014), 146.
[80] Ingalls, Senator John James, eulogy on the death of Representative James N. Burnes, (January 24, 1889), *A Collection of the Writings of John James Ingalls,* 273.
[81] Breckenridge, John C., "An address on the occasion of the burial of Kentucky volunteers", 10.

deserved a sacred resting place, and therefore the federal government began official legislation regarding the appropriation of assets towards cemeteries.

Under the direction of the Quartermaster General, Congress provided the general concepts and generic guidelines for the establishment of the first official military cemeteries approximately eighteen months prior to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address:

> In order to secure, as far as possible, the decent interment of those who have fallen, or may fall, in battle, it is made the duty of Commanding Generals to lay off lots of 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 when practicable (sic), the names of the persons buried in them. A register of each burial ground will be preserved, in which will be noted the marks corresponding with the headboards. (General Orders No. 33- April 3, 1862)[82]

The first directive was simple in vision but difficult to put into motion. Ultimately, it was under the responsibility of the Commanding Generals to do their best in the situation with little to no oversight. By year's end of 1862 there were fourteen military cemeteries established. They were located throughout the country adjacent to battlefields, hospitals, and troop encampments and show that soldiers were adhering to the new official directive to honor the dead in their burial locations.

These fourteen cemeteries were located in the following locations, alphabetized by name: Alexandria National Cemetery (Alexandria, Va.), Annapolis National Cemetery (Annapolis, Md.), Antietam National Cemetery (Sharpsburg, Md.), Camp Butler National Cemetery (Springfield, Ill.), Cypress Hills National Cemetery (Brooklyn, N.Y.), Danville National Cemetery (Danville, Ky.), Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery (Fort

[82] Quoted in, Sledge, Micheal, *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor Our Military Fallen,* Columbia University Press, (New York) 2005, 33.

Leavenworth, Kan.), Fort Scott National Cemetery (Fort Scott, Kan.), Keokuk National Cemetery (Keokuk, Iowa), Loudon Park National Cemetery (Baltimore, Md.), Mill Springs National Cemetery (Nancy, Ky.), New Albany National Cemetery (New Albany, Ind.), Philadelphia National Cemetery (Philadelphia, Pa.), and Soldier's Home National Cemetery (Washington, D.C.).[83] These first generation cemeteries have no rhyme or reason to a specific geographical location, except that none resided in confederate states. It cannot be overstated that the federalization of military cemeteries was driven by a Northern legislature and narrative. Which also brings back into the equation the roots of the cemetery system in the Protestant North as well.

Looking closer at the development of these fourteen pre-Gettysburg cemeteries also provides a unique insight into what not only the government but also citizens learned in the process of memorializing soldier dead. Of the fourteen pre-Gettysburg cemeteries, only two are located specifically on battlefields, Antietam and Mill Springs. The remaining twelve were located where troops would congregate for either training, hospital recovery, or even prisoner of war parole camps as was the case for the cemetery in Annapolis, Maryland.[84] Even though these fourteen cemeteries were established in 1862, the final legal processes would take longer to formalize. Which is also a unique connection with the cemetery at Gettysburg, dates of establishment and dates of legal completion were different in nearly every case of Civil War cemeteries.

Dean Holt, a former employee of the National Cemetery Administration has published the best summative overview of the cemetery system with his *American*

[83] Authors, "History and Development of the National Cemetery Administration", VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration.
[84] Holt, Dean W.. "Annapolis National Cemetery", *American Military Cemeteries*, 2d Ed.. United Kingdom: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2009), 21.

Military Cemeteries A Comprehensive Illustrated Guide to the Hallowed Grounds of the United States, Including Cemeteries Overseas (1992). The contents of the book include a brief historical overview of the cemetery system beginning with the Civil War up through time of publication, appendices dealing with small topic specific information such as headstones, and his greatest contribution is a cemetery by cemetery historical overview. Each cemetery in the national system is given a brief basic historical overview and the origin stories behind them.

Describing the legislations of 1862, Holt states that they were "the necessary final step in assuring a proper burial for military dead- an effort the War Department had begun over a year earlier, when responsibility for burial of officer and soldier dead was delegated to commanding officers of military corps and departments." He continues, "The act itself was a means of legitimating the actions of military commanders in the field who had, prior to July 1862, simply buried the dead where they fell and declared the land a military burying ground without compensating the owner."[85] Sloane agrees with Holt in that "The earliest burials in the military cemeteries were rough and quick, with little attempt at identification and less at sanitary conditions. As the war progressed and the number of casualties escalated, an attempt was made to provide each grave site with a wooden headboard identifying the deceased."[86] Therefore the pre-Gettysburg cemeteries can be summarized as a collection of geographically sporadic locations, with little to no parameters of execution, and were the first attempts to legally federalize military cemeteries beyond hastily created necessities.

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[85] Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries*, 2d Ed.. United Kingdom: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2009), 2.

[86] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History.* United States: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1991), 114.

A second major legislative document in the development of national cemeteries came in July of 1862. Known as the Omnibus Act and passed by the 37th Congress, section 18 represents a broad extension of presidential power; “And be it further enacted, That the President of the United States shall have power, whenever in his opinion it shall be expedient, 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.”[87] With General Order No. 33 and the executive power to purchase land for the purposes of burial grounds as precursor legislation, the federal government began the process of memorializing those who sacrificed their lives for the Union they were attempting to save.

President Lincoln’s involvement in the development of the fourteen 1862 cemeteries was limited in scope from a personal level. Logistical aspects of fighting the war were on the forefront of his mind, and he delegated responsibilities to local commanders and volunteers. The lack of direct correspondence between Lincoln and the 1862 cemeteries reflects a president who is busy; too busy with other obligations that occupied his time and attention. Naturally, more study and research needs to be done to fully understand Lincoln’s relationship with these 1862 cemeteries as limited as it was. They represent the most underutilized, under-researched, and undervalued era of Civil War cemeteries. Necessity and haste, federal ambiguity in legislation, and presidential delegation have relegated 1862 cemeteries to the footnotes of history. Even so, they provide an excellent foundation for which to build Lincoln’s changing perspectives towards the role cemeteries play in the rebuilding nation.

[87] United States 37th Congress, “An Act to define the Pay and Emoluments of certain Officers of the Army, and for other Purposes.” July 17, 1862.

The relationship between American religion, military cemeteries, and the crusaders buried within had foundation stones long before the Civil War. Early Puritan cemeteries were purposefully built on church property to remind individuals the realities of death and the need for spiritual salvation. The church was also the center of each community and therefore not geographically too far to handle death in a speedy manner. When cemeteries went through their first major cultural change with the development of rural cemeteries beginning in 1830, their purpose was to instill romanticized thoughts about death. They were designed to be beautifully landscaped outside of population centers as a place for both the dead and living to resort to. It was also during the 1830's where patriotic remembrance of the founding fathers instilled in the minds of Americans that the destiny of the nation was intertwined with sacred principles. In the years leading up to the Civil War and Lincoln's universal sacred vision of what military cemeteries should represent, the pieces of the puzzle were already in place. It was Lincoln at Gettysburg who provided the image of what military cemeteries were intended to represent and work commenced almost immediately to see the vision realized.

Chapter 3: Altogether Fitting and Proper

Only hindsight would put the battlefield at Gettysburg on the forefront of American minds and expressions of mourning. At the time, July 1863 would have been added to a growing list of consequential battles alongside Bull Run, Shiloh, and Antietam. Yet even in the immediate days that followed, something about Gettysburg was different. Historian Rob Wingert summarized the local sentiment in 1863 by stating "The dishonor of letting these Union men lay on the field, those who 'gave the last full measure of devotion,' was unthinkable and unconscionable, especially those native Pennylvanians who died on the native soil of the commonwealth."[88] American military cemeteries were a direct result of the Civil War, and they were directly affected by efforts at Gettysburg.

The desire to do something from the citizenry was almost immediate, and within a week's time, plans were being prepared and put into motion. Nobody knew exactly the details or how it would look, but Gettysburg became the first battle where a conscious effort was placed on burying the dead. Therefore, Gettysburg represents the true birthplace of American military cemeteries. Although efforts had been initiated prior, it was at Gettysburg that soldier sacrifice would be raised to the higher and holier principles of American civic religion. In the four and half months between the conclusion of the battle and the dedication ceremonies, plans to honor the dead would overcome anticipated and unforeseen challenges. There were numerous unsung heroes involved

[88] Wingert, Rob, "Simple Grandeur'" The Creation of the Soldiers National Cemetery at Gettysburg and the men who Stepped Forward to Make Their Contribution", T*he Unfinished Work- Abraham Lincoln, David Wills & The Soldiers' National Cemetery Papers of the Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*, Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015).

in the work and those stories deserve to be shared in the history of military cemeteries. Ultimately, The Soldiers Cemetery at Gettysburg would become part of the sacred fabric not only for Lincoln's address but also for what military cemeteries would express to the nation and global citizenry.

One aspect that makes Gettysburg unique is the historical emphasis placed on the battle itself after the conclusion of the war. Gettysburg historian Gary W. Gallagher has claimed that the battle of Gettysburg has no less than ten thousand bibliographic references, let alone the larger library of Civil War publications which no doubt include it as part of the narrative.[89] Within the bibliography of the battle, one established interpretation was that the Battle of Gettysburg was the final straw for a potential Confederate victory. With the defeat at Gettysburg, many considered the Confederacy's chances of winning the war null and void and as the old proverb suggested, "it was only a matter of time" following July 1863. The Confederacy was limited to the fading hope that the Union was growing weary and would retreat from pursuing victory. However, momentum was on the Union side. Especially when adding in the surrender of Vicksburg, Mississippi to General Grant's forces within twenty four hours of the conclusion of Gettysburg. For many scholars, Gettysburg was the point that Union victory became when and not if.[90]

Also considering other independent factors such as Gettysburg being the largest battle of the war, it taking place in free Union territory, being Lee's boldest attempt in the North, and the deadliest battle in American history; it is clear as to why historians love

[89] Gallagher, Gary W., "Understanding Gettysburg in 2021", Lecture given on behalf of Forever Scholars, (October 14, 2021).
[90] Charles River Editors, Charles River. *Gettysburg and Vicksburg: The Civil War Turning Points of 1863*. N.p.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, (2017). See also, White, Kristopher D.., Mackowski, Chris, *Turning Points of the American Civil War.* United States: Southern Illinois University Press, (2018); Symonds, Craig L., *The Battle of Gettysburg.* N.p.: New Word City, (2017).

Gettysburg. Yet herein lies the problem once again about the lack of emphasis placed on the cemetery at Gettysburg. If mentioned at all, the realities of a military cemetery on the battlefield is relegated to historical footnotes. It is long overdue that the existence of the cemetery and its story becomes intertwined with the battle and the address. Among the sacred historical sites throughout the United States, the battlefield of Gettysburg is a prime example, and the cemetery is an overlooked equal expression of temple-like grounds to be honored alongside its military counterpart.

To place the Soldiers Cemetery at Gettysburg (hereafter referred to as the Gettysburg National Cemetery for description purposes) on its rightful perch within the pantheon of American sacred historical places, the timeline and people between July and November needs particular attention. Only after countless hours of dedication to the war dead at Gettysburg would Lincoln be granted his moment to put into words his vision of American military cemeteries. Among the many who provided services, certain individuals deserve recognition for their efforts to give Lincoln his literal and symbolic platform to turn military cemeteries into temple-like expressions of American civic religion. Two such individuals were Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin (1817-1894) and local Gettysburg lawyer David Wills. They would become the architects, engineers, organizers, financers, and biggest advocates of a military cemetery on the battlefield. It was their commitment to the cause, along with the citizens of Gettysburg to which attention will be given. At the cemetery's completion, Governor Curtin and David Wills would be the leading unsung heroes to orchestrate the development of a cemetery worthy of Lincoln’s universal sacred vision.

As the war left Gettysburg, the ever present reminders of death became the motivation of Pennsylvania citizens and politicians. The four and half months between July and November were constituted by an overarching desire to remorse, remember, and reminisce on the departed. Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin visited the battlefield in the immediate aftermath and was overwhelmed at the realization of death around him. This realization initiated official government intervention in terms of assistance to properly bury the dead. As governor, he had the responsibility to care for his constituents and providing the political backing for a cemetery was a natural and honorable step to be taken.

After gaining statewide notoriety for his integritous political involvement in the decades leading up the Civil War, Republican Andrew Gregg Curtin was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1860 with the realization that war was on the horizon. Governor Curtin was one of the strongest allies of President Abraham Lincoln, and would go on to lead the collection of loyal governors at the War Governors Conference of 1862. Described by Pennsylvania State Librarian and Curtin biographer William H. Egle as a man "Strikingly amiable, genial, warm-hearted, of luminous, quick and extensive intelligence, of the most engaging address endowed with a fluent and captivating eloquence…," he continues to praise by stating "The magnetism of Colonel Curtin's personal qualities, his matchless oratory, his energy and untiring zeal, made him a man not only fitted to act, but to lead the people of his State in any great crisis."[91] He was a man of the people and for the people who guided Pennsylvania through their commitments to the war efforts.

[91] Egle, William Henry. *Life and Times of Andrew Gregg Curtin,* United States: Thompson Publishing Company, (1896), 28, 33-34.

During his first three year term, Governor Curtin initiated numerous soldier centered legislations including educational reforms for military orphans and making a promise that no Pennsylvania soldier would be buried on foreign soil.[92] When asked about the level of fulfillment such promises were kept to soldiers, Curtin responded with an emphatic “Religiously” and continued that “Commissioners were placed in every corps of the army, and every Pennsylvania soldier found, wherever he went, the representative of his State specially charged with the task of looking after his necessities,... he found that his State had a watchful eye over his comfort. Pennsylvania was the first State to do this, and no Pennsylvania soldier ever fell in battle whose body was not sent home for burial, if his body could be identified, and application made therefor.”[93] To Governor Curtin, it was the soldiers who deserved every level of heroic recognition, and the cemetery at Gettysburg was another example of his efforts to reward and honor soldiers. Although his legislative duties to the state prevented him from being physically hands-on in the cemetery developing process, his heart was invested to see the project through.

Just two days following the conclusion of the battle, a newspaper report described the horrific scene left behind but also directly in view, “Who can write the history of a battle whose eyes are immovably fastened upon a central figure of transcendingly absorbing interest — the dead body of an oldest born, crushed by a shell in a position where a battery should never have been sent, and abandoned to death in a

[92] This notion was unique amongst Union governors as Pennsylvania was the first state to make such a promise as to return their soldiers back to home soil. Others would later attempt to follow suit but to lesser degrees of success. Especially with the development of military cemeteries, the state by state organization to return soldiers became more of a federal task regardless of home soil.
[93] Egle, William Henry. *Life and Times of Andrew Gregg Curtin*. United States: Thompson Publishing Company (1896), 54.

building where surgeons dared not to stay?"[94] There was no doubt in recognizing the problem, thousands of the dead remained on the battlefield. The solution presented to the citizens of Gettysburg was a proper burial for the dead, but the question of how still remained. However, what made Gettysburg so special in the context of cemeteries was the immense public support to create one. By July 1863 the war was two years old and countless battles had occurred with no similar movement on the scale experienced at Gettysburg. Yet the symbolic final journey to November's dedication ceremonies experienced numerous obstacles that were overcome with eyes singled on the ultimate purpose of honoring the sacred sacrifices of those on the battlefield.

History books often overlook the four and half months between July and November 1863, but that story is critical in remembering the larger context of military cemeteries expressing quasi-religious sentiments of American civic religion. Governor Curtin visited the battlefield for the first time on July 10, 1863, just a mere week following the final day of battle. He toured the battlefield, visited with ailing soldiers, and initiated his plans to name an agent of the state and governor's office to oversee the cemetery's development. Following his visit, in a letter dated 13 August 1863 to the other loyal state governors, Governor Curtin presented his vision regarding the plans, finances, and purposes for the military cemetery at Gettysburg. His suggestions included plans for the state of Pennsylvania to purchase ground and oversee the reburial process; that bodies which could be identified to receive proper headstones;

[94] July 6, 1863, *New York Times.* Dispatched by Samuel Wilkeson whose son had been killed in the battle.

each state be given a specific plot within the grounds; and that the grounds be appropriately suited for the location.[95]

The man chosen by Governor Curtin as agent of the state and governor's office was local Gettysburg attorney and fellow Republican David Wills. A lifelong resident of Adams County Pennsylvania, Wills had made a name for himself from a young age and possessed leadership qualities that were recognized by contemporaries around him: "No doubt the numerous posts he held and the education he had received demonstrated that he had long since established a reputation for getting things done. Although we may never fully know how David Wills acquired the full faith and confidence of Governor Andrew Curtin, one thing has remained clear until today, the job was an immense undertaking."[96] Originally the assignment was to locate the near 6,000 Pennsylvania casualties, including and specifically the near one thousand killed in action. However, the work grew to include overseeing the plans initiated by Governor Curtin to invite the other loyal states to name acting agents to locate, identify, and rebury their own dead.

On July 23 or 24 of 1863 (the record is unclear), Wills called a meeting to discuss a logistical problem with the other loyal state agents: the number of dead combined with the summer heat and humidity made the task of repatriating near impossible and illogical. It was at this meeting that the idea for a combined, unified cemetery in

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[95] Egle, William Henry. *Life and Times of Andrew Gregg Curtin.* United States: Thompson Publishing Company, (1896), 148.

[96] Welch, Daniel, "Acting as an Agent for Governor Curtin David Wills and His Mark on Gettysburg", *The Unfinished Work- Abraham Lincoln, David Wills & The Soldiers' National Cemetery Papers of the Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*, Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015), 19. See also Bradsby, Henry C.., Leeson, Michael A.. *1886 History of Adams County, Pennsylvania: Containing History of the Counties, Their Townships, Towns, Villages, Schools, Churches, Industries, Etc., Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men, Biographies.* United States: The Bookmark, (1886), 376.

Gettysburg for all the dead was agreed upon. Rather than a state by state rush against the decaying process in the summer, a plan was initiated to take the summer to plan a national cemetery for all the Union dead of Gettysburg.[97] Wills sent a dispatch to Governor Curtin almost immediately following the meeting describing the most pressing issue at hand, identifying and acquiring the appropriate location for the cemetery.

> "There is one spot very desirable for this purpose. It is the elevated piece of ground on the Baltimore Turnpike opposite the Cemetery. It is the place where our army had about 40 pieces of artillery in action all Thursday & Friday and for their protection had thrown up a large number of earthworks for the artillerists. It is the point on which the desperate attack was made by the Louisiana Brigades on Thursday evening when they succeeded in reaching the guns, taking possession of them and were finally driven back by the infantry assisted by the artillery men with their handspikes and rammers. It was the key to the whole line of our defenses,—the apex of the triangular line of battle. It is the spot, above all others, for the honorable burial of the dead who have fallen on these fields."[98]

The issue of purchasing land would not take long to formulate, as within one month's time the location suggested by Wills had been approved and a legal deed secured for the location aptly named Cemetery Hill.

The location legalities were not done without controversy as another Gettysburg citizen, David McConaughy, who served as president of the Evergreen Cemetery Association in town had attempted to present his own ideas to Governor Curtin. However, ultimately a unified vision of purpose overcame differences as the best location for the cemetery.[99] Even with the early relatively slow progress due to weather,

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[97] Campbell, Eric, "A Field Made Glorious' Cemetery Hill: From Battlefield to Sacred Ground", *The Fourth Annual Gettysburg Seminar: Gettysburg 1895-1995: The Shaping of an American Shrine,* Gettysburg: National Military Park, (1995), 23.

[98] *David Wills to Governor Andrew Curtin,* July 24, 1863, Letter, Copy in Gettysburg National Military Park, V10-5 David Wills Correspondence, Quoted in Daniel Welch "Acting as an agent for Governor Curtin".

[99] Welch, Daniel. "Acting as an Agent for Governor Curtin David Wills and His Mark on Gettysburg". The Unfinished Work- Abraham Lincoln, David Wills & The Soldiers' National Cemetery Papers of the

the purpose of the cemetery was being raised to higher and holier planes. Historian Eric Campbell summarized many of the individual sentiments of those working on the cemetery with the following: “Despite the many difficulties, the project had already taken on a higher meaning for those parties involved. Wills referred to the undertaking as a ‘sacred project,’ a ‘noble project,’ ‘sacred work,’ and a ‘sacred purpose.’ The Evergreen Cemetery Board called it a ‘noble enterprise’ and ‘a grand national enterprise.’ Thus, the perception of the very ground also took on special significance. Gov. Curtin referred to the area as ‘sacred grounds.’”[100] Even prior to Lincoln’s immortalized address, the cemetery was evolving into a shrine of honor, memorialization, and sacredness. It would be Lincoln’s introduction of the dualistic objectives that turned the cemetery at Gettysburg a national, rather than local effort.

As discussed in the previous chapter, cemeteries throughout the United States were in the process of developing a more romanticized notion of honoring the dead. Along with a growing nationalistic patriotism for military personnel, Republican figures in and around Gettysburg were furthering the concept of combining these two cemetery trends. It cannot be understated that Northern sentiments were at the forefront of cemetery trends and that Gettysburg was located in an area that already had cemetery development on their minds. That is not to take anything away from the uniqueness of Gettysburg but to rather expand it as never before. Cemetery trends of the 19th century combined with a military battle produced a new civic religion phenomenon where the dead were on the leading edge of progress and equality.

Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar. Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015), 23-25.

[100] Campbell, Eric. “A Field Made Glorious’ Cemetery Hill: From Battlefield to Sacred Ground”. The Fourth Annual Gettysburg Seminar: Gettysburg 1895-1995: The Shaping of an American Shrine. Gettysburg: National Military Park, (1995).

Other nations around the world were doing similar actions in terms of creating cemeteries more fitting of sacred remembrance during the nineteenth century.[101] People were reconsidering how death would and could be memorialized through cemeteries beyond places of necessity. Yet Lincoln added a unique component unseen prior to his address; American military death was also an extension of American civic religion to other nations. Focus for the time being was on Gettysburg, yet foreshadowing was also taking place about the possibility of expanding the "new birth of freedom" to people and places it had never been. Gettysburg was the introduction to a dualistic objective of military cemeteries, promoting nationalism and expanding civic religion, which is the foundation of this dissertation. More will be presented on Lincoln's specific language and symbolism later in the chapter, but it does deserve mention that Curtin and Wills were adhering to larger social cemetery movements found at home and abroad with the original concept of a military cemetery at Gettysburg.

Once the land was secured and reburials postponed until cooler weather, Wills was able to turn attention to other tasks such as hiring a landscape architect, receiving bids for casket construction, and putting together a dedication ceremony.[102] Wills had hired William Saunders (1822-1900) as the consultant for designing the layout of the new cemetery, and after making a trip to Gettysburg in August, he presented the initial plan to both Wills and President Lincoln. "He recommended that a monument be placed at the central point on the highest reach of ground and that it serve as the focal point for the half-circle in which the graves would be placed. Parcels allotted to each of the

[101] France represents the best example of a "sister movement" of romanticized cemeteries experienced in the United States, particularly the Pere Lachaise Cemetery referenced in chapter 2.
[102] Wingert, Rob. "Simple Grandeur' The Creation of the Soldiers National Cemetery at Gettysburg and the men who Stepped Forward to Make Their Contribution". The Unfinished Work- Abraham Lincoln, David Wills & The Soldiers' National Cemetery Papers of the Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar. Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015), 4-6.

eighteen participating states would run toward the common center, fitting together in a semicircular arrangement."[103] As the Botanist and Superintendent of Horticulture for the United States Government, Saunders was in a perfect position to bridge the gap between the cemetery, Wills, and the President. Just two days prior to the dedication ceremonies, Saunders was invited to the White House to present the plans to President Lincoln and according to Saunders: "I spread the plans on his office table,... He took much interest in it, asked about its surroundings, about Culp's Hill, Round Top, etc. and seemed familiar with the topography of the place although he had never been there. He was much pleased with the method of the graves, said it differed from the ordinary cemetery, and, after I had explained the reasons, said it was an advisable and benefitting arrangement."[104] Of the numerous individuals who left their personal imprint on the Soldiers Cemetery at Gettysburg, William Saunders perhaps is least known with the greatest impact. His design that "the prevailing expression of the cemetery should be that of simple grandeur" has stood the test of time and exhibits a temple-like geographic expression of civic religion.[105]

Once the land had been obtained and the landscape design approved, the next step was to recommence the reburying process. Wills had originally proposed a cemetery where the dead were indiscriminately buried of state affiliation, rank, or identification. However, support of that idea quickly faded from the state agents who desired to have state by state plots within the cemetery.[106] This represents a unique

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[103] Quoted in Klement, Frank, *The Gettysburg Soldiers' Cemetery and Lincoln's Address,* Shippensburg: White Mane Publishing, (1993), 96.
[104] Quoted in Wills, Gary, *Lincoln at Gettysburg, The Words that Remade America*, New York, Touchstone, (1992), 26.
[105] Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association, *Soldiers' National Cemetery, Gettysburg,* 1865 Reprint, Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, (1988), Report of William Saunders, 148.
[106] It is noteworthy to highlight that other distinguishing factors such as rank, identification, and particularly race were not brought up as determining factors.

component of the ensuing development of military cemeteries and their purposes of expressing American ideals. Considering the strong sentiments to honor each individual state and not as a unified Union suggests that even in 1863 the overall purpose of the war was still in question. As discussed in the previous chapter, the first Civil War cemeteries were done out of sheer necessity with no larger purpose beyond burying the dead. The cemeteries which followed Gettysburg during the final two years of the conflict had not yet embraced Lincoln's vision and were still attempting to navigate raw emotions. It would not be until reconstruction when military cemeteries would consciously be designed to honor the Union as a whole with little to none state by state preference in burial location.

There is no denying that the original cemetery at Gettysburg was designed specifically for Union soldiers and Union soldiers only. Historian Drew Gilpin Faust summarizes the distinction as “Practical realities dictated that retreating armies did not have time to attend to the dead but had to depend on the humanity of their opponents, who predictably gave precedence to their own casualties. This discrimination arose largely from ties of feeling with departed comrades,...”.[107] Discrimination was existent at Gettysburg but it was more between the “blue and gray” and less about “black and white”. It would not be until after the reburial program initiated by the federal government for Union soldiers during reconstruction, and the growing sense to reunify against a common enemy during the Spanish-American War that this geographic discrimination would be overcome.[108] Yet, the notion that military cemeteries

[107] Faust, Drew Gilpin, *This Republic of Suffering Death and the American Civil War*. United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2009), 70.
[108] The same could be said of gravesites of Union soldiers in the South during the war. Cemeteries would play a role in Reconstruction that has been undervalued by scholars as examples of how people both held on to strong emotions as well as letting them go.

represented a geographic expression of American ideals would have its foundation at Gettysburg. The execution would take time, but the overall purposes of sacred sacrifices and civic religion crusades would become the centerpiece of military cemeteries moving forward.

Once the weather had turned from summer to fall, the process of reburying the dead in the new soldiers cemetery recommenced on October 27, 1863 with the first official burial taking place the following day of an Ohio soldier (the final burial would occur on March 18, 1864). The individual who oversaw the responsibility was a Gettysburg photographer by the name of Samuel Weaver (1811-1871). His dedication to the task was meticulous and never ceasing. In an 1865 field report of the work done, Weaver defended his recordkeeping of the reburial process as the following:

> "There was not a grave permitted to be opened or a body searched unless I was present. I was inflexible in enforcing this rule, and here can say, with the greatest satisfaction to myself and to the friends of the soldiers, that I saw every body taken out of its temporary resting place, and all the pockets carefully searched; and where the grave was not marked, I examined all the clothing and everything about the body, and all the hair and all the particles of bone, carefully placed in the coffin. At the same time I wrote the name, company, and regiment, of the soldier on the coffin, and numbered the coffin, and entered in my book the same endorsement."[109]

Weaver would continue in his report the ability to differentiate between Union soldiers from their Confederate counterparts by the type of clothing worn and then made the declaration that "I here most conscientiously assert, that I firmly believe that there has not been a single mistake made in the removal of the soldiers to the Cemetery by taking the body of a rebel for a Union soldier."[110] Time would prove that there were a handful of

[109] Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association, *Soldiers' National Cemetery, Gettysburg*, (1865), 149.
[110] Weaver, Samuel, report of, *Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association*, (1865), 151.

Confederate soldiers “mistakenly” interred in the cemetery, but Weaver’s dedication and immaculate recordkeeping was second to none.[111] He would be called upon again to use that skill set when southern states initiated Confederate reburials during reconstruction. However, an untimely death in 1871 passed the responsibilities to his son Rufus, who oversaw certain cemetery reburials as military cemeteries were being redefined in nationalistic sacred terms.

With reburials in full execution, attention was turned to the dedication ceremonies to be held on November 19. The keynote speaker for the event was Edward Everett, who was regarded as the nation's most prominent orator. His public speaking skills and political office experiences were highly regarded and few had any quarrels as to his selection to provide the keynote address. In fact, it was Everett who many in attendance desired to hear, which they did for nearly two hours. His message recounted in great detail the events of the battle as well as provided historical contextual examples of putting the American Civil War into the fabric of world history.

Yet within the realms of developing the sacred, quasi-religious sentiments of military cemeteries Everett provided similar sentiments to Lincoln. Referred by some as the “other Gettysburg address” Everett recalled the Biblical story of Moses being commanded to take off his shoes “as one that stands on holy ground” to “pay the last tribute of respect to the brave men who, in the hard-fought battles of the first, second, and third days of July last, laid down their lives for the country on these hillsides and the plains before us, and whose remains have been gathered into the cemetery which we

[111] Remains were discovered on the battlefield in later years and as recently as 1996. Noted Civil War historian James McPherson gave the eulogy at the 1997 soldiers funeral and surviving widows of Union and Confederate soldiers placed roses on the casket. See *The Baltimore Sun,* “Unknown but not forgotten War: With proper respect and solemnity, a nameless soldier is buried with honor 134 years after he fell in Gettysburg”, July 2, 1997.

consecrate this day."[112] It is clear that those in attendance and speaking recognized the spiritual component of the day. There was indeed something sacred about Gettysburg. The challenge was to contextualize it within the larger context of American civic religion and the purposes of the war for all Americans.

Everett specifically mentions the realities of the task performed in the months leading up to the cemetery dedication: "I must leave to others, who can do it from personal observation, to describe the mournful spectacle presented by these hillsides and plains at the close of the terrible conflict…. The horrors of the battle-field, after the contest is over, the sights and sounds of woe,- let me throw a pall over the scene, which no words can adequately depict to those who have not witnessed it on which no one who has witnessed it, and who has a heart in his bosom, can bear to dwell."[113] The stark contrast between the cemetery at Gettysburg and its serene sacred beauty to the battlefield only four and a half months prior was awe-inspiring. The reality of the moment was not lost on Everett. His concluding remarks before turning the stage over to Lincoln called once again upon the sacred nature of not only the geographic location, but also the service and sacrifice of both the living and the dead.

He concludes, "let me again, as we part, invoke your benediction on these honored graves. You feel, though the occasion is mournful, that it is good to be here…. You now feel it a new bond of union, that they shall lie side by side, till a clarion, louder than that which marshalled them to the combat, shall awake their slumbers…. as we bid farewell to the dust of these martyr-heroes, that wheresoever throughout the civilized

[112] Everett, Edward, "Gettysburg Address", (19 November, 1863), text provided by the U.S. Oratory Project Voices of Democracy.
[113] Everett, Edward, "Gettysburg Address", (November 19, 1863), text provided by the U.S. Oratory Project Voices of Democracy, paragraph 38.

world the accounts of this great warfare are read… there will be no brighter page than that which relates to the battles of Gettysburg."[114] To many in the crowd the message was fitting for the occasion. However, even though Everett was proud of his speech in of itself, he recollected some disappointment when comparing it to Lincoln's in the following months.

The stage was now set and following a prepared hymn, Lincoln stood and forever changed the narrative of not only military cemeteries but also the expression of them within the context of American civic religion. To many the Civil War was about causes. Not in the chain of events which caused the war to occur, but rather the purposes of fighting the war. Answering why became one of the biggest obstacles, especially considering the mounting death toll. This includes for those directly involved but also for historical scholarship who attempt to provide analytical research of motivations and actions. Lincoln himself wrestled with the notion of defining his cause during the election of 1860 and during the first two years of conflict. Reunification was always at the forefront of Lincoln's mind, but his message at Gettysburg goes beyond simple reunification. There was a call to return to an era of higher and holier ideals laid out long before Gettysburg, long before Fort Sumter, and long before sectional division which drove the nation to pieces.

Few are unfamiliar with the immortal words spoken by Lincoln at the cemetery's dedication on November 19, 1863. The story of the Gettysburg Address has been well told by scholars, educators, and school children alike for the past one hundred and fifty years. It represents the most recognizable speech in American history and still few are

[114] Everett, Edward, "Gettysburg Address", (November 19, 1863). text provided by the U.S. Oratory Project Voices of Democracy. paragraph 58.

able to fully contextualize its importance in relation to the development of civic religion and military cemeteries. Simply stated, the words which Lincoln spoke are remembered but the context as to why he spoke them has been either completely missed or overlooked. His reference to a “new birth of freedom” directly aligns with abolitionist purposes. The cemetery would become the great geographic temple to memorialize principles of civic religion.

Lincoln received the official invitation to the ceremonies from David Wills on November 2, 1863 which in its entirety requested the following:

> “The several States having soldiers in the Army of the Potomac, who were killed at the Battle of Gettysburg, or have since died at the various hospitals which were established in the vicinity, have procured grounds on a prominent part of the Battle Field for a Cemetery, and are having the dead removed to them and properly buried.
>
> These Grounds will be Consecrated and set apart to this sacred purpose, by appropriate Ceremonies, on Thursday, the 19th distant,—
>
> Hon Edward Everett will deliver the Oration.
>
> I am authorized by the Governors of the different States to invite You to be present, and participate in these Ceremonies, which will doubtless be very imposing and solemnly impressive.
>
> It is the desire that, after the Oration, You, as Chief Executive of the Nation, formally set apart these grounds to their Sacred use by a few appropriate remarks.
>
> It will be a source of great gratification to the many widows and orphans that have been made almost friendless by the Great Battle here, to have you here personally; and it will kindle anew in the breasts of the Comrades of these brave dead, who are now in the tented field or nobly meeting the foe in the front, a confidence that they who sleep in death on the Battle Field are not forgotten by those highest in Authority; and they will feel that, should their fate be the same, their remains will not be uncared for.

> We hope you will be able to be present to perform this last solemn act to the Soldier dead on this Battle Field."[115]

Once again the cause of the cemetery dedication was placed in religious sacred, even abolitionist contexts. There was something larger than the necessity of a cemetery at play. Those that gave their lives in defense of the Union were also crusading for higher and holier ideals found within the principles of civic religion.

Another example of the spiritual recognition comes from Ward Hill Lamon (1828-1893), who was a close friend of Lincoln's and served as the U.S. Marshall for the District of Columbia and the marshall/ protector of Lincoln while in Gettysburg who stated in his acceptance response that the offer was "no less a solemn duty, than a pleasure, to those who enjoy the protection of a Government under which all civil and religious liberty are secured, to unite in consecrating a National Cemetery as a sacred resting place for our country's heroes who fell at Gettysburg."[116] Anticipation of the dedication ceremonies grew as the date drew closer. The *Daily National Republican* gave a glowing recommendation for any contemplating the journey to Gettysburg to be present at the ceremonies; it reported that Lincoln "has determined to be present at the consecration,... The Hon. Edward Everett will doubtless bring his matchless rhetorical and oratorical powers into full play in the dedicatory address which he is to deliver. The theme and circumstances of the occasion will all conspire to lend wings of fire to his

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[115] Lincoln, Abraham. Abraham Lincoln papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833 to 1916: *David Wills to Abraham Lincoln, Monday,Invitation to attend the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg and make a "few appropriate remarks"*. November 2, 1863. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.
[116] Basler, Roy P., ed., *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln,* Vol. 7, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, (1952-1955), 7. *Daily National Republican*, November 7, 1863.

eloquence. It will be a celebration worth any amount of travel and fatigue to see and hear."[117] Cleary the sentiment was all efforts should be given to be in attendance.

Karlton Smith, who works as a historian and battlefield guide for the Gettysburg National Military Park has written a comprehensive overview of Lincoln's journey to the cemetery dedication. In his essay titled "A Presidential Trip to Gettysburg", Smith recounts the larger political scene which Lincoln was dealing with at the time and details the less than two day trip from Washington D.C. into Gettysburg and back.[118] Different accounts of the journey show a Lincoln who was continually working but also able to show respect and reverence for the event which he was traveling to.[119] The magnitude of the moment was not lost on Lincoln, and yet he was able to still showcase his personable connection to those around him.[120] Compartmentalizing was one of the gifts that Lincoln possessed and made the address at Gettysburg all that much more compelling. Given time to prepare, albeit not a huge amount of time, Lincoln would have consciously chosen his message with care.

Connection becomes an underlying theme of Lincoln's short and "appropriate remarks", connecting with the audience, the past, the living and dead, and the cause for which they were gathered on that sacred day. In only two hundred and seventy two

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[117] *Daily National Republican,* (November 7, 1863).
[118] Smith, Karlton, "A Presidential Trip to Gettysburg", *Papers of the Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*, Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015).
[119] *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, VII, 526. See also Rice, Allen Thorndike, ed. *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time,* New York: North American Publishing Company, (1886), Chapter XXII- James B. Fry, 402-403.
[120] One particular story recounted by Smith was that Lincoln was not ready when Col. James B. Fry arrived at the White House to take the President and his invited guests to the train station. Col. Fry suggested to the President that they were late and had no time to lose to which Lincoln responded with the following: "Well, said he, I feel about that as the convict in one of our Illinois towns felt when he was going to the gallows. As he passed along the road in custody of the sheriff, the people, eager to see the execution, kept crowding and pushing past him. At last he called out: 'Boys, you needn't be in such a hurry to get ahead, there won't be any fun till I get there; see Smith, Karlton, "A Presidential Trip to Gettysburg", *Papers of the Fifteenth Semi-Annual Gettysburg National Military Park Seminar*, Gettysburg National Military Park, (July 2015).

words, Lincoln forever changed the cause of American military cemeteries and their relationship or connection with civic religion.

> "Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure.
>
> We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.
>
> It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.[121]

Once the speech concluded, almost immediately people began searching for ways to contextualize and summarize his content. Heralded for its simplicity, the Gettysburg Address has also been praised for its universal application. The dualistic objective of military cemeteries had been created. Military cemeteries under the vision of Lincoln would forever honor nationalism and increase patriotism; as well as represent the sacrifice of soldiers in expanding principles of American civic religion by defeating enemies of those ideals.

[121] *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, edited by Roy P. Basler and others. “Bliss Copy”, November, 1869.

Lincoln had spoken for just a few brief minutes, but his words penetrated the audience in ways that have stood the test of time. Two such brief examples show just how quickly Lincoln's Gettysburg address would begin its climb into the sacred echelons of political speeches: "Perhaps nothing in the whole proceedings, made so deep an impression on the vast assemblage, or has conveyed to the country in so concise a form the lesson of the hour, as the remarks of the President. Their simplicity and force make them worthy of prominence among the utterances from high places."[122] While Josiah G. Holland, an early biographer of Lincoln stated, "Surprisingly fine as Mr. Everett's oration was in the Gettysburg consecration, the rhetorical honors of the occasion were won by President Lincoln. His little speech is a perfect gem, deep in feeling, compact in thought and expression, and tasteful and elegant in every word and comma…"[123] The speech was simply beautiful and beautifully simple. Lincoln's words provide the foundation for the dualistic objective of military cemeteries. Specific attention to how the Gettysburg Address promotes nationalism and expansion of civic religion becomes the basis for the remainder of the chapter.

Of the many interpretations presented by scholars about the grand purpose of the Gettysburg Address, the notion that it became a national identity furthers the cemetery civic religion argument best. In a way, Gettysburg itself becomes part of the American civil religion landscape. Americans began seeing not only the battle of Gettysburg differently but also the larger scope of the war with Lincoln's words. Historian and Lincoln expert Garry Wills concluded in *Lincoln at Gettysburg: the Words*

[122] Quoted in, Klement, Frank L., *The Gettysburg Soldiers' Cemetery and Lincoln's Address: Aspects and Angles*, White Mane Publishing Company, Shippensburg, PA, (1993), VIII
[123] Quoted in, Klement, Frank L., *The Gettysburg Soldiers' Cemetery and Lincoln's Address: Aspects and Angles*, White Mane Publishing Company, Shippensburg, PA, (1993), IX.

that Remade America (2012) that “The Gettysburg Address has become an authoritative expression of the American spirit- as authoritative as the Declaration itself, and perhaps even more influential, since it determines how we read the Declaration. For most people now, the Declaration means what Lincoln told us it means,... It is this correction of spirit, this intellectual revolution, that makes attempts to go back beyond Lincoln to some earlier version so feckless.”[124] The past, present, and future were all connected as part of Lincoln’s vision and it revolutionized how military cemeteries were to be portrayed to local Americans and a global citizenry.

There is no doubt as to which generation Lincoln took inspiration from. The founding fathers and the nation conceived “fourscore and seven years ago” became the foundation upon which Lincoln built his military commemoration narrative. In the first sentence of the address, Lincoln makes note of civic religion with his specific mention of liberty and the “proposition that all men are created equal.” It is clear that the address was designed to recall the purpose of the United States, challenge the current interpretations which caused the war, and then redefine the long term results in order that “these dead shall not have died in vain.” There is a poetic balance in the address which puts the United States both on an internal self evaluation but also an external pedestal for other nations to model their civic religion principles.

Quickly he brought the dialogue of the address to the present challenge facing the nation and its magnitude on other nations around the globe. He knew that America was an experiment of civic religion and that nations had their eyes on whether the experiment was destined for success or failure. Since the time of the revolution,

[124] Wills, Gary, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America,* United States: Simon & Schuster, (2012) 146-147.

America's political and military experiment had been challenged but nothing like the realities of the Civil War. Historian Jared Peatman in *The Long Shadow of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address* (2013) argues that it was not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s that the address became a "revered document essential to American national identity" wherein society was ready to accept the equality component of the message.[125] Scholars such as Peatman and Wills recognize the notion that equality was a critical component of Lincoln's sentiments. However, they disagree as to the timeframe by which it was administered on a societal level.

Yet neither scholar fully develops the role that military cemeteries played in both the initiation and fulfillment of societal equality as part of their arguments. They focus on how the address was used as a political weapon to further individual agendas, with Peatman arguing that the most usages came in times of turmoil.[126] However, perhaps the best usage of Lincoln's intentions are found in military cemeteries. Although not perfect in implementation, military cemeteries were on the forefront of equality and progressive civic religion. America's shining beacon was quickly dimming, and Lincoln attempted to rekindle it with soldier sacrifices at the center of his rhetoric.

Scholar Shannon Bontrager summarized his interpretation of Lincoln's address as such: "The Gettysburg Address democratized the sanctification process by claiming that the thousands who died there– not founders or framers, generals and statesmen, sages and poets– produced sacred space; it represented the best that American

[125] Peatman, Jared, *The Long Shadow of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address*, (United States: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), 3.
[126] Peatman concludes his introduction with "Every salesman needs a pitch, and over time, increasing numbers of Americans came to see the Gettysburg Address as the most effective way to sell the ideals of this country, both internally and externally"; Peatman, Jared, *The Long Shadow of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address*, 5.

democracy had to offer to modern civilization."[127] Using the national trends of previous decades, Lincoln was able to integrate the romanticism cemetery movement with increased patriotic reverence to military soldiers and how final resting places could teach valuable lessons to the living. The consecration and dedication of the ground had been done by those who gave the last full measure of devotion; the recognition of holy places and continued reverence to them was now in the hands of "us the living." With the United States being the first nation to federalize military death, Lincoln provided a duality purpose that would forever differentiate American military cemeteries to their counterparts around the world. They were intended to memorialize the sacrifice and defense of the motherland internally, but also they were motivated by external geographical representations of American civic religion to other nations.

Shortly following the conclusion of the war, George Bancroft (1800-1891), an American diplomat and historian stated that: "For a time the war was thought to be confined to our own domestic affairs, but it was soon seen that it involved the destinies of mankind; its principles and causes should the politics of Europe to the centre, and from Lisbon to Pekin divided the governments of the world."[128] This global impact and ramifications of America's civil war result was not to be understated. The vast majority of Lincoln's address was forward thinking with not only the United States on trial but also with acknowledging that other nations were intently watching. Historian Allan Nevins further explains that "He (Lincoln) saw the conflict as a struggle of vital import to that growing part of mankind which felt a passionate interest in democracy and freedom- of

[127]Bontrager, Shannon. *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921.* United States: University of Nebraska Press, (2020), 20.
[128] Quoted in, Doyle, Don H. *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War.* United States: Basic Books, (2014), 1.

vital import to the future of the human race."[129] America was the world's best hope in pushing forward concepts of civic religion and that a "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

One of the unique Civil War historical methodologies is that of international diplomacy and how the United States and newly established Confederate States of America navigated international relations. Historian Don H. Doyle has become one of the leading voices on Civil War international diplomacy and begins his masterful *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (2014) with a unique dichotomy facing both the Union and the Confederacy. After describing the challenges facing Lincoln and Secretary of State William Seward in regards to legitimizing the internal conflict while also delegitimizing the validity of the Confederate States, Doyle summarizes "This left foreign observers wondering: Just what were the Americans fighting over? Was this only a civil war, a domestic dispute over territory and tariffs? Just another quarrel within a factious democracy? Or were there, behind the rhetoric and posturing, vital principles at stake that really mattered beyond America's borders?"[130] To Lincoln there were vital principles at stake, the principles of American civic religion. Progress, liberty, equality, freedom, democracy, and others were being challenged internally throughout the United States and military cemeteries could be on the leading edge of showing society that they could be expanded to all.

Now that the end result of the military conflict was beginning to be realized in November 1863, Lincoln's vision would take on the higher and holier vision he so

[129] Nevins, Allen, *Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address Commemorative Papers*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, (1964), 5.
[130] Doyle, Don H. *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War.* United States: Basic Books, (2014), 6.

desperately wanted to achieve. This included not only reunification but also abolitionist ideals being realized as part of the newly rededicated government. With the Emancipation Proclamation going into effect on January 1, 1863 and other legislative actions geared towards expanding rights to African-Americans; military cemeteries would be given the opportunity to put into action the words of Lincoln. The war would take on a completely expanding purpose for which soldiers and society would eventually be confronted with, equality for all in life and in death. Military cemeteries would not be perfect in their implementation but they would be on the forefront of progressive actions to ensure Lincoln's vision was realized.

Once the dedication ceremonies were completed, Lincoln returned to Washington D.C. that afternoon and resumed other presidential duties pressing upon his mind. The cemetery in Gettysburg was not however complete and work recommenced on finishing the task of reburying the dead. David Wills continued in his responsibility as agent in charge and work completed with the last Union reburial occurring in March 1864 (just a couple months prior to the first burial at Arlington National Cemetery) and the Soldiers Monument being installed and dedicated in 1869. Citizens of Gettysburg were thrusted into the national limelight thanks to the critical strategic battle as well as becoming the fulcrum point of military cemeteries. Gettysburg would truly become a place where few do not remember what was said there and what happened there.

The remainder of the war after November 1863 saw the creation of seventeen new military cemeteries in the years 1864 or 1865. There are some differing interpretations as to when the official recognition dates occurred in terms of first burial

or official land purchase, but by the end of 1865 the United States had approximately thirty recognized military cemeteries located throughout the states; eleven of which were located directly on battlefields. Not enough time had passed, and the realities of the war still being contested prevented the post-Gettysburg cemeteries from truly embracing Lincoln's higher and holier vision. However, a brief synopsis of their history would do well to continue building the framework of how American military cemeteries represent geographic temples of civic religion.

In alphabetical order by year, the seventeen military cemeteries established after Lincoln's address were: in 1864; Arlington National Cemetery, Battleground National Cemetery, Beverly National Cemetery, Chalmette National Cemetery, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, Knoxville National Cemetery, Lexington National Cemetery, Mound City National Cemetery, Rock Island National Cemetery, and Stones River National Cemetery. In 1865 the following were established; Andersonville National Cemetery, Antietam National Cemetery, Ball's Bluff National Cemetery, Florence National Cemetery, Mobile National Cemetery, Raleigh National Cemetery, and Salisbury National Cemetery.[131] These represent the second generation of military cemeteries following the pre-Gettysburg ones discussed previously.

The diversity of these post-Gettysburg cemeteries testifies to the notion that the war was experienced throughout the nation regardless of space and time. From Ball's Bluff and its 54 remains being "probably the least known and least visited of all the

[131] See official records of the National Cemetery Administration, "dates of establishment". There is also some contradictory information depending on when looking at specific cemeteries or the chronological list provided by the agency. For example, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery was formally established in 1866 but chronologically it appears in 1863. Not becoming overly concerned about official dates of establishment is crucial to the argument. Suffice it to argue that there were approximately 30 military cemeteries established during the Civil War with another approximate 45 created during the Reconstruction era.

national cemeteries"[132] to Antietam and Andersonville and their international infamy; these cemeteries are testaments of national sacrifice and the expansion of civic religion. Similar to the pre-Gettysburg cemeteries, much more research could and should be done on the post-Gettysburg examples prior to the large reburial program initiated during Reconstruction.

When the alliterative dust settled, those who oversaw the burial of the dead would begin to purposefully intertwine memorialization with necessity. The trustees of the Antietam National Cemetery explained that, "One of the striking indications of civilization and refinement among a people is the tenderness and care manifested by them towards their dead."[133] Purpose became the single most important criteria when making decisions for the Civil War dead. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was the backdrop by which those decisions were made, but raising military cemeteries to a higher and holier plane was never far from the mind of survivors. As Civil War memory expert Drew Gilpin Faust explains, "the purpose of the effort extended well beyond simply meeting the need for disposing of the dead. These cemeteries were intended to memorialize the slain and celebrate the nation's fallen heroes."[134]

A joint resolution of Congress in 1866 passed legislation where the Secretary of War was authorized and required "to take immediate measures to preserve from desecration the graves of soldiers of the United States who fell in battle or died of disease.. So that the resting place of the honored dead may be kept sacred forever."[135]

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[132] Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries,* 2d Ed.. United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010), 22.
[133] Board of Trustees of the Antietam National Cemetery, *History of the Antietam National Cemetery*, Baltimore: J.W. Woods, (1869), 5.
[134] Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2009), 99.
[135] Quoted in Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries,* 2d Ed.. United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010), 201-202.

These brief examples show that Lincoln's vision was already being put into practice. Military cemeteries were not only to be appropriate places to memorialize the dead, but also sacred places for the living to internalize their role in the moral crusade of spreading American civic religion.

A few anecdotes from the early development of post-Gettysburg and pre-Reconstruction cemeteries help develop an understanding of how military cemeteries from the Civil War have as war veteran William Fox (1837-1888) observed, "Every story, even a statistical one, has a moral."[136] The sheer number of military dead can become overwhelming when looking at the big picture in their totality. Lincoln's vision was to refocus on who accomplished the consecration and in turn remembering to put the story back into history and the human back into humanities.

Chalmette National Cemetery is the oldest below-ground cemetery in the New Orleans area and sits on the site of the famous battle led by General Andrew Jackson at the conclusion of the War of 1812. It was chosen as the repatriation site for Civil War dead in 1864 and one veteran of the battle in 1815 is interred within the grounds. Not to mention the hundreds of British casualties whose remains have never been found in the area, Chalmette has become a bridge between the Civil War, previous generations of military martyrs and international diplomacy. The Stones River National Cemetery lays claim to the oldest still standing Civil War memorial monument. Dedicated as the Hazen's Brigade Memorial, it was built in 1863 coinciding with Lincoln's vision to begin the process of remembering. Mobile National Cemetery was enlarged after a request

[136] Quoted in Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War.* United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2009), 264-265.

from the Union Army to city officials, which was agreed upon and unanimously adopted. Thus showing early stages of reconciliation between the two sides.[137]

Between 1865 and 1877 the number of military cemeteries would double and represented the largest expansion in the history of United States federalized actions regarding military death. One other interesting fact to note regarding the emphasis to create military cemeteries following the war: “By 1890, the federal government had created seventy-eight national cemeteries to contain the Civil War dead, encompassing nearly 1,500 acres in twenty-two states and the District of Columbia, all before creating the first battlefield park.”[138] Clearly there was an emphasis on the sacrifice of soldiers over the place of sacrifice. These details will be covered in the following two chapters as time is given specifically to Arlington National Cemetery and Reconstruction challenges between Union and Confederate attempts to memorialize their own dead and how reconciliation dimmed the flame but never extinguished the moralistic causes for which Lincoln embraced at Gettysburg.

One final subject of interest in regards to Gettysburg, the dualistic objective of military cemeteries, and the implementation of Lincoln’s vision comes from the experiences of African-Americans. There are a total of 3,512 internments, including 979 unknowns, from the Civil War at the Gettysburg National Cemetery and only two are known to be African-American.[139] Henry Gooden of the 127th USCT was interred in Section 13 and Charles H. Parker of the 3rd Regiment was buried in the northwestern

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[137] Information taken from Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries*, 2d Ed.. United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010). See each individual cemeteries brief history, i.e. “Chalmette National Cemetery”, 430.

[138] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation.* United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 22. Of note the first military battlefield parks were located at Chattanooga and Antietam, both established in 1890.

[139] The cemetery expanded with the Spanish-American and World War 1 to now hold over 6,000 total burials including hundreds of African-American descent.

section in 1884 and 1936 respectively. Both were repatriated from their original burial locations in eras when the United States was attempting to contextualize soldier sacrifice, in-between conflicts where purposes were being interpreted. An additional thirty black soldiers from the USCT are buried in the Lincoln Cemetery a half a mile away after the dedication ceremonies in November 1863.[140] Thus showing once again that although not perfect, military cemeteries were on the leading edge of civic religion progressivism.

The four and half months that separated the battle and the cemetery dedication became critical in that they allowed the conceptualization of why. For decades the United States was in a crossroads of development. Cemeteries were changing into romanticized desirable locations; patriotism was being redefined with the passing of the revolutionary generation; and civic religion was being challenged with manifest destiny and the ironies of freedom, liberty, and progression. After November 1863, the United States could answer why. These trends were not mutually exclusive but rather dependent on each other to solidify America's sacred mission to be the “city upon a hill”. Abraham Lincoln and his speech at Gettysburg represents the single most important rhetoric that military personnel and their final resting spots are martyrs who sacrificed their lives on what one mother labeled the “federal altar”[141] and military cemeteries are temples of freedom.

[140] Information gathered from and courtesy of burial records of Gettysburg National Cemetery, the National Park Service, and the Adams County Historical Society.
[141] See Faust, Drew Gilpin, *This Republic of Suffering*, 113.

Chapter 4: Some Suitable Place

On April 14, 1865, Ford's Theatre would be elevated to the realms of sacred and tragic sites in American history. John Wilkes Booth entered into the presidential suite and assassinated Abraham Lincoln, which made him the ultimate martyr for the cause which he dedicated at Gettysburg. Even though not buried in a military cemetery, the Civil War's Commander in Chief should forever be immortalized alongside his soldiers who gave the last great measure of devotion: said historian John Neff, "If soldiers dying on the battlefield were thought of as martyrs for a greater, national cause, then Lincoln would be identified as the greatest of martyrs… and would come to symbolize the sacrifice of all the the life of the nation itself."[142] With his death, the dualistic objective of military cemeteries would be cemented as sacred temples of nationalism and the expansion of civic religion.

All eyes were on the funeral procession from Washington D.C. to Springfield, Illinois as citizens of the nation were mourning. They were doing so not only for the nation's savior but also for soldier crusaders numbering in the hundreds of thousands still spread across battlefields throughout the nation. John Neff concludes "The resolution of the crisis of presidential assassination might have taken any number of forms but was found largely through evoking a Northern myth of American nationalism, a resolution ensuring that every event, no matter how potentially disruptive to the continuity of American destiny, fell safely within providential designs for American

[142] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation.* United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 68.

prosperity and future aggrandizement."[143] Steps backward could still represent steps upward as the spiritualized war had taken its supreme offering (ministers particularly would reverently compare Lincoln to Christ as the offering of reconciliation) and the nation was once again at a crossroads of defining the conflict in terms of balancing reunification and principles of civic religion.

One such attempted definition came from orator George Bancroft (1800-1891) who connected Lincoln's death with the spiritual vision which Lincoln himself formulized at Gettysburg; the bond between nationalism, spirituality, and American civic religion:

> "The grave that receives the remains of Lincoln, receives the costly sacrifice to the Union; the monument which will rise over his body will bear witness to the Union; his enduring memory will assist during the countless ages to bond the states together, and to incite to the love of our one undivided, indivisible country. Peace to the ashes of our departed friend, the friend of his country and his race. He was happy in his life, for he was the restorer of the republic; he was happy in his death, for his martyrdom will plead for ever for the Union of the states and the freedom of man."[144]

It is clear that abolitionist Reconstruction would have universal civic religion connotations attached to the difficult challenges ahead. Military cemeteries would become sacred ground not only for the realities of death, but also for the higher and holier sentiments of nationalism and civic religion.[145] They would represent efforts on the leading edge of a national healing towards the "more perfect Union" envisioned by Lincoln at Gettysburg.

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[143] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation.* United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 83.
[144] Bancroft, George, in New York Citizens' Committee, *Obsequies of Abraham Lincoln in Union Square, New York, 25 April 1865,* New York: Van Nostrand, (1865), 20.
[145] This would include the general understanding and acceptance that abolitionism included racial equality in its purest form. The goal was not to simply emancipate but also produce a new level of equality for all.

Just forty-one days prior to his assassination, Lincoln would provide another witness and testament to his Gettysburg vision of America's crusade to immortalize civic religion to the world. The cleansing and sanctification of America through the sacrifices of soldiers was to be a peace offering for all to find comfort in a long term global perspective. Lincoln would conclude his second inaugural by stating that the new nation should represent the obligations of civic religion "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."[146] The work mentioned has direct ties to Gettysburg and the dualistic objectives for which soldiers had given their lives for. Lincoln believed that the root cause and therefore the root purpose for military death was to cleanse the nation in both nationalistic and abolitionist terms. Therefore it is appropriate to label soldiers as crusaders, those who fought for higher and holier ambitions.

There was a higher and holier purpose to which military cemeteries would elevate the abolitionist vision of Lincoln but also as the beacon for the world to emulate. In each speech discussed, Lincoln called upon divine approval for the crusade he was pursuing: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."[147] At Gettysburg, the remembrance of revolutionary ideals and expectation "that this nation (one dedicated to the proposition that all men

[146] Lincoln, Abraham, *Second Inaugural Address*, (4 March 1865).
[147] *Emancipation Proclamation*, Official Declaration, (1 January 1863).

are created equal), under God, shall have a new birth of freedom."[148] Then at the second inaugural, "One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves not distributed generally over the union but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war…. If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which in the providence of God must needs come but which having continued through His appointed time He now wills to remove and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him."[149] Other letters, speeches, and conversations suggest Lincoln's connection between the causes of the war, the abolitionist crusade to represent American civic religion, and how military death and cemeteries intertwine but the three discussed provide effective foundational argumentative support.

Much has been written concerning the developing sentiments of Lincoln regarding the fair treatment of African Americans in the country. The Emancipation Proclamation suggests that Lincoln was at least aware of the growing belief that blacks would receive a newfound sense of freedom at the war's conclusion. Historian John Hubbell argued that "for practical political reasons, Lincoln did not openly lead the movement toward the enlistment of blacks" and that during the Civil War "a basic truth emerged: Black people understood the meaning of the war and contributed to the great goal of freedom."[150] Along with other traditional principles of civic religion, racial equality

[148] Lincoln, Abraham, *Gettysburg Address*, Bliss Copy, (19 November 1863).
[149] Lincoln, *Second Inaugural,* 4 March, 1865.
[150] Hubbell, John, "Abraham Lincoln and the Recruitment of Black Soldiers", *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association,* Vol. 2, Iss. 1, (1980), 6-21; see also Smith, John David, *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops,* United States: Southern Illinois University Press, (2013), for a good historical overview of the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation and recruiting black soldiers to fight in the war.

would become a core component thanks in large part to Lincoln and those around him who advocated for it.

To argue that Lincoln was solely assassinated for his advocation of racial equality would be narrow minded but it also cannot be understated. During his last public address on April 11, 1865, Lincoln recommended that voting rights be extended as part of the abolitionist expansion of civic religion: “It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the colored man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers.”[151] Lincoln was advocating for an expansion of civic religion through racial equality. By the conclusion of the war, it was clear that the motivations of Lincoln included notions of expanded civic religion. Even though racial equality would be imperfectly implemented during Reconstruction and onward, military cemeteries provide a unique case study where soldiers were given equal treatment in their death and their sacrifices to the causes of the war.[152] Here again not perfect, but on the forefront of progress for equality within society.

Others would follow Lincoln in their sentiments to what the war meant for the living and the dead. Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) declared at an alumni meeting at Yale University in July 1865 that: “These dead are the spent ammunition of the war, and theirs above all is the victory…. These are the price and purchase money of our triumph. A great many of us were ready to live, but these offered themselves, in a sense, to die, and by their cost the victory is won.”[153] Almost immediately the memory of

[151] Lincoln, Abraham, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 8, United States: Wildside Press, (2008), 403.
[152] Some will argue that “separate but equal” does not constitute complete racial equality as cemeteries were still often segregated. However, the notion of beginning implementation of racial equality in military cemeteries does suggest movement and progress in the right direction.
[153] Bushnell, Horace, “Our obligations to the dead” Oration, Yale University Alumni Gathering, July 1865.

the war was attached to the slain and frequently in religious terms. The victory was meant to be larger than military success, it was also supposed to be an offering towards equality. An atoning nation was to be achieved through the sacrifice of blood. Years of societal trends entrenching anti- civic religion were beginning to be rooted out and crusading soldiers were the greatest source of advocacy. Once cleansed, the United States was to be the shining example to all nations for principles of civic religion.

It is clear that Lincoln evolved his mindset to include a crusade for freedom, democracy, equality, and progressivism for the United States and to eventually spread that civic religion abroad. Gettysburg was merely the introduction and Lincoln intended to see the unfinished work to the very end. American historian Elizabeth R. Varon has furthered the crusade like cause and motivations of the North in *Armies of Deliverance A New History of the Civil War* (2019) where she argues that "Northerners imagined the Civil War as a war of deliverance, waged to deliver the South from the clutches of a conspiracy and to deliver to it the blessings of free society and modern civilization."[154] To Varon, there was a higher and holier purpose to Northern war aims and that cannot be understated when considering Lincoln's vision at Gettysburg. A free society and modern civilization was at the core of military cemeteries, and were among the first entities to implement Lincoln's vision.

With Lincoln's death, almost instantaneously the military conflict would be transformed into an ideological battle of complex Reconstructive motivations. Historian Martha Hode argues, "Lincoln's assassination complicated its ending. The strife provoked by conflicting political stakes at war's end was inseparable from irreconcilable

[154] Varon, Elizabeth R., *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War,* United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, (2019), 2.

personal responses to Lincoln's assassination…. Responses to the crime at Ford's Theatre were intertwined with different understandings of the war that had just ended and, in turn, different hopes and fears about what would come next."[155] As stated before, to claim that John Wilkes Booth killed Lincoln solely for the purpose that he disagreed with the abolitionist crusade would be short sided but one angle that is clear and overlooked. Booth himself wrote in his infamous diary that "I can never repent it, though we hated to kill, Our Country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment. The country is not what it was. This forced union is not what I have loved.. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to out-live my country."[156] As Lincoln was calling upon divine intervention and hope in a just cause, Booth was blaming Lincoln for pushing an agenda unwanted and unwarranted in the South. Once again to say that Lincoln's abolitionist crusade was the sole reason Booth chose to act as he did may be to the extreme. However, when Lincoln continued to raise the purposes to include abolition, Booth also escalated his decision to assassinate rather than kidnap the president. There is no doubt that both men acted in accordance with the dictates of their own spiritual conscience in the final days of their lives.[157]

The assassination temporarily strengthened the position of Radical Republicans who desired complete and swift reconstruction with no reconciliationist compromises. Lincoln's death was the final straw in their eyes to push abolition not only as a punishment for the Confederacy but also as a way to show divine approval for the Northern cause. Scholars and historians have analyzed Reconstruction and have

[155] Hodes, Martha. *Mourning Lincoln,* United Kingdom: Yale University Press, (2015), 11.
[156] Booth, John Wilkes, "Diary Entry April 13-14", Text.
[157] Connecting the definition utilized for civic religion herein that represents ideas/ principles that communities ought and should accept shows that Lincoln and Booth had differing beliefs as to how civic religion would be implemented and the balance between expanding and embracing.

established interpretations which suggest that it was a failure, that the abolitionist crusade was unsuccessful. Pointing to Jim Crow Laws and other racially motivated actions, scholars lament how quickly the unified nation geographically distinguished themselves again. The new birth of freedom would be short lived as the South was able to establish a narrative of redemptive lost causes which proved beneficial for their way of life. Whatever short term successes brought about as a result of the war were erased by the end of the nineteenth century at the very latest.[158]

Military cemeteries of the era would not be immune to the compromising notions regarding race, reunion, and cultural memory; but the failures of Reconstruction did not extinguish the flame to the extent as has been suggested by scholars on a larger national scale. Lincoln would not have agreed with Radical Reconstructionists to the point of no compromise. His writings suggest that he believed that some level of pragmatic concession would be necessary for long term conversion, and military cemeteries were one place where those concessions were implemented to the abolitionist crusade. There would be necessary steps to bring about his vision as it would not happen overnight. Yet Lincoln would not be granted the opportunity and Andrew Johnson became the Commander-in-Chief to oversee military cemeteries in an era where they were on the forefront of expanding civic religion.

Reconstruction era military cemeteries were developed in a cultural reality which suggested necessity was a leading motivator to honoring the dead. With embalming practices still uncommon and expensive, time was of the essence to bury soldiers from

[158] The Supreme Court Case “Plessy v. Ferguson” which established the legality of “separate but equal” in 1896 provides a beneficial timeframe to anti-abolitionist sentiments. For thirty years, as the United States debated the legalities of Reconstruction, military cemeteries were constantly moving towards the abolitionist goals set forth by Lincoln.

the battlefields. The need to bury the dead was obvious; and similar to citizen cemeteries and their development beyond pure necessity, military cemeteries went through a similar evolution. Yet it cannot be overstated that necessity was the leading factor through which other ideals would build upon. The North saw a need to extend Gettysburg-like honor to all Union soldiers while the South saw an opportunity to raise Confederate sacrifice to similar levels of sacredness. There was a distinct geographical difference between the former combatants and their cemeteries. Each side took different approaches in the process of nationalizing the dead and was the biggest challenge to Lincoln's dualistic objective during the era.[159] The South attempted to appeal to Southern culture, while the North was implementing larger abolitionist and civic religion ideals. Answering questions regarding nation, citizen, and race within the context of Reconstruction and cemeteries proved to be a central focus.

Without question, race played a role in cemeteries but Historian John Neff in *Honoring the Civil War Dead* (2005) suggests that "on the whole, the color line of segregation that pertained in the nation's cemeteries was between blue and gray…" and that military cemeteries were some of the first publicly funded integrated cemeteries in American history.[160] Thus helping solidify the thesis that military cemeteries did not retreat from Reconstruction to the extent as previously suggested. War affiliation, most often geographical, and racial Reconstruction are separate entities and yet military cemeteries provide a unique intersection between the two. More will be discussed on

[159] John Neff argues the "transition of a loose collection of burial grounds into the National Cemetery System was the result of three related but largely independent actions…" 1- The federal government deciding to provide the "logistical concerns" of military death 2- The movement originated from within the military and 3- Civilians "exerted themselves on behalf of the soldier dead"; Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead,* Chapter 3 "One Interminable Grave-Yard: Northern Dominance in the Commemoration of the Dead", (2005).

[160] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation.* United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 133-134.

racial components in military cemeteries later in the argument, but it is critical to set the foundation that much of the Reconstruction segregation was war affiliation first and not racial in military cemeteries. The expansion of civic religion was implemented very early on within military cemeteries and would set examples for other entities to follow.

Without immediate dangers of attack, survivors of the war would turn their attention to providing appropriate gravesites for fallen soldiers hastedley buried during the war. In 1862 there had been only fourteen military cemeteries officially established by the Union federal government. By the war's conclusion there were an additional fifteen in operation spread throughout the country. Each of these cemeteries were meeting Lincoln's vision in varying degrees but there were still uncertainties as to the final product. The number of military cemeteries would double between 1865 and 1870 to approximately seventy, which does not include the numerous Confederate cemeteries or Confederate sections within cemeteries throughout the nation. It would not be until the turn of the twentieth century that American military cemeteries would justly fit the description of national cemetery. For thirty years military cemeteries would be characterized as Union or Confederate and not under a unified American persona.[161]

Once again, the critical argumentative points within this chapter are recognizing this immediate separation of Union and Confederate cemeteries. Each side took responsibility for their own dead with little recognition, acceptance, or aid given to the opposing efforts. The federal government oversaw the reburial of Union soldiers, while private organizations and citizens performed much of the work for Confederate soldiers. Advocates of the lost cause interpretation use this separation as evidence to support

[161] John Neff suggests in *Honoring the Civil War Dead* that the term "National Cemetery" is synonymous with "Union Cemetery" during the years immediately following the war. Deeping the argument that military cemeteries during reconstruction were driven mainly by geography.

the notion that Lincoln's crusade was unsuccessful long term. Distinguishing components of military cemeteries between former Union and Confederate soldiers, not to mention the lack of racial equality within the cemeteries, suggest that civic religion was still geographically driven, or at the very least war affiliation driven. However, even though the abolitionist spiritual crusade retreated for a time, it never fully surrendered. Justifiable concessions were made in the short term to ensure a long term beacon to the world of how civic religion includes notions of patience and progress.

Lincoln's desire was to create a new birth of freedom for the United States and once again establish a beacon for other nations to emulate. With his assassination, that challenge would be placed on Andrew Johnson and Ulysses S. Grant to be the vicarious administrators of his vision. However, much of the military cemetery portion of Reconstruction rested upon one man who became renowned for his organizational skills during and after the war. Just as with the cemetery at Gettysburg, military cemeteries during the Reconstruction have unsung heroes whose dedicated efforts further developed American sentiments towards memorializing military death on the sacred grounds of martyrdom for the advancement of civic religion.[162]

Born in Augusta, Georgia in 1816, Montgomery C. Meigs (1816-1892) made his mark on American society in numerous different eras of history. Prior to the Civil War he was one of the key engineers and architects of Washington D.C. and helped the city develop within its role as the nation's capital. During the war itself he was labeled as "second only to Grant" by biographer David Miller for his immaculate organization as quartermaster general. Then Meigs became responsible for the overseeing of Union

[162] Meigs was present in the room of the Peterson House when Lincoln passed away, thus establishing another connection between the two men who influenced the implementation of military cemeteries and their purposes to honor the dead and expand civic religion.

reburials during Reconstruction including at Arlington National Cemetery.[163] In 1867, Secretary of State William Seward praised General Meigs and his value to the war efforts: “Without the services of this eminent soldier, the National cause must either have been lost or deeply imperiled.”[164] Traditionally lost among the great names of the Civil War, Montgomery C. Meigs played a critical part in the Union victory. Arguably as valuable to the war effort as any other one individual.

The realities of war death personally affected Meigs as his son, John Rodgers Meigs, was killed in Virginia in October 1864. Even without the personal tragedy, General Meigs had intense feelings against the Confederacy, which he continued through his involvement with military cemeteries. Amidst personal connections with Confederate leaders such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, Meigs insisted on unrestricted warfare for Union victory as well as the symbolic sacred punishment of Southern slavery. As the war was approaching its destructive end, Meigs would begin organizing appropriate burials for Union dead as another opportunity to show devotion to their sacrifice. More will be detailed about Meigs’ specific and personal role in developing Arlington in the following chapter, but it is noteworthy to introduce Reconstruction cemeteries with his overseeing involvement around the nation as Quartermaster General. Arlington became his number one focus, but his fingerprints are found throughout Reconstruction cemeteries.

Legislation for Civil War reburials commenced almost immediately following the conclusion of the war. On July 3, 1865, General Orders No. 40 requested lists of

[163] Miller, David W., *Second Only to Grant: Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs : a Biography.* United States: White Mane Books, (2000).
[164] Quoted in, O'Harrow, Robert, *The Quartermaster: Montgomery C. Meigs, Lincoln's General, Master Builder of the Union Army*, India: Simon & Schuster, (2016).

internments which had occurred during the war. However, the National Cemetery Administration concludes that documentation produced from the field only accounted for less than thirty percent of the war dead.[165] Thus another congressional order was given in October 1865 asking for the location of cemeteries where Union soldiers had been buried and then gave suggestions for preservation.[166] The following year congress authorized a joint resolution dated April 13, 1866 where it gave the Secretary of War permission to "take immediate measures to preserve from desecration the graves of soldiers of the United States who fell in battle or died of disease in the field and in hospitals during the war of the rebellion; to secure suitable burial places in which they may be properly interred; and to have the grounds enclosed, so that the resting-places of the honored dead may be kept sacred forever."[167]

With those legislations, a new era military cemeteries was established for the United States. Up to 1866, everything dealing with the burial of fallen soldiers had come from the context of conflict. Any burials were done as the war continued on. Now that peace had been restored, Americans could now analyze the larger purposes of soldier sacrifice. Lincoln had established the dualistic objective of military cemeteries at Gettysburg but much was still to be accomplished on the battlefront. Congress took up the mantle of Lincoln's vision and showed their willingness to embrace his objectives. Although not perfect in their implementation, Congress helped create military cemeteries which represented geographic temples of American civic religion.

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[165] Authors, History Program National Cemetery Administration, *NCA Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead,* U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., (July 2016), 14.
[166] General Orders No. 65, (October 30, 1865), *Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead*, 14-15.
[167] *The Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations of the United States of America*, United States: Little, Brown, (1868), Joint Resolution April 13, 1866, 353.

One of the earliest academic writings on military cemeteries came in 1866 from James F. Russling (1834-1918) who published an article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* titled simply "National Cemeteries". The article recounted an early history of military cemeteries but also furthered the argument as to the purposes behind them. As part of a lengthy overview of military cemeteries up to that point both in the United States and other world history examples, Russling declares "But while we all agree to honor and reward our living heroes, we must not forget that there are solemn duties we owe also to the dead. Both duties belong equally to true patriotism, and an enlightened civilization will surely regard one as but the complement of the other. It may be that death is an eternal sleep, and the grave the end of all things, as some 'small philosophers' hold. But the instincts of humanity recoil from the doctrine, and with all right-thinking men care for the dead stand close to reverence for God."[168] Civic religion and the expansion of those ideals come from enlightened civilizations. It is clear that connecting sacrifice with both nationalism and civic religion was established from the onset of military cemeteries.

In 1867 further direction was provided by congress to both the Secretary of War and the Quartermaster General (Montgomery C. Meigs at that time) "That in the arrangement of national cemeteries established for the burial of deceased soldiers and sailors,... to cause each grave to be marked with a small headstone, or block, with the number of the grave inscribed thereon,... in a register of burials to be kept at each cemetery and at the office of the quartermaster-general, which shall set forth the name, rank, company, regiment, and date of death of the officer or soldier; or, if unknown it

[168] Russling, James F., "National Cemeteries", *Harper's New Monthly Magazine Vol. 33*, (1866), 310.

shall be so recorded."[169] Congress also enacted annual visits to each cemetery to inspect and report on condition as well as set forth criminal punishment for any who desecrate the cemeteries as misdemeanors with superintendents given police power to make arrests if ever needed. In a span of four years, the United States government went from pre-Gettysburg military checklists of burying the dead to governmental legislation to ensure that all were remembered. Americans had elevated soldier death to higher and holier realms. A journey that would continue making Lincoln's vision at Gettysburg an ever increasing opportunity for success.

Between 1867 and 1871, the succinctly named federal reburial or reinterment program was under the watchful eye of Montgomery Meigs who "ordered a massive search of every battlefield, isolated churchyard, farm, plantation, railroad siding, or any other place combat operations had occurred and where Union dead might lie in temporary graves…. and brought nearly 300,000 remains to national cemeteries, with 58 percent identified."[170] The undertaking was enormous as government officials and private citizens throughout the nation went to work to ensure Union dead were recognized for their ultimate sacrifice. As described by Quartermaster Edmund Whitman (1835-1897), the reburial program was "Such a consecration of a nation's power and resources to a sentiment, the world has never witnessed."[171] One clear and distinctive piece of historical evidence that the United States was accepting Lincoln's vision. That military cemeteries would represent civic religion principles to showcase to nations around the globe and efforts given prove that Lincoln's vision was being implemented.

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[169] Russling, James F., "National Cemeteries", Harper's New Monthly Magazine Vol. 33, (1866), 399.
[170] Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries*, 2d Ed.. United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010), 3.
[171] Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery*. United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 71-72.

Scholars have written numerous different perspectives on the reburial program and how the United States engaged with the relationship between Reconstruction and military death. One of the early enlightening dynamics was how Gettysburg once again played the leading role in the interpretation of what military cemeteries meant to Americans both symbolically and in terms of memorialization. Historian John R. Neff begins his historiographic essential work *Honoring the Civil War Dead Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (2005) with the notion that the "impulse to interpret and express meaning was nowhere more significant nor more eloquent, than in the commemoration of the war's soldier dead. For the national government and all American citizens following the war, the commemoration of the war's dead provided the quintessential forum for engaging- and, most important, expressing- the war's meaning."[172] Connecting cause and meaning to death became a motivating factor in much of the post war military cemetery experiences.

Numerous examples can be found of Americans attempting to connect causes of civic religion to soldier sacrifice. One in particular is noteworthy for brief analysis as it demonstrates Northern sentiment in simplicity and clarity. Located on the grounds of Mount Auburn Cemetery is a monument sculpture entitled *American Union Monument* carved by Martin Milmore in 1872. The monument itself is a representation of an Egyptian Sphinx, but the inscription is the point of emphasis: "American Union Preserved- African Slavery Destroyed- By the Uprising of a Great People- By the Blood of Fallen Heroes".[173] Ultimately the sacrifice of Union soldiers was to expand civic religion, which by nature included the destruction of slavery as an institution but also

[172] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*. United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 1.
[173] *American Union Monument*, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Boston, Massachusetts.

higher and holier ideals of equality. Military cemeteries represented the best geographic example of symbolizing the conflict in terms of civic religion.

As already discussed, the federal government initiated a five year program of locating, identifying when possible, repatriating, and appropriately memorializing Union dead from the war. Efforts on a national scale are similar to those put forth by the citizens of Gettysburg between July 1863 and March 1864. The national success of reburial (over three hundred thousand soldiers), was greatly enhanced by a new government agency which acted in connection with the military's quartermaster office. It was headed by a woman whom history has remembered for her later accomplishments and influence as the founder of the American Red Cross.

Clara Barton (1821-1912) gained respect during the Civil War as a compassionate nurse who would go above the call of duty to ensure ailing soldiers were cared for. She was declared as the “angel of the battlefield” by Union surgeon Dr. James Dunn following her heroics at the battle of Antietam and with President Lincoln’s permission opened the Office of Missing Soldiers in March 1865. The agency's sole purpose was providing families solace in knowing, or at the very least having the most accurate information. A letter which Barton wrote to President Lincoln in February 1865 summarizes her simple and monumental task: “It will be my object also to obtain and furnish all possible information in regard to those that have died during their confinement.”[174] Individuals and families from throughout the country would seek Barton’s help in finding any information that could be gathered regarding the fate of missing soldiers from the war. By some accounts as the Office of Missing Soldiers

[174] Barton, Clara, “letter to Abraham Lincoln February 1865”, Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

concluded their service, Barton would aid over sixty thousand requests with information compiled by survivors and official military reports.[175]

Unfortunately, far too often the answer Barton and those who worked with her provided to families was the expected and anticipated. As much as families secretly hoped for a miracle, reality simply was that missing soldiers were found through death rolls. Yet finding out as much truth provided the desired solace and closure. According to Jake Wynn who serves as the director of interpretation at the Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office Museum, during the three years the office functioned they were able to "find" twenty-two thousand Union soldiers and provide that closure to families.[176] Barton herself aligned with Lincoln's vision of representing a higher and holier abolitionist sacred cause to the war: "Let me hasten to commend to the grateful consideration of this noble, generous people, alike the soldier who has given his strength, the prisoner who has sacrificed his health, the widow who has offered up her husband, the orphan that knows only that its father went out to battle and comes no more forever, and the lonely, distant grave of the martyr, who sleeps alone in a stranger soil, that freedom and peace might come to ours."[177] The work dedicated to aiding grieving families became part of Barton's sacrifice to Lincoln's vision. Freedom not only for African Americans but also the freedom which information gave to families.

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[175] A sample of recent scholarly work on Clara Barton includes: Pryor, Elizabeth Brown, *Clara Barton, Professional Angel,* United States: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, (2011); Burton, David Henry, *Clara Barton: in the service of humanity*, Westport: Greenwood Press, (1995); Hamen, Susan E., *Clara Barton: Civil War Hero & American Red Cross Founder*, United States: ABDO Pub., (2010). Barton also has an extensive primary document collection through the University of Maryland, the National Park Service, as well as the Library of Congress. However, much of the scholarly studies emphasize and focus on her role with the American Red Cross with less attention given to the Missing Soldiers Office.

[176] Wynn, Jake, "Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office", presentation given as part of Longwood Civil War Seminar, February 9, 2019. Video and transcript made available through C-SPAN.

[177] Quoted in Bontrager, Shannon. *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921.* United States: University of Nebraska Press, (2020), 37.

A specific and particular success story of Barton's, centered on her role at the cemetery located at Andersonville Confederate Prison. Along with those working at the Missing Soldiers Office, Barton was able to provide information to thousands of families thanks to the bravery of one soldier who compiled a secret copy of Union deaths and burials. Opening in 1864, Andersonville (originally named Camp Sumter) saw over thirteen thousand Union deaths on its grounds by the time the war concluded. In June 1865, Barton received a letter from Dorence Atwater who was a former prisoner at Andersonville and who had kept death records during his incarceration. The federal government prompted Atwater and Barton to travel to Andersonville with other government employees to officially document and dedicate a new cemetery for Union soldiers. During the summer, the expedition accomplished an astounding ninety six percent identification rate and on August 17, 1865, Barton raised the American flag over the newly dedicated cemetery.[178]

The efforts of Clara Barton also introduce a new component of American civic religion in conjunction with racial equality, that of gender equality. Opportunities for women to be a crucial part of the mourning, memorialization, and memory constructors suggest that military cemeteries were one of the first institutions in American history that allowed for such equality. Historian Caroline Janney argues even further that efforts of the Ladies Memorial Association in numerous areas of the South were attempting to maintain or reinforce traditional southern gender roles as part of their efforts to locate and appropriately bury Confederate dead.[179] Suggesting that gender roles were also

[178] Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War.* United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2009), 215- 217.
[179] Janney, Caroline E., *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause*, United States: University of North Carolina Press, (2012).

part of the larger civic religion battle produced by the war and military cemeteries provide a great case study for how each geographic region furthered their beliefs.

However, an argumentative distinction needs to be considered between Clara Barton and the Ladies Memorial Associations found throughout the South. The larger purposes for both were different in objective and motivation. Barton and others in the North were challenging the social order whereas the Ladies Memorial Associations were attempting to preserve memory. Gender was a component of their memorialization, but not a unifying effort towards gender equality. Thus creating another distinction during the Reconstruction era in regards to the development of military cemeteries. Lincoln's vision of dualistic objectives advocated for equality and women played an influencing part in the implementation of those ideals.

Creating military cemeteries into temples of American nationalism and civic religion would take time and would have adaptations as sentiments evolved. Lincoln desired for a unified sacred nation that would be the beacon to other nations around the world as crusaders of universal principles. Advocates of abolitionist Reconstruction never fully accomplished that vision but anti-Reconstructionists never truly diminished it. Military cemeteries provided hope for believers of American civic religion as they came closest to the ideals of equality, democracy, and so forth. Even though Reconstruction ended without complete abolitionist success, military cemeteries suggest that overall the era did not fail. There was movement in the right direction with military cemeteries even though the differences between Union and former Confederate actions show that Americans were not quite ready to fully accept Lincoln's vision but never completely disregarded it.

Transitioning to the former confederates experiences with military cemeteries and the challenges they faced allows for a unique comparison to the Gettysburg National Cemetery with that of the development of Antietam National Cemetery. The differences cannot be more stark in the process of accomplishment, and yet the end objectives aligned with Lincoln's vision for post-war America. Antietam has the distinction of being the bloodiest day in American history and the results of that bloodshed continued into the symbolic battlefield of how to appropriately memorialize soldier death. Different from Gettysburg, the Antietam battlefield was located in the more contested border state of Maryland and plans for a cemetery had of necessity and choice had to wait for the conflict to end. Citizens from Gettysburg worked in relative safety once the armies left the area; those from Maryland were constantly at alarm. Another drastic difference was the varied sentiments to the individual causes on both sides of the war. The people of Antietam and its surrounding areas were mixed not only as to which side their loyalties lied but also to what extreme.

Dedication ceremonies were planned at the Antietam National Cemetery after numerous different perspectives, arguments, and suggestions as to how to appropriately honor Union dead. Attendees included President Andrew Johnson, Generals Grant, McClellan, and Burnside, as well as other high ranking officials from both the federal and state governments of Maryland. In his keynote address, Maryland Governor A.W. Bradford (1806-1881) stated "May not imagination, as it seeks to portray the future of this great American Republic, without any overstraining of its powers, see the coming time,... when her sons from every State shall seek this little hamlet for its hallowed memories of the past, and coming from the South as well as the North,

reunited in fact as well as theory, in affection as well as formality, shall stand here together as pilgrims at a common shrine."[180] Notions of civic religion and necessary pragmatic decisions are common throughout documentation of the origins and dedication of Antietam National Cemetery. Reunification took on a larger perspective at cemeteries due to the raw emotions of those whose sons lied beneath the graves.

President Andrew Johnson then concluded the dedication ceremonies (very similar to Lincoln at Gettysburg) with the following plea, that "we may follow the example which has been so eloquently alluded to this afternoon, and which has been so clearly set by the illustrious dead…. Would to God we of the living could imitate their example, as they lay sleeping in peace in their tombs, and live together in friendship and peace."[181] Early hints towards what Reconstruction scholars refer to as reconciliation as time passed and radical reconstructionists retreated. Yet it must also be noted that Johnson called upon the living to imitate the example of the dead. Although not perfect, the dead were sleeping and living together as friends at peace and crusaders for American civic religion.[182]

Even amid the cultural differences and challenges facing the nation during reconstruction, military cemeteries themselves as geographic locations were always intended to represent American civic religion. The grounds were always intended to be a representation of service, sacrifice, and selflessness. With that, Confederate cemeteries took on a different facade. The living intended to honor sacrifice, that much

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[180] Col. Henry Morrow, *Official Records,* ser. 1,27, pt. 1: 269; *History of the Antietam National Cemetery, Including a Descriptive List of All the Loyal Soldiers Buried Therein,* Baltimore: John W. Woods, Steam Printer, (1869), 201; Quoted in Neff, John R., *Honoring the Civil War Dead,* 118.
[181] Johnson, Andrew, "Closing Remarks", Dedication Ceremonies of Antietam National Cemetery, September 17, 1867; as quoted and reported in the *New York Times*, September 18, 1867.
[182] Confederate remains were originally destined for Antietam National Cemetery but lack of funding and bitter emotions during construction caused Maryland delegates to back out of the proceedings. Nearly 3,000 Confederates were relocated to numerous surrounding cemeteries.

is unquestionable. For those within the South, the question became how to raise Confederate death to the same level as Union death. Perhaps not in the same definition but at least on the same level. For example, the Confederate Monument at Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery suggests that former Confederates were not fighting for the spread of American civic religion but rather defending their way of life.[183] Consistently, Confederates were not portrayed as crusaders but rather defenders. Union soldiers on the other hand were almost universally portrayed as crusaders for the larger causes of civic religion. The cemetery at Antietam shows one example that the nation was navigating a fine balance between honoring Southern death while not desecrating Northern sacrifice.

A common feeling throughout the South during the immediate aftermath of the war was the stark contrast between what the federal government was doing for deceased Union soldiers and their counterparts. One such description found in the *Norfolk Virginian* in March 1866 suggested: "Since the war the people of the North have been long in doing honor to their dead—Stately monuments have been erected; tablets have been placed on famous battle-fields; beautiful cemeteries have been designed…. But as the splendid shaft rises above the Northern dead, how sad and painful to think of the unmarked ground that holds the ashes of those dearest to us… Alas! It is a sad contrast."[184] The objective of memorializing Confederate dead would not be picked up by the Federal government but rather by private local organizations. Individuals would

[183] See inscription plaques, Confederate War Dead Memorial/ Monument, Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond Virginia, dedicated 1869, commemorating 18,000 Confederate Soldiers buried nearby in mass graves.
[184] *Norfolk Virginian,* March 31, 1866. Also quoted in Bell, Diana Williams, "A Nation's Wail their Requiem!": Memory and Identity in the Commemoration of the American Civil War Dead, 1865-1870", College of William and Mary, Theses, Dissertations, and Masters Projects, 2005.

ensure that the memory of Confederate death would be perpetuated but opposite as to what Lincoln had envisioned at Gettysburg.

Women's charitable groups would compose the largest cohort of private citizens' efforts to not only bury Confederate dead out of necessity, but also to attempt to provide meaning in those deaths. Referred generally as the Ladies Memorial Associations (LMA's), numerous branches operated throughout the South during the first few decades following the war. Although their efforts were less successful in terms of sheer numbers of reburials, their efforts consisted of the same motivations to honor the dead but with different objectives. The National Cemetery Administration in 2016 published *Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead* where they provided overview information of not only the history of Confederate cemeteries but also the evolving relationship the geographic regions had with each over during Reconstruction. Fundamental to the research was that the "Lost Cause" myth was central to the creation of Confederate cemeteries. Union cemeteries were adhering to civic religion principles, while Confederate cemeteries were attaching to defending a way of life.[185]

National Cemetery Administration historians detailed eighteen cemeteries that were either completely constituted with Confederate burials or that had no less than four hundred known Confederate gravesites. These eighteen cemeteries would put the total number of military cemeteries in the United States to approximately ninety by 1880. All of these eighteen cemeteries besides two reside in either Northern or border states. Suggesting the amount of death that occurred within Confederate forces while prisoners

[185] "The southern cause was not only undefiled by defeat but that the bloodbath of the war actually sanctified the values and mores of the Old South."; Emory, Thomas, "Civil War," Charles Reagan Wilson & William Ferris, editors, *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, (1989), 604–605.

of war. Overall, the history of these eighteen match the general notions experienced at Gettysburg and Antietam where Confederate soldiers were afterthoughts at the expense of honoring the Union victors.[186] Yet they cannot be overlooked as part of the expansion of civic religion. Soldiers from both sides were being treated as defenders of nationalistic causes, albeit different ones and thus helped establish the dualistic objectives of American (Union in this context) military cemeteries.

Some Reconstruction scholars have suggested that Confederate deaths and reburial helped initiate the "Lost Cause" myth within the South as it was those deaths that the cause/ purpose of the war connected with post conflict meaning.[187] There has also been extensive writing on the connection to Memorial Day origins in both regions of the country during Reconstruction, but particularly in the South where mourners desired a purpose in their grief. One such fascinating occurrence took place on Memorial Day in Charleston, South Carolina 1871 where Confederate dead from the battle of Gettysburg were being re-interred in their home state. Reverend John L. Girardeau (1825-1898) was the keynote speaker at the ceremonies and declared that "They were entitled to strangers' accommodations and they received them. But they will no longer sleep along. They will now have a fellowship in death from which they have hitherto been excommunicated…. They have come home at last;... to their native soil."[188] It is clear from this and other speeches that Confederate remembrances were centered on

[186] See *Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead*, History Program National Cemetery Administration U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., (2016).
[187] I.E., Foster, Gaines M., *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913,* United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, (1987). Foster argues that the South actually embraced reunification in the hope of quickly creating a new southern identity. He declares that Confederate cemeteries were part of "ceremonial bereavement" and initial reactions to long term goals.
[188] Girardeau, John Lafayette, *Confederate Memorial Day at Charleston, S.C.: Reinterment of the Carolina Dead from Gettysburg*, "Address of Rev. Dr. Girardeau, Odes, &c", United States: W.G. Mazyck, printer, (1871), 6.

country and way of life; opposite to that of Lincoln. Historian Shannon Bontrager even called Girardeau's speech the "counter-Gettysburg Address" due to its opposing purposes of commemoration.[189] An area of further research that would greatly benefit Reconstruction studies would be the usage of Memorial Day speeches in both geographic regions as moments to push forward agendas.

The history of Memorial Day has become a centralized topic of conversation when discussing Civil War memory. Besides the obvious connection to cemeteries, there are connecting threads to the development of federal legislation toward honoring the past. As individual states initiated their own versions of Memorial Day, including choosing specific days that held special significance to the area (anniversary of the death of "Stonewall" Jackson for example), citizens of the United States unified under the vision of memorializing soldier death. New York was the first state to make Memorial Day an official holiday in 1873 and by 1890 all Northern states had recognized the holiday. Similar to the notion that national cemeteries during Reconstruction could be relabeled as Union cemeteries, so too could the development of Memorial Day. In terms of national holiday, it was driven by northern sentiments and the South altered as needed for their own interpretations.

Yet a fascinating entry in the *New International Encyclopedia 1917* defines the holiday as "A day (May 30) set apart each year by the various Northern States for the purpose of decorating the graves in the national cemeteries and of commemorating the soldiers who during the Civil War lost their lives for the Union cause. It is a legal holiday in all the States and Territories of the Union except Arkansas, Florida, Georgia,

[189] Bontrager, Shannon. *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921.* United States: University of Nebraska Press, (2020), 66.

Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. Some of the Southern States have also set apart a day for the commemoration of the Confederate soldiers who fell during the war."[190] Specific reference to the Union cause suggests Lincoln's vision and the expansion of civic religion. Commemoration practices developed in both the North and South during the Reconstruction years but once again commemorating different objectives. Memorial Day is just one example of how people choose to remember, recall, and reflect on the dead. Another well documented variation of commemoration was the Confederate push to build memorials as part of their memorialization.

Monument studies has become a growing subfield of historical memory and the Civil War provided numerous opportunities for the living to remember through stone. A few noteworthy studies in recent years include *Interpreting Sacred Ground* (2013) by Christian Spielvogel; *Cities of the Dead Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (2011) by William A. Blair; *Ruin Nation Destruction and the American Civil War* (2012) by Megan Kate Nelson; and most recently Thomas J. Brown's work *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* (2019).[191] In summative overview, scholars who have considered cemeteries as part of the Civil War monument building emphasis only do so with the question of what purpose did they serve the living. Or in other words, what were the political, cultural, or social motivations behind

[190] *New International Encyclopedia*, "Memorial Day", (1917); Quoted in *NCA Federal Stewardship of the Confederate Dead,* 18.

[191] These are just a few of the scholarly works regarding Civil War monuments, memory, and the construction/ intertwining of those two concepts. Their overall arguments suggest that the "Lost Cause" myth was aided in the notion of building monuments to the dead who sacrificed for Southern ideals. Not dissimilar to Northern efforts to "nationalize" Union dead, the South attempted to keep Southern identity alive through monuments to the dead. Although military cemeteries are referenced (particularly by Blair in *Cities of the Dead*), particular and focused study on the objectives short term and long term for military cemeteries is still underdeveloped.

these cemeteries? Rarely does the cemetery itself and those who rest beneath its soils receive the focus of a study.

To claim that the development of military cemeteries did not coexist within the context of historical interpretation and events would be irresponsible. Without question the realities of the Civil War and Reconstruction played roles in military cemetery development. However, to claim that military cemeteries were nothing more than political statements and another representation of the flaws of the American cultural past shows disregard for lives cut short while wearing a military uniform. Few individuals were willing to give their lives for a post-war political statement, there was something higher and holier for which soldiers recognized during the conflict. Starting with Abraham Lincoln and continuing through the ebbs and flows of history, the political statement of military cemeteries was simply this: the dead deserved the praise, and the living are to set the worthy example of their sacrifice.

Therefore, the concluding argumentative point of this chapter is a positive interpretation of reconciliation where soldiers North and South were granted opportunities to receive the honor befitting their sacrifice. Once again there are flaws and contradictions found in the historical record, but when considering the temple-like setting of military cemeteries there are notions of forgiveness as part of reconciliation. Historians may disagree about considering reconciliation as a success, but reconciliation in terms of military cemeteries was a positive step in the right direction to meet Lincoln's vision as a spiritual beacon for the world to follow.

As typical, Gettysburg provides a clear example of a national trend towards reconciliation in the later years of reconstruction. At the 1869 dedication ceremony for

the Soldiers' National Monument, Major General George Gordon Meade (1815-1872) declared in his remarks:

> "When I contemplate this field, I see here and there the marks of hastily dug trenches in which repose the dead against whom we fought.... Above them a bit of plank indicates simply that these remains of the fallen were hurriedly laid there by soldiers who met them in battle. Why should we not collect them in some suitable place?... I do not ask that a monument be erected over them; I do not ask that we should in any way endorse their cause or their conduct, or entertain other than feelings of condemnation for their course; but they are dead! They have gone before their Maker to be judged. In all civilized countries it is the usage to bury the dead with decency and respect, and even to fallen enemies respectful burial is accorded in death. I earnestly hope that this suggestion may have some influence throughout our broad land, for this is only one of a hundred crowded battle fields."[192]

Interesting to note the personal connection between Major General Meade and the battlefield at Gettysburg. Only six years prior he was on that battlefield commanding Union troops and defending against Confederate advancements and now he desired to see Confederate troops be given respectful burial without the expectation of what might be deemed memorialization.

This sentiment was not uncommon among former troops as a letter from seventeen former Union officers sent to the board of the Antietam National Cemetery expressed a belief that "the act of collecting the remains of the rebel dead and giving them decent interment, in a separate enclosure, would be in harmony with our feelings; it would not, in our opinion, be conferring honor on the rebel dead, or desecrating the

[192] John Russell Barlett, Secretary of the Board of Commissioners, "Address of Major General George G. Meade," The Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg. With the Proceedings at its Consecrations: at the Laying of the Corner-Stone of the Monument, and at its Dedication, (Providence Press Company for the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' National Cemetery, Providence, 1874), p. 86; Quoted in Campbell, Eric A., "A Field Made Glorious Cemetery Hill: from Battlefield to Sacred Ground", *Fourth Annual Gettysburg Seminar Papers*, (1995).

honored memory of our fallen comrades who now sleep on those fields."[193] There is little doubt that emotions were still raw and scholars will point out the separatist ideas of separate enclosures and perhaps the lack of purely equal actions to bury Union and Confederate dead within the same cemetery. However, there is a difference between reconciling as best friends and doing so with the respect between human beings. Using religious terminology; forgiveness takes on many different short term and long term visions.

Meade was under the impression that the Union cause was just and advanced universal principles of civic religion. He was careful however not to suggest that the Confederate cause was equal and therefore required equal treatment of military death. Rather it was pragmatic to be patient and understanding in the time necessary for the South to convert back those ideals. Fanatical believers of American civic religion did not want Confederates receiving any honor in any definition of the term but the vast majority of advocates of civic religion saw the benefit in allowing certain concessions. Patience that would ultimately prove successful. By the Spanish-American War the majority of the South had come to realize that America's role, and they played a part in that role, was to spread universal principles of civic religion to other nations. Therefore, the bloody conflict between brothers aided in their long term relationship as companion crusaders into the twentieth century.

Reconstruction era military cemeteries would go through a few decades of what will be considered minor developments following the initial post war reburial programs initiated in both the North and South. Original legislation only allowed for soldiers killed

[193] Quoted in Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*. United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 123.

in action during the war to be buried within national cemetery grounds but an updated legislation was passed in 1872-1873 allowed for all former Union soldiers to have that opportunity (Former Confederates would not be until the Spanish-American War and the first decade of the 20th century). Legislation was also discussed and passed regarding the federal responsibility to mark, maintain, and replace headstones not only in national cemeteries but any soldier who desired a military headstone regardless of burial place. There was also continued evolution of memories and emotions as time pressed forward and the United States pressed westward. Historian Shannon Bontrager recounts a few specific case studies as to how westward expansion post Civil War played a role in developing cultural memory of what soldiers and cemeteries represented.[194]

Approximately thirty years passed with minor progression towards fulfilling Lincoln's vision. Albeit, those thirty years laid the foundation for which military cemeteries were able to build upon later. Both the former Union and Confederacy were anxiously engaged in creating a dignified resting place for soldiers, each on their own individual terms. Then in 1898 President William McKinley initiated the next major development in raising military cemeteries to the higher and holier temple-like representations of American nationalism and civic religion. A new conflict had allowed for re-analyzation of Lincoln's vision of not only the expression of nationalism and civic religion but ultimately who represented those ideals.

The Spanish American War provided two new trends in the history of military cemeteries. First, as Dean Holt suggests, American decisions to handle military death

[194] Examples include early burials in Sitka, Alaska not receiving merit because of the uncertainty of geographic spaces in American imperialism; the role of the railroad industry in furthering tensions between Native Americans and expansionists in the Native American Wars of the late 19th century; and the unique components of General George Custer's death and re-burial at West Point; see Bontrager, Shannon, *Death at the Edges of Empire,* Chap 2.

during the Spanish American War "was probably the first time in history that a country at war with a foreign power had disinterred its soldiers who died on foreign soil and brought them home to family and friends."[195] Now arguments can be made for other examples prior to 1898 including in Ancient Greece, but Americans took it upon the federal government to bring every soldier home to receive a hero's honor. Even though disease killed up to 6 times more soldiers during the war, the government saw no difference in their sacrifice. Giving the last full measure of devotion outweighed how the final breath was spent.

Secondly, the Spanish American War was the first military conflict post Reconstruction and therefore a unified nation had a unified military force. Questions arose about honoring the dead and whether it would be similar or different from decisions made during the 1860's and 1870's. President William McKinley would offer his solution in a speech to the Georgia legislature on December 14, 1898. The peace treaty with Spain had recently been signed and an era of patriotic unity was being ushered in:

> "Sectional lines no longer mar the map of the United States. Sectional feeling no longer holds back the love we bear each other. Fraternity is the national anthem, sung by a chorus of forty-five States and our Territories at home and beyond the seas. The Union is once more the common altar of our love and loyalty, our devotion and sacrifice. The old flag again waves over us in peace, with new glories which your sons and ours have this year added to its sacred folds… The memory of the dead will be a precious legacy, and the disabled will be the nation's care.
>
> A nation which cares for its disabled soldiers as we have always done will never lack defenders. The national cemeteries for those who feel in battle are proof that the dead as well as the living have our love. What an army of silent sentinels we have, and with what loving care their graves are kept! Every soldier's grave made during our unfortunate Civil War is a

[195] Holt, Dean W.. *American Military Cemeteries*, 2d Ed.. United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2010), 3.

> tribute to American valor. And while, when those graves were made, we differed widely about the future of this government, those differences were long ago settled by the arbitrament of arms; and the time has now come, in the evolution of sentiment and feeling under the providence of God, when in the spirit of fraternity we should share with you in the care of the graves of the Confederate soldiers."[196]

The sentiment received an extended applause from the congregation and the third generation of military cemetery development was underway.[197] Up until the beginning of World War 1, the United States experienced a positive step in reaching Lincoln's visions for what military cemeteries should represent both internally and externally to other nations. The years between 1898- 1914 were not drastically different in the creation of new cemeteries but with President McKinley's call for federal ownership of Confederate graves, symbolic growth occurred.

Legislation was passed creating the Commission for Marking Graves of Confederate Dead in the early 1900's and efforts were put forward to officially create a unified national cemetery system. Their objectives were to locate and appropriately mark Confederate graves not only in Confederate cemeteries but also to identify Confederate burials throughout the nation regardless of location. Work continued and halted a handful of times due to a number of obstacles, including World War 1 and the deaths of commissioners, but overall their objective of placing headstones on Confederate graves was successful. Much more could be written about this government agency and their place within military cemeteries contexts. Similar to Clara Barton's Missing Soldiers Office, the Commission for Marking Graves of Confederate Dead are

[196] McKinley, William. *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley: From March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1900.* United States: Doubleday & McClure Company, (1900) 158-159.
[197] Generation One being understood as the pre-Civil War efforts up through the conclusion of the war in 1865 with Gettysburg being the flag bearer. The second generation being those developed with sectional differences of Reconstruction discussed here. Third generation military cemeteries were organized under reconciliationist terms up through the beginning of World War 1 where a new generation of cemeteries would be created with foreign locations as a new reality.

both under emphasized federal actions to increase the sacredness of military cemeteries. Lincoln's vision of establishing a sacred geographic location for Americans and global citizens to embrace as symbols of sacrifice, honor, and love were now reconciled and beginning a new journey that would take them overseas as sacred crusades were being presented around the world.

It is noteworthy that the admittance, or in some instances such as Gettysburg and Arlington, of former Confederates in national cemeteries came only after at least a partial conversion to Lincoln's vision. Reconciliation within military cemeteries was only done after a military conflict where both North and South fought to spread civic religious principles. Confederates would not be "let in" in full equality until fighting for the same ideals for which Lincoln established at Gettysburg. It would not be until the Spanish American War where full recognition of Lincoln's vision could occur. Certain pragmatic decisions became more acceptable with the unifying clarion call to "remember the Maine".

The years of Reconstruction provided military cemeteries real life case studies and opportunities to prove their ability to embrace Lincoln's vision. Starting with Lincoln's assassination in 1865 and concluding with the federal acceptance of Confederate graves in the early 1900's, the United States journeyed on separate paths but ultimately arrived at the same destination. As historian John Neff explains, "This was the marked distinction between commemorative efforts: Although both sides commemorated only their own dead, Northerners did so within a memorial rhetoric that invoked a broad, inclusive nationalism, while Southerners followed the dictates of a

separate mythos predicated on difference and distinctiveness."[198] The origin points were different, and the paths they chose to commemorate were different, but Lincoln foresaw a day where a united nation would come together as one to honor the dead.

Emotions drove the majority of military cemetery plans and executions during reconstruction. The federal government oversaw the reburial of over three hundred thousand Union dead into the largest and quickest expansion of military cemeteries. Their desire was to memorialize the victors in a way that would sacredly match their sacrifice to the cause. In the South, private citizens and local charitable groups initiated the memorializing of their own. This was done not only through reburials and or grave marking but specifically with public displays of affection such as the origins of Memorial Day and with monument building. Both sides initiated a movement towards raising military death to higher and holier realms and a major step was taken in 1898 by President William McKinley by declaring the time had come for Confederate graves to be adopted under the federal government's national cemetery system.

Even within the flaws of Reconstruction, continued racism, and geographic differences; the higher and holier ideals of military cemeteries came out of the era with positive forward momentum. Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) at the 1898 Thanksgiving jubilee in Chicago echoed the reality that success was experienced during Reconstruction but also gave a haunting warning:

> "We have succeeded in every conflict, except the effort to conquer ourselves in the blotting out of racial prejudices. We can celebrate the era of peace in no more effectual way than by a firm resolve on the part of Northern and Southern men, black men and white men, that the trenches which we together dug around Santiago shall be the eternal burial place of

[198] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*. United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 143.

> all that which separates us in our business and civil relations. Let us be as generous in peace as we have been brave in battle. Until we thus conquer ourselves, I make no empty statement when I say that we shall have,... a cancer gnawing at the heart of the Republic, that shall one day prove as dangerous as an attack from an army without or within."[199]

It is interesting that Washington chose to use burial locations as his lesson imagery. Military cemeteries very well could have been on his mind when discussing the importance of gaining victory over racial prejudices. As has been discussed, military cemeteries were not perfect but they were a shining light in the abolitionist push towards civic religion. Even if society as a whole were not ready for drastic progressive changes, military crusaders were consistently showing progress in their "cities of the dead".

Reconstruction cemeteries would also be directly experienced in the nation's capital. Among the approximate seventy military cemeteries established between 1862 and 1877, one in particular stands out as the national of the national cemeteries. Gettysburg might have been where military cemeteries were born, but Arlington, Virginia is where they matured. Discussion points in the following chapter will turn directly to Arlington National Cemetery and its development within and outside the context of larger military cemetery trends. It will be demonstrated that Arlington quickly established itself as the premier military cemetery and the brightest beacon in the system. The journey was not perfect, that much is clear. However, the spiritual crusade to elevate military cemeteries as shrines to American nationalism and civic religion was successful during the decades immediately following the Civil War and Arlington is example number one.

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[199] Washington, Booker T, *Thanksgiving Peace Jubilee Exercises, and Daniel Murray Pamphlet Collection*. "An Address". (Chicago: s.n, 1898).

Chapter 5: Our Nation's Most Sacred Shrine

Along the banks of the Potomac River in the shadow of Washington D.C.'s famous monuments to Lincoln, Jefferson, and Washington sits 639 acres of another type of sacred monument. Over three million visitors annually walk the grounds of Arlington National Cemetery and experience America's most recognizable military cemetery temple to nationalism and civic religion. If the cemetery at Gettysburg was the flag bearer of initial objectives, then Arlington represented the standard bearer as the most nationalistic of all the national cemeteries and the one which best came to fulfill Lincoln's vision to expand civic religion. It is the only military cemetery which holds the remains of soldiers and sailors from every American conflict when repatriated remains from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Mexican-American War were brought to Arlington. With over four hundred thousand graves, Arlington is a museum of American history and the largest military cemetery in the world.[200] Truly Arlington stands alone not only in the number of burials but also in meeting Lincoln's vision, in time and practice, of honoring nationalism and expanding civic religion.

Lincoln desired to create dedicated and consecrated grounds worthy of emulation, and Arlington calls visitors to "remember these hallowed grounds" as the "nations most sacred shrine."[201] No matter the date of origin or the geographic location, all American military cemeteries have developed a sense of nationalistic sacredness since inception in 1863, but Arlington embraced and pursued those objectives more

[200] For comparison: France's largest military cemetery is Notre Dame de Lorette also referred to at times as the Ablain St. Nazaire French Military Cemetery which has just over forty thousand burials; England's largest is Tyne Cot Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery and Memorial to the Missing with just shy of twelve thousand.
[201] As seen on Welcome Signs when visitors enter the grounds, Arlington, VA.

quickly and successfully than any other cemetery. The proximity to Washington D.C. and the other memorials to American civic religion is a crucial component to be developed further, but there is little doubt that Arlington was conditioned for higher and holier realms. That is not to say that Arlington escaped the frailties of Reconstruction, but from its earliest beginnings it was designed to be different from other military cemeteries. How that transformation occurred from military necessity to globally revered resting grounds becomes the purpose of this chapter. If military cemeteries are temple-like geographical representations of American nationalism and civic religion, then Arlington is the Holy Mecca, or as historian John Neff describes it "the great symbolic center of national honor and sacrifice".[202] As the focal point of the American military system, Arlington has become the beacon which Lincoln would be proud to shine to the world showing American nationalism and civic religion is worth memorializing.

Much has been written about the history of Arlington, providing one of the greatest sources of scholarship for cemetery studies in general and without question for military cemeteries.[203] The story of Arlington represents the single best case study for how Lincoln's vision went from conception to reality. From its earliest burials to "America's saddest acre" of section 60 reserved for military personnel killed in the wars on terrorism, Arlington proves that "that nation might live" has come to fruition and that Lincoln's ambitions for what military cemeteries could represent was attainable. Two specific scholars have greatly enhanced the historiography of Arlington in recent years

[202] Neff, John R.. *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*. United States: University Press of Kansas, (2016), 13.
[203] Some of the earliest histories include; Decker, Karl, and Angus McSween, *Historic Arlington. A history of the National cemetery from its establishment to the present time*, Washington, D.C., The Decker and McSween publishing company, (1892); and Bengough, William, *United States National Military Cemetery, Arlington*. United States: Blanchard Press, (1897).

and their writings represent much of the historical overview information regarding the cemetery in this work. Robert M. Poole with his *On Hallowed Ground the Story of Arlington National Cemetery* (2009); and Micki McElya with her *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (2016) present not only comprehensive background to the origins, development, and history of the cemetery but also further the argument of how Arlington connects to the sacred fabric of American nationalism and civic religion. Without question Poole and McElya have furthered historiographic analysis of Arlington but both failed to fully develop the abolitionist/ civic religion component of the cemetery.

When the compromise was made to bring the capital of the newly established United States further south during the Constitutional Conventions, the Arlington Plantation would immediately become prime real estate.[204] On the "heights" across the Potomac River, Arlington was in the possession of the Custis family. They had owned the property for generations when Martha Dandridge Custis became a widow with the passing of her husband Daniel Parke Custis. Two years later, Martha would remarry another Virginian plantation owner, George Washington, and he would become the temporary overseer of the Custis estate. On the death of John Parke Custis following a short battle with camp fever during the siege at Yorktown, the property would be inherited by his son George Washington Parke Custis when he came of age.

George Washington Parke Custis (step grandson of George Washington) would be the individual most responsible for the development of the Arlington plantation in the years leading up to the Civil War. Beginning in 1803, construction of what would

[204] See discussions, debates, and compromises included during Constitutional Conventions, 1789-1790, *Constitution of the United States*, (1789).

become known as the “Arlington House” were underway as Custis envisioned a Greek revival exterior to match the magnificence of the developing capitol across the river.[205] Custis only had one child survive to adulthood and that daughter, Mary Anna would marry at Arlington on June 30, 1831 to a young West Point graduate named Robert E. Lee. Even though military life prevented him from making Arlington a consistent home, the Lee’s would spend whatever allotted time at the plantation up until the fateful day when war was upon the nation.[206]

Five days after the siege at Fort Sumter, the Virginia legislature voted in favor of seceding and joining the Confederate cause, which Robert E. Lee had been preparing and anticipating. In a letter dated 20 April 1861 to his friend and trusted fellow soldier Winfield Scott, Lee declared his intentions in the war by resigning from his military command in the United States army.[207] Lee’s conflict began as an internal one between his duty as a soldier to the United States and his admiration for his native state of Virginia. Even though his resignation from military service lasted less than a week with his appointment to lead southern troops, it is clear that Lee struggled balancing home, duty, and expectations as a soldier and a citizen. Or at the very least he had yet come to terms with the larger purposes of the war. As a southern slave owner, livelihood was at stake. Within Lee himself, the larger differences of military cemetery objectives can

[205] At different times since completion the house has been referred to by different names not only by those who lived there but also by historical interpreters. As of 2022, the National Park Service calls it the “Arlington House- The Robert E. Memorial” but interpretive guides emphasize the original connection to the Custis family and work is being done to better understand slave experiences on the property.
[206] Two recent publications have paid particular attention to Mary Anna Custis Lee and her role and relationship with both Robert E. Lee and the plantation; Perry, John. *Mrs. Robert E. Lee: The Lady of Arlington.* United States: Multnomah Publishers, (2003); DeVito, Carlo, *Mrs. Lee's Rose Garden: The True Story of the Founding of Arlington National Cemetery*, United States: Cider Mill Press, (2015).
[207] Robert E. Lee to Winfield Scott, April 20, 1861, in Dowdey, Clifford., Lee, Robert E*., The wartime papers of Robert E. Lee,* United States: Little, Brown, (1961), 8-9.

be found; on one hand the warrior ethos of protecting nationalism and on the other defending self interest.

Lee would leave Arlington on April 22, 1861 heading towards Richmond, Virginia to begin his new role within the Confederate Army. His wife would remain on the property until May 15 supervising the hurriedly executed house preparations and attempts to preserve family treasures, including items belonging to George Washington. In the weeks leading up to her departure, Mary Anna would declare that her desire was to remain at Arlington but the Union army saw the military strategic location as undeniable. At the insistence of Robert E. Lee, Mary Anna would leave Arlington with a much quoted prophecy about her home: “I fear that this will be the scene of conflict & my beautiful home endeared by a thousand associations may become a field of carnage.”[208] Little did she realize just how true her statement would become. Arlington would become a field of carnage, not like the fields of battle but rather as grounds which held the remains of soldiers who died fighting to save the nation.

Within a few days of Mary’s departure, the Union army swept in and began their occupation of the property that would last throughout the duration of the war.[209] As battlefield casualties increasingly strained Washington D.C., the capital needed new burial space and they needed it quickly. Amidst the occupation, General Lee would keep an eye on the reports coming in regarding his former home, and wrote a fitting symbolic goodbye to the property; “It is better to make up our minds to a general loss. They cannot take away the remembrance of the spot, & the memories of those that to us

[208] Mary Custis Lee to Mildred Lee, May 5, 1861, D-E Collection, Library of Congress, Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 25.
[209] For more detailed coverage of the military occupation of Arlington see Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010) Chapter 2 “Occupation”.

rendered it sacred. That will remain to us as long as life will last, & that we can preserve."[210] The property was considered sacred to the Lee's for the memories that had been created there; now the property was to be rendered sacred for another type of memory, those of soldiers who gave their lives in defending the Union and expanding civic religion.

The first military burial at Arlington took place on May 13, 1864 (two days short of exactly three years after Mary Anna left the property) and is well represented in academic writing and primary documentation.[211] With burial space quickly running out in other D.C. cemeteries, Quartermaster Montgomery C. Meigs authorized the burial of soldiers at Arlington with the intention of rendering the property impossible for the Lee's to return one day. As historian Micki McElya described the intentions of the bittered quartermaster general, "If Meigs could not have the man's (Robert E. Lee) life in payment for the Union blood on his hands, he would take the life the general once knew by seizing his family's beloved Arlington and forever altering it."[212] The extent of Meigs' motivations have differed over time by historians but it is clear that Arlington's beginnings had the multipurpose of necessity and punishing Robert E. Lee. Transitioning to meet Lincoln's vision would take time, as the implementation was never perfect, but Arlington would quickly embrace the dualistic objective of military cemeteries.

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[210] Robert E. Lee to Mary Custis Lee, December 25, 1861, *Wartime Papers*, 95-96.
[211] The first military burial was that of Private William Christman of the 67th Pennsylvania Infantry who died on May 11, 1864 from peritonitis after developing measles in a Washington D.C. hospital. He never saw a day of combat as had only enlisted a few months prior. Private William H. McKinney of the 49th Pennsylvania Infantry was the first battle casualty burial on May 14, 1864 after succumbing to brain injuries from the Battle of the Wilderness.
[212] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 96.

Meigs wrote to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton in June 1864 with the official recommendation that, "… the land surrounding the Arlington Mansion, now understood to be the property of the United States, be appropriated as a National Military Cemetery, to be properly enclosed, laid out, and carefully preserved for that purpose."[213] Stanton almost immediately approved, and thus officially established Arlington National Cemetery one month after the first burials on the property. This legislation would become a symbolic passing of the torch from Gettysburg to Arlington. Work was complete, in terms of burials, at Gettysburg and the federal government under the jurisdiction of Montgomery C. Meigs turned their attention towards Arlington.

During the first year of its existence, Arlington would not have met the lofty expectations of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and what military cemeteries could represent to the nation. Yet there was almost immediate recognition of what the property could become: the *Washington Morning Chronicle* reported "The grounds are undulating, handsomely adorned, and in every respect admirably fitted for the sacred purpose to which they have been dedicated. The people of the entire nation will one day, not very far distant, heartily thank the initiators of this movement."[214] The purpose of dedication was the dualistic objective of military cemeteries and those described as initiators most certainly included Montgomery C. Meigs. Yet in a larger sense President Lincoln needs to be included as the one who set the vision for military cemeteries.

Burials would continue at a steady pace over the following year as the war drew to a close. As objectives evolved, so did the realities of the cemetery. Historian Robert Poole described an early shift within the cemetery as chaplains were placed full time on

[213] Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Edwin Stanton, June 15, 1864, NARA RG 92, Office of the Quartermaster General, Quoted in Poole, *On Hallowed Ground,* 61.
[214] "A Great National Cemetery", The *Washington Morning Chronicle,* June 17, 1864.

the property to speed up the funeral process in terms of religious services and performing religious burial rights. Poole declared that this and other "administrative shifts proved to be critical in the evolution of Arlington, which would gradually become less important as a strategic military site and more so as a national symbol of the martial virtues- duty, honor, and sacrifice."[215] Whether described as martial virtues or principles of civic religion, Arlington would quickly embrace those higher and holier ambitions of Lincoln's vision.

The history of Arlington would echo that of other military cemeteries during the reburial program initiated between 1865 and 1870. Yet it was different due to the proximity of Washington D.C. and the close access and oversight of General Meigs. Even though Arlington would quickly embrace Lincoln's vision of dualistic objectives, it would not become *the* "national cemetery" for the nation until much later into the 20th century.[216] For the first twenty years or so of its existence, Arlington would be akin to other Union cemeteries which dealt with the challenges of Reconstruction. However, there were numerous different components that separated Arlington from other cemeteries. Including the legal debate to the property, the presence of freed African-Americans on the property, and the political dynamic of setting the example as part of the capital complex.

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[215] Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 63.

[216] An interesting side note regarding the early development of Arlington National Cemetery noted briefly by Micki McElya is the lack of historical record indicating any possible discussion regarding the burial of President Lincoln at Arlington following his assassination. She states, "Perhaps the clearest indication that the new national cemetery at Arlington held nothing of its later gravitas or power to bestow honor on the dead is the fact that no one considered burying Lincoln there after his assassination. There were many people in the District who thought the martyred president was best memorialized in the national capital.... But no one seemed to feel that Arlington was a fitting place for the final rest of a president.", McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016). 97.

As discussed in the previous chapter, military cemeteries during Reconstruction were developed in a balancing act between appropriate memorialization. The larger themes of Reconstruction regarding race, reunion, reconciliation, and memorialization were all felt at Arlington. Perhaps even to the point where Arlington took the symbolic lead for other cemeteries throughout the nation due to its proximity to the capital and its constant presence in the media. Looking at specific examples of how Arlington was presented Reconstruction challenges and the process of which they were overcome becomes the purpose of the remainder of the chapter. Lincoln desired that military cemeteries would represent the best America had to offer to the world in terms of principles of civic religion. Arlington would eventually reach those higher and holier ideals but not without stumbling blocks that would be turned into stepping stones.

Beginning with racial Reconstruction, Arlington provides unique experiences which pre-date and go beyond the war years itself with the slave population on the property. One particular individual deserves special recognition and continues the theme of unsung heroes that played a major role in the development of military cemeteries into sacred temples of American nationalism and civic religion. Born into slavery on the Arlington estate sometime in 1843, James Parks would become the connecting thread between slavery, emancipation, racial Reconstruction, and the constant challenges to race relations in the United States for Arlington National Cemetery. When Parks died in 1929, he had spent his entire life on or near the plantation which he called home. His story is the single greatest first hand account of Arlington. Of the many who helped create it as the beacon of military cemeteries, Lincoln and Meigs included, James Parks deserves much of the credit.

Consider the historical landmarks in the chronology of Arlington which Parks witnessed and was personally involved in. In 1861, Parks recalled watching Robert E. Lee pacing on the front porch as he contemplated his military career with the impending Civil War.[217] Parks stayed on the property as it transitioned from slave plantation to military base during Union occupation (1861-1865) to a new African-American gathering place that would eventually be known as Freedman's Village. In 1864 he was called upon to dig the first graves of Arlington. He and other former slaves would remain busy digging graves numbering in the thousands up through the conclusion of the war.[218] After gaining his freedom, Parks chose to live and work at the cemetery alongside fellow former slaves up until 1888 when the government chose to disband the Freedman's Village. Parks was evicted off the property but was "generously" given $13.20 (approximately $400 in 2022 dollars) for his home as it had improved the value of the Arlington estate.

This would not end the connection between Parks and the cemetery as he continued to work and have a direct impact on the day to day operations of Arlington. Montgomery C. Meigs passed away in 1892 and would be buried alongside his family members at the cemetery that became synonymous with his efforts in a grave dug by Parks. In the 1920's, the national government called upon Parks to help with historical interpretation, documentation, and verification of facts of the Custis Mansion as a first hand witness of its earliest days: "for a particular purpose in connection with the

[217] Parks stated: "He looked fine- keen as a briar- tall and straight,... He walked backward and forward on the porch studying. He looked downhearted. He didn't care to go. No… he didn't care to go.", Quoted in Poole, Robert M., *On Hallowed Ground,* 17-18; Sharpe, Grace H., "Colored Servant of Adopted Son of George Washington," *Christian Science Monitor,* (September 24, 1924).
[218] Parks was officially granted freedom in 1862 under the will terms of his former owner George Washington Parke Custis.

restoration of the Arlington Mansion."[219] Never known as one who exaggerated his experiences and memories, James Parks became invaluable in the efforts to make Arlington not only a military cemetery but also a growing museum of American history.

Then as a final fitting honor to the slave turned employee his last wish was to be buried himself among the headstones at Arlington. James Parks died on August 21, 1929 and the War Department arranged a funeral fitting for a soldier. In a lengthy obituary that ran the following day (August 22, 1929), *The Evening Star* reported that; "Former Custis slave to sleep in death in Arlington 'Estate'-- War Department Lifts Civilian Burial Rule for 'Uncle Jim' Parks– The portals of America's Valhalla will be opened for 'Uncle Jim' Parks, former colored slave of the Arlington Estate, who played and toiled in the woods and fields long before the fortunes of war had transformed them from a drowsy old Virginia plantation into a city of heroic dead."[220] Even with the clear racial components of the chosen language in the obituary, Arlington had transformed during the lifetime of this one man. The city of heroic dead had added one of her own with honor and recognition deserving of the sacrifice given.[221]

The American Legion provided a commemorative tablet at Parks' grave which states: "An interesting respectful, kindly old negro: Born a slave at Arlington House Estate about 1843. Died Arlington County Virginia, August 21, 1929. He belonged to George Washington Parke Custis, Proprietor of Arlington Estate from 1781 to 1857. "Uncle Jim" lived and worked at Arlington practically the whole of his long and useful life. In appreciation of his faithful service the Secretary of War granted special

[219] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 198.
[220] *Evening star,* Washington, D.C., (22 Aug. 1929); *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.
[221] Also note the usage of "valhalla" in the obituary, by definition representing the great hall in Norse mythology where heroes slain in battle are received or a place of honor, glory, and happiness.

permission to bury his mortal remains in this National Cemetery. Requiescat in Pace."[222] From birth to death, the soils of Arlington were home to James Parks. If Lincoln's vision for what military cemeteries represented, the experiences of James Parks prove that higher and holier ambitions were attainable. Without question a contributing factor of Lincoln's vision was abolitionist in nature, but in even larger contexts it was about the possibility of a nation worthy of emulation. It was about taking the horrific realities of civil war and turning them into progress for all by remembering the cause and crusade of sacrifice.

The story of James Parks proves how central civic religion is to Arlington National Cemetery. His service to the cemetery but also to the larger ideals of civic religion was recognized by the federal government and thus allowed him to be buried on the grounds as a non-veteran African-American. Typical military service requirements became secondary to his dedication to Lincoln's dualistic objectives. The notion that this case study occurred at the most important of all the nation's military cemeteries is also telling and exemplary. Regardless of race, Parks was granted burial at Arlington which was something that few non-soldiers were given.[223] Arlington thus truly memorializes devout service to American civic religion, which most commonly takes the form of military service but is not the end all requirement.

Much more could be written about the racial components of Arlington and its direct experiences with slavery, the Freedman's Village, reconciliation, and continued choices in the early years to segregate burial plots. Arlington was not immune to the story of race relations in the United States and therefore was not perfect in its

[222] "James Parks Commemorative Tablet", Arlington National Cemetery.
[223] Burial requirements have evolved over time but the common denominator was always honorable military service or immediate family and dependents.

transformation to the figurehead military cemetery in the United States. Yet worthiness does not mean flawlessness. The purpose of this dissertation is not to emphasize the failures of Reconstruction with military cemeteries as the central focus but rather to show how military cemeteries overcame those early setbacks and are the best representation of American nationalism and civic religion.[224] Arlington National Cemetery has become the most national of all the military cemeteries for its ability to overcome and reach the ambitions put forth by Lincoln at Gettysburg that the nation might live in thanks for the dead.

An individual described only as “a woman in Washington” in 1866 described the location for a military cemetery at Arlington as “There can be no kindlier spot in which the soldiers of our love may rest after the march and the battle. There can be no fitter place in all the world, than the domain of the man who used such power to destroy her, for the mausoleum of the nation.”[225] Race played a key role in the development of Arlington, but so too did the emotions between the Union and Confederacy. As discussed in the previous chapter, segregation occurred in military cemeteries in multiple facets but was driven more by war affiliation than race. That is not to state that racial segregation was not persistent during those times, but a desire to honor and or punish was determined by blue or gray. Equality for race became if nothing else matched by the affiliation feelings in memorialization.

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[224] Another specific example from Arlington comes from the equal treatment, although segregated, of soldiers buried in Section 19 of the cemetery. Many African-Americans who served during World War 1 under the Graves Registration Service are buried within this particular section. These men and women were responsible for much of the repatriation work throughout Europe and upon their deaths received the honor fitting their sacred service.

[225] Quoted in McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 95.

As soon as the war was over, Montgomery C. Meigs initiated the federal reburial program and in many ways, Arlington was where it started. However, there was growing concern that the government's acquisition of Arlington would not hold up in court if the Lee's pushed hard enough. In 1866 Meigs wrote to Edwin Stanton (1814-1869) that he "respectfully recommend that the title be investigated by the legal advisor of the Government and that then if not perfect, steps be taken to make it entirely secure…. A portion of the estate has been set aside as a National Military Cemetery and in it a large number of interments have taken place. Inquiries have been made lately of members of Congress by their constituents, the bodies of whose kindred repose in this cemetery, suggesting a fear that the United States may yet restore to the original possessors, the land consecrated by these remains."[226] Those uncertainties were warranted as the Lee's, particularly Mary Anna, initiated legal lawsuits against the government shortly after the war concluded.

Senator James Warren Nye (1815-1876) of Nevada did not hold back his feelings during the legal battles over Arlington and the potential of removing Union graves from the property. The petition and court case was to him "an insult to all the dead who fell in the mighty struggle for the Union… Disturb these dead, and for what? To make room for a traitor's widow."[227] Emotions were raw and personal claims to Arlington ran deep and as Enoch Aquila Chase described it in 1930, "a great legal chess game was being played" between the Lee's, the military, and the government over the confiscation of the

[226] Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Edwin M. Stanton, February 23, 1866, NARA RG 92, Office of the Quartermaster General; Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 70.
[227] Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 82.

property. Lower courts ruled in favor of the Lee's but the ensuing legal battle would not be finalized until 1882.[228]

Ultimately, the Supreme Court ruled that the property was illegally obtained during the war with the interpretation of land taxes, who can pay those taxes, and whether the land owner had to be present. With the ruling, the title to the Arlington estate was officially returned to Custis Lee (son of Robert and Mary Anna Lee who died in 1870 and 1873 respectively) who then in turn sold it back to the United States at its "fair market price" of $150,000.[229] By the time the legal dust settled, Custis was simply looking for financial restitution as the ramifications of attempting to make Arlington home again was simply going to be too much fight for the effort.

During those approximate twenty years of legal battles, burials would continue at Arlington under the watchful eye of Montgomery C. Meigs.[230] The cemetery would grow dramatically not only in number of burials but also in sacred importance to the growing sentiments of nationalism and civic religion as the nineteenth century drew to a close. Grand Army of the Republic Chaplain in Chief Joseph F. Lovering insisted that the connection between patriotism, love, and military graves are intertwined in the United States and the "faith and morals" of the GAR meet those sacred objectives:

> "Its faith has its religion, and its religion has the devout obedience of every worthy member of our Order. I do not refer to any religion, sectarian or universal, liberal or conservative, Christian or Pagan, as such. Whatever disputes there may be outside of our organization concerning them do not affect us. Religion means '*bond'*. The highest religion casts out all spirit of fear and makes its 'bond' that of love. Our religion, within the terms of our

[228] Chase, Enoch Aquila, "The Arlington Case: George Washington Custis Lee against the United States of America", *Records of the Columbia Historical Society,* Washington D.C., Vol. 31/32, (1930), 175-207.
[229] See Supreme Court Ruling and Procedures, *United States v. Lee, 106 U.S. 196 (1882).*
[230] "Meigs devoted much of the 1870s and 1880s to making Arlington patriotism's high church and most sacred terrain." summarizes McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery*. N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 129.

> organization, claims that highest bond. It is permeated, it is saturated with the spirit of that love. That love is love of country. That religion is the religion of patriotism. Its altars are the graves of the unforgotten and heroic…."[231]

This sentiment echoes that of Lincoln's vision at Gettysburg that there was always designed to be a higher and holier purpose to the military cemeteries. The connection between patriotism and sacrifice had been present from the earliest days of the revolution but now with official military cemeteries the nation had geographic temples to civic religion to display their affection towards the dead.

Specifically at Arlington the display of affection would be multi-angled with the emergence of Decoration/ Memorial Day, the treatment of Confederate Soldiers, and the repatriation of remains from previous American Wars. Once again, the Reconstruction era provided general themes for military cemeteries throughout the nation and Arlington provided specific case studies that not only matched those larger themes but in most ways helped initiate them. The remainder of the chapter will explore specific examples of how Arlington represented the national cemetery system and its Reconstruction era themes as it relates to Lincoln's vision to create a nation worthy of emulation through the treatment and respect given to its soldier dead.

Although there are numerous historical interpretations to the origins of Decoration Day, the celebrations at Arlington National Cemetery have been an annual event since 1868.[232] That first celebration was orchestrated by the Grand Army of the Republic and spearheaded by Congressman John A. Logan (1826-1886), a radical

[231] Beath, Robert B., *History of the Grand Army of the Republic,* New York: Bryan, Taylor, (1889), 176.
[232] David Blight suggests in *Race and Reunion* that the origins of Decoration Day stem from Charsleton, South Carolina and celebrations there in the early years of Reconstruction. Identifying a standpoint on the origins of Decoration Day is not critical for this particular thesis, but rather recognizing that Arlington National Cemetery has become the location of annual celebrations put on by the federal government.

Republican from Illinois and former Major General in the Union Army. As part of his introductory remarks to the celebration, Congressman Logan read the General Orders which set the expectations, purposes, and objectives of the gathering:

> "What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes…. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security, is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or to coming generations, that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided Republic."[233]

As a former soldier, Congressman Logan knew the human cost and therefore desired that their graves not only be decorated for the occasion but also remembered throughout the hearts and minds of a grateful nation. His efforts would be enlarged and solidified not only in that first ceremony in 1868 at Arlington but also as the holiday gained footing throughout the nation.

Reverend Byron Sunderland (1819-1901), a Presbyterian abolitionist from Washington D.C., offered the invocation in 1868 and set the sacred tone and nature for both the cemetery grounds and those who rest there: "For we are come this day to the cities of the dead– we are come to the sepulchres of our heroes, slain and fallen in battle with all the host of them that counted not their lives dear unto them for the sacred cause of God, and of country, and of humanity, and by which price they have made of this land one greater than Thermopylae, and have filled it in all its borders with

[233] Logan, John A, "Memorial Ceremonies at the National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia", United States: McGill & Withrow, (1868), 5-6.

freedom's shrines."[234] It was clear that survivors of the Civil War saw spiritual connections to causes fought for with higher and holier ambitions for the United States and its citizens alike. Arlington National Cemetery would quickly attach to Lincoln's vision at Gettysburg that military cemeteries were sacred ground hallowed by the dead so that the living can represent American principles of civil religion to nations around the globe.

One of the keynote speakers that first Decoration Day was the Honorable James A. Garfield (1831-1881), Congressman from Ohio and future President who at the time supported ideals of Radical Reconstruction in terms of civic religion. His message celebrated the heroic dead and their dedication to civic religion:

> "We do not know one promise these men made, one pledge they gave, one work they spoke; but we do know they summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country they accepted death; and in that act they resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and their virtue.
>
> For the noblest man that lives there still remains a conflict. He must still withstand the assaults of time and fortune; must still be assailed by temptations before which lofty natures have fallen. But with these the conflict was ended, the victory was won, when death stamped on them the great seal of heroic character, and closed a record which years can never blot.…
>
> We began the war for the Union alone, but we had not gone far into its darkness before a new element was added to the conflict, which filled the army and the nation with cheerful but intense religious enthusiasm. In lessons that could not be misunderstood, the Nation was taught that God had linked to our own, the destiny of an enslaved race - that their liberty and our Union were indeed "one and inseparable."[235]

[234] Sunderland, Byron Rev., "Memorial Ceremonies at the National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia", United States: McGill & Withrow, (1868), 6-7.
[235] Garfield, Hon. James A., "Memorial Ceremonies at the National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia", United States: McGill & Withrow, (1868), 7-9.

Garfield would also spend time on comparing the location of Arlington with the Vatican Mount and its symbolic dome of St. Peter as a place of spiritual pilgrimage. He states that Arlington "will be forever the sacred mountain of our Capitol. Here is our temple; its pavement is the sepulcher of heroic hearts; its dome, the bending heaven; its altar candles, the watching stars."[236] Thus showing an early reference to an expanded civic religion for Catholics, who had also dealt with certain prejudices and persecutions as part of the American democracy experience. Not to overstate or undermine the direct connection to racial equality within his speech.

It is clear that Garfield had embraced the ideology set forth by Lincoln at Gettysburg that military cemeteries were geographic temples of nationalism and civic religion. The recognition that liberty and abolition were intertwined and inseparable showcases another example that military cemeteries were on the leading edge of furthering principles of civic religion. Additionally, Garfield included lines from the war anthem "Battle Hymn of the Republic" as they related to the task still at hand with the expansion of civic religion. In the concluding verse the hymn states: "As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free"[237] A direct reference that the Civil War was a spiritual conflict above merely reuniting the states. Those who died were crusaders in the expansion of civic religion and universal freedoms found therein.

Other components of the first Decoration Day celebratory events at Arlington will be discussed further in later chapters as they relate to larger themes considered;

[236] Garfield, Hon. James A., "Memorial Ceremonies at the National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia", United States: McGill & Withrow, (1868), 9.
[237] Howe, Julia Ward, *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, first published in *The Atlantic Monthly,* (February 1862), 5th verse.

including the role of the Civil War Unknowns Monument, and other principle based sentiments established that would become part of the fabric of future events held at Arlington. However, one concluding connection to Lincoln's vision and how Arlington was attempting to represent it early on was the inclusion of the Gettysburg Address as part of the ceremonies. The Honorable Halbert E. Paine (1826-1905) was given the platform to recite Lincoln's address in its brief entirety showing one of the earliest examples of how the message given at Gettysburg was being interpreted as a connecting thread to all military cemeteries. Providing recognition to the notion of hallowed ground being expanded beyond the fields of Pennsylvania shows that Lincoln's vision had begun to be embraced on a larger national level.

The first Decoration Day celebrations were considered a monumental success not only for who was there and what was said, but also for who was not there. Although Confederate soldiers were buried on the property, Confederate veterans and sympathizers were excluded from participation on that day in 1868. The clear distinction became an argument point for the next thirty years as Arlington was transitioning from a "cemetery of convenience into a shrine for national heroes."[238] As the Federal Reburial Program was locating, identifying when possible, and relocating over three hundred thousand Union soldiers in the five years after the war concluded, the Confederacy had to wait longer to bring their dead home due to the lack of federal funding. Failing to allow former Confederates to participate in the first Decoration Day celebrations only furthered the sectional differences during reconstruction and gave Southerners another

[238] Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 79.

reason to push for the removal of Confederate graves in the North, including the few buried at Arlington.

Motivations and emotions varied from pure humanistic mourning to jealousy of Union care and continued malcontent between former foes. Yet, not even Arlington was able to fully embrace “national cemetery” during the years of Reconstruction and reconciliation. Beginning in 1871 the Ladies’ Hollywood Memorial Association of Richmond were granted permission to repatriate Virginian soldiers in the north and rebury them in home soil. They started with nearly three thousand soldiers at Gettysburg (not in the Soldier’s Cemetery but still scattered throughout the battlefield) and then the following year in 1872 they oversaw the reburial of eighty-nine remains from Arlington. It is noteworthy for the dissertation thesis that confederates buried at Arlington were treated no better or no worse than Union soldiers including black veterans. There was separation, but there was also equality granted to the dead.

Other examples from different southern states are found in the historical record, but Virginia truly led the southern movement to bring their sons back home. It could be argued that if Arlington represented the most national of the Union cemeteries then Richmond’s Hollywood Cemetery was the most national of the Confederate cemeteries. In time, Richmond’s Hollywood Cemetery would hold the remains of over eighteen thousand confederate soldiers as well as the gravesite of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Although never designed or intended to be solely a soldiers cemetery, Richmond’s Hollywood represents a sister cemetery to Arlington in many facets and

more scholarship comparing the two “national cemeteries” would be beneficial for future cemetery historians.[239]

One additional note on Hollywood Cemetery, even though they have similar premises and connections; Arlington quickly and completely overshadowed Hollywood Cemetery in both objectives from Lincoln’s Gettysburg vision. The reality that Hollywood was also the city cemetery for Richmond prevented it from becoming a shrine of sorts to the Confederate dead. Even with the gravesites of Presidents Monroe and Tyler on the grounds, not to mention Jefferson Davis as well, Hollywood never embraced nationalism like Arlington did. The impressive 90 foot pyramid shaped monument adorning the mass grave of Confederate soldiers at Hollywood includes a plaque inscribed with “Numini et Patriae Asto” translated as “They stood for God and their country” has no reference to expanding civic religion.[240] Symbolizing that Confederates were not crusaders attempting to convert their enemies but rather defenders of their own lifestyle and cultural norms. The South’s principle pseudo- military cemetery pales in comparison to Arlington not only in size and scope but also drastically differs in terms of ideology. This will also be the case when comparing Arlington to the principle British and French cemeteries established following World War 1.

Arlington was in a transitional period for the final thirty years of the nineteenth century as it continued to climb towards Lincoln’s vision of emulation. Ironically enough, those same years show a consistency of developmental realities. Legislation was relaxed to allow all former Union soldiers access to be buried in national cemeteries

[239] A few scholarly and primary works which consider Richmond’s Hollywood Cemetery include; *Register of the Confederate Dead, Interred in Hollywood Cemetery*, Richmond, Va. United States: Gary, Clemmitt & Jones, printers, (1869); Mitchell, Mary H., *Hollywood Cemetery: The History of a Southern Shrine,* United States: Library of Virginia, (1999); and Peters, John O.. *Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery.* United States: Valentine Richmond History Center, (2010).
[240] Monument inscriptions, Confederate Dead Monument, Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, Virginia.

which drastically increased the number of burials. There were continued racial questions within the cemetery including a petition to repatriate black soldiers' remains to a more prominent location alongside white soldiers. Of the petition Meigs declared: “I regret always to move a body once interred in the National Cemetery, believing that the dead, once decently buried, should have rest,” He continued, “As for the disinterment and removal now proposed, I think that there are objections to it in sentiment as well as in the expenses… If the colored people generally prefer to have their comrades, who fought for them, taken up again and scattered among the whites, it can be done… I believe that hereafter it will be more grateful to their descendants to be able to visit and point to the collected graves of these persons, than to find them scattered through a large cemetery and intermingled with another race.”[241] Believing there was power in a “black section”, Meigs decision sheds light on another component of how military cemeteries were on the leading edge of expanding civic religion.

The petition itself and the reality that it was even considered suggests that there was no legal requirement to segregate burials within military cemeteries. Their existence in military cemeteries shows a two-folded advancement of civic religion. First, even though individual sections were segregated, accepting all military personnel regardless of color was unique. Secondly, all soldiers were given the same warrior ethos treatment in their burials. Clearly race played a role in the development of military cemeteries but to the extent of prohibiting entrance to the geographic temple symbolizing civic religion. Societal customs, not official legislation, became the number one factor as to why cemeteries included “black sections”

[241] Quoted in Poole, Robert M., *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery*. United States: Bloomsbury Publishing, (2009), 81.

Historian Shannon Bontrager argued that "What made Arlington different was that it emerged as a space where emancipation as cultural memory lost out to conservative interpretations of reunion and reconciliation."[242] As the most national of the national cemeteries did it mean that Arlington was to be the trend setter towards reconciliation? Whether it was intentional or part of the growing sentiment, Arlington would be the center of the "spirit of fraternity" between the North and South. As the century was drawing to a close, Arlington would take steps to truly embrace the "most hallowed ground" moniker. Or as architectural historian Ron Robin put it, "Arlington National Cemetery served as the central repository of military dead and, as such, it was perceived as a monument to national unity rather than a mere cemetery."[243] There was always something unifying about the foundational purposes of Arlington. It was to be the catalyst of moving past sectional feelings towards a unified brotherhood of American sacrifice.

With President William McKinley's (former Union soldier) announcement in 1898 that it was time for the federal government to take jurisdiction over Confederate graves, military cemetery reconciliation was put into motion. It had been thirty three years since the conclusion of the Civil War and another war was on the horizon with Spain. Americans were ready in varying definitions for the nation to move forward unified in cause, military service, and in death. The representation of Confederate graves at Arlington was limited due to the efforts of southern associations and repatriation of their dead back to their home states, but "the significance of the reburial at Arlington,

[242] Bontrager, Shannon, *Death at the Edges of Empire: Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921*, United States: University of Nebraska Press, (2020), 53.
[243] Robin, Ron. "'A Foothold in Europe': The Aesthetics and Politics of American War Cemeteries in Western Europe". *Journal of American Studies* 29, no. 1, (1995) 59.

however, lies in having been the first major effort by the United States government to recognize a responsibility in caring for the graves of its former enemies, and the lessons learned and precedents established at Arlington served as models for future re-marking projects."[244]

One of the greatest lessons learned from Confederate reconciliation within military cemeteries is the fact that representatives on both sides of the war affiliation line desired for segregated reconciliation. Memorialization was to occur segregated blue from gray as a form of concession was experienced in Arlington in favor of civic religion. Whether it was the North allowing and extending the opportunities for Confederate burials at Arlington; or the South's acceptance of the invitation, concession was central. Principles of civic religion were being implemented, although not perfect due to the continued segregation in terms of region. Thus showing once again that military cemeteries were on the forefront of expanding civic religion to society.

Dr. Samuel E. Lewis (1840-1907) headed the committee formed from members of the Charles Broadway Rouss Camp of the United Confederate Veterans near Washington D.C. and Lewis expressed that "such segregation of Confederates from the midst of Federals would doubtless also be gratifying to many good people of the North".[245] Official legislation would become law on 6 June, 1900 (Gen. Marcus J. Wright, a former Confederate, "prepared" the bill and Senator Joseph R. Hawley, a Union veteran, sponsored it) and the transferring of 264 remains to the newly established Confederate section at Arlington National Cemetery commenced. When the section was

[244] Krowl, Michell A., "'In the Spirit of Fraternity': The United States Government and the Burial of Confederate Dead at Arlington National Cemetery, 1864-1914", *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 2003, Vol. 111, No. 2 (2003), 151-186.
[245] Lewis, Samuel E., Quoted in Krowl, Michell A., "'In the Spirit of Fraternity': The United States Government and the Burial of Confederate Dead at Arlington National Cemetery, 1864-1914", *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 2003, Vol. 111, No. 2 (2003), 162.

completed in October 1901, blue and gray soldiers once again shared the sacred ground at Arlington. Albeit in different sections and with different shaped headstones in order to quickly distinguish between the two showing the reconciliation had its human limits.[246]

The reburial of Confederate dead at Arlington was not a unanimous sentiment throughout the country but continued efforts to push military reconciliation at Arlington continued with the annual Decoration/ Memorial Day ceremonies. In 1903 John B. Gordon (1832-1904), a former Confederate General used spiritual prophetic language during his remarks which stated "if the disembodied spirits of Lincoln and (Stonewall) Jackson, of Grant and Lee, and the hosts whom they led could be permitted to look down from the battlements beyond the clouds upon the scene,... with what emotions of pleasure would they be filled."[247] Forty years after his remarks at Gettysburg, the spirit of Lincoln was called upon to recognize his vision for military cemeteries was being fulfilled. Arlington was representing "the nation" and that the dead had not "died in vain" fighting to preserve its ideals of civic religion.

Another component of Arlington's growing reality that it was the most national of the national cemeteries occurred in 1892, 1899, and 1905 respectively. It was during those years that remains from the American Revolution, the Spanish-American, and War of 1812 were repatriated and brought to Arlington.[248] Thus making Arlington the

[246] A popular legend surrounding the pointed headstones of Confederates as opposed to the rounded versions for Union soldiers was to "keep Yankees from sitting on them". However, the design was already in use elsewhere on Confederate graves and was simply created for easy distinguishing.
[247] Gordon, John. B., "Confederate Dead at Arlington Decorated for the First Time", *The Lost Cause*, 9, (1903), 72; Quoted in Krowl, Michell A., "'In the Spirit of Fraternity': The United States Government and the Burial of Confederate Dead at Arlington National Cemetery, 1864-1914", *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 2003, Vol. 111, No. 2 (2003), 171.
[248] Remains from the American Revolution were disinterred from the Presbyterian Burial Ground in Georgetown when it was scheduled for demolition; and the remains from the War of 1812 were "discovered" at the Marine Barracks in Washington D.C. during construction/ renovation work.

only military cemetery in the United States that is represented by every American conflict since Lincoln's reference to "forscore and seven years ago".[249] The quartermaster's annual report of 1893 declared that Arlington was ascending to comparative sacred grounds in other nations: "In addition to its historical associations, the park abounds in rare natural beauty, and has been most carefully kept and improved. Few cities have so fine a park contiguous to their borders. Arlington Cemetery, where so many heroes lie buried, has become, like Great Britain's Westminster Abbey, the nation's 'Walhalla'".[250] Lincoln envisioned geographic temples to American nationalism and civic religion during his Gettysburg Address, and over time Arlington became just that.

One concluding aspect to consider as Arlington transformed into the national cemetery of all the national cemeteries. As an often overlooked military conflict in the large scope of American history, the Spanish-American War had an enormous role in the development of not only Arlington but also the military cemetery system as a whole. Decisions regarding the burial of American deaths on American soil, the appointments of former Union and Confederate soldiers as leaders in the new war, sons of former enemies fighting for the same colors, and the spreading of American nationalism and civic religion to new regions around the globe represent a few components that greatly affected the trajectory of military cemeteries.

Scholars, particularly Shannon Bontrager, have begun to recognize this connection between the Spanish-American War, nationalism, and military death as a

[249] Veterans from the Mexican-American War were accounted for amongst the thousands who served during the Civil War as well.
[250] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 137.

crucial component of how America rebuilt itself into a global power at the beginning of the twentieth century.[251] The Civil War produced reactionary objectives on how, when, where, who, and why military deaths were a necessary component of American nationalism. For thirty years, those questions were answered solely in the context of the Civil War which drove the nation apart. Then with the realities of the Spanish-American War another factor was found within the context of variables. Arlington National Cemetery would see an increase of nationalistic sentiments but it was thanks in large part to the Spanish-American War that propelled the cemetery into a new century of American ideals.

The *New York Times* reported on 30 March, 1899 that "The bringing home of the dead to the land of their birth or adoption is regarded as an innovation in the world's history of warfare."[252] No other nation besides ancient examples had ever purposefully attempted to return the bodies of all of their fallen soldiers. Officers, Generals, and other ranking officials may have been returned due to their position not only within the military but often through their standing in society as well. However, if a soldier died "away from home" it was expected that they would be buried where they fell. Therefore, the decision by the United States truly was "an innovation" that created new levels of hope and mourning. By the end of the nineteenth century, Arlington National Cemetery was the expected destination for the majority of military personnel brought back to the states after dying abroad. It would not be until the world wars when the government would provide next of kin an opportunity to choose (free of charge that is) where the remains would ultimately be laid to rest.

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[251] See Bontrager, Shannon, *Death at the Edges of Empire Fallen Soldiers, Cultural Memory, and the Making of an American Nation, 1863-1921*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE, (2020).
[252] "686 Dead Heroes Arrive", *New York Times*, March 30, 1899, 3.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, Arlington had grown into the premier cemetery in the national system. Further events and burials during the twentieth century would only raise its standing to even higher and holier realms. John Ball Osborne wrote one of the earliest histories of the cemetery in 1899 and introduced the narrative by stating Arlington's place among the nation: "... ARLINGTON- a name synonymous with deathless patriotism and graven upon the hearts of more Americans than that of any other spot on the globe…; the last resting-place of thousands of heroic defenders of the Union;... and, finally, the eternal bivouac of hundreds of gallant martyrs of our recent war for suffering humanity, by whose solemn advent Arlington has been consecrated anew as a truly *National* cemetery."[253] With each additional burial, the argument can be made that Arlington was consecrated anew to higher and holier levels of sacredness, nationalism, and geographic temple of American civic religion. Each headstone became an example of Lincoln's vision that America was truly a nation worthy of emulation.

From its earliest connections to George Washington up through the continued burials for men and women who gave their lives during the wars on terrorism in the Middle East, Arlington has become one of America's greatest history museums. The cemetery's history was not without flaws and human realities, but higher and holier ambitions were at the forefront of its decision makers with the long term in mind. Its proximity to Washington D.C. greatly aided in the nationalistic outlook of Arlington. However, to limit the cemetery's development simply to geography is narrow in nature. Other more recognizable Civil War cemeteries were located at or near battlefields and

[253] Osborne, John Ball, *The Story of Arlington: A History and Description of the Estate and National Cemetery, Containing a Complete List of Officers of the Army and Navy Interred There, with Biographical Sketches of Heroes of the Civil and Spanish Wars, and Notable Memorial Addresses and Poems.* United States: Press of J. F. Sheiry, (1899), Introduction.

therefore typically would be limited to those who fought in that battle. Arlington never saw direct conflict and so its sacredness was not limited to time and space. Lincoln desired a geographic temple symbolizing the best America had to offer. As World War 1 was on the horizon, Arlington National Cemetery was already America's "most hallowed ground" and it was about to become even more so with thousands more soldiers joining its soils. Yet it was one particular soldier that forever changed the role of Arlington as the nation's sacred shrine, the soldier "known but to God."

Arlington truly transformed into the premier temple of military cemeteries and the dualistic objectives set forth by Lincoln. For reasons discussed previously and summarized here at the conclusion of the chapter, Arlington became the figurehead cemetery for which Lincoln would be proud of. "Our nation's most sacred shrine" became such because it acted in accordance with Lincoln's desire to honor nationalism and promote civic religion. Whether it be the proximity to Washington D.C., the size and number of burials, the reality of burials from every American conflict, the direct racial impact of the Freedman's Village and James Parks, or countless other examples; Arlington is the temple by which all other temples are compared to in the military cemetery system. It would take time, and the journey was not perfect, but Arlington would transform into the premier military cemetery not only for the United States but also for a global audience as American crusaders would spread civic religion to each corner of the world.

Chapter 6: Here Rests in Honored Glory

When the war to end all wars concluded in 1918, the global death toll was astronomical. Multiple nations saw over one million military deaths during the four year engagement; including France, Germany, the Austrian-Hungary Empire, and the Soviet Union. Due to policies of neutrality the United States entered the war in April 1917 and approximately one hundred sixteen thousand soldiers lost their lives before the armistice was agreed upon on November 11, 1918. With the centennial anniversary of events, scholarship has grown exponentially as public attention was once again placed on the conflict. As historical interpretations have been rechallenged, re-examined, and re-emphasized by scholars and researchers alike, military cemeteries have also seen an increase of attention. This is especially true with the centennial anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery as historians desired to celebrate the occasion by increasing public awareness of the tomb.[254]

The American government had numerous decisions to make regarding the handling of the military personnel who sacrificed their lives defending Lincoln's vision for what military cemeteries were to represent to the globe. Earlier decisions made by the government brought back the remains of soldiers killed during the Spanish-American War but the sheer number of deaths from World War 1 made that decision a logistical challenge. However, what might be the response of the American people if the government chose to leave their sons and daughters buried in Europe? Military

[254] November 11, 2021 was the centennial anniversary of the World War 1 soldiers funeral at Arlington and thus the creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Part of the centennial events was a public flower placing ceremony where people were able to approach the tomb in a "once in a lifetime" opportunity to pay their respects. The author flew from Utah to Washington D.C. in order to participate and the experience instantly became one of the most sacred moments of his life and solidified his interest in military cemeteries and their histories.

cemeteries had recently celebrated their fifty year jubilee in the United States but they were all on domestic soil. World War 1 provided an opportunity for Lincoln's vision to not only be deepened at home but also to spread into other nations. Military crusaders of American nationalism and principles of civic religion had spread across the globe, and the United States government leaped at the opportunity to perpetuate that presence forever through military cemeteries. Although the method of approach varied chronologically and between nations, the long-term effect was international comradery centered in universally accepted principles of mourning and sacrifice.

The next couple of chapters will detail the expansion of Lincoln's vision to a global citizenry both domestically through the memorialization of unknown soldiers, and foreignly as nations made diplomatic agreements to create military cemeteries on each other's soils. Up to 1918, everything dealing with military cemeteries in the United States had an underlying objective dealing with abolition, or otherwise defined as the expression and expansion of equality. Although racial components were still prevalent during World War 1, the vision of civic religion took on a larger spiritual conversion. Military cemeteries were to become geographic expansions of all universal ideals of civic religion, not just racial equality. Yet racial equality was a key component and the leading edge of military cemetery objectives. Even as the military was still segregated, soldiers in death would provide examples of equality in their burials.

One of the unforeseen effects of the Civil War, that would become a huge component of later military cemeteries, was the reality of soldiers being unidentifiable during the reburial process. Underlying objectives of military death legislation was to provide honorable burials for all soldiers but also to aid in the identification of those

same soldiers. As discussed previously, the federal reburial program between 1865-1870 was able to locate and repatriate to centralized cemeteries over three hundred thousand Union soldiers spanning the United States. Records show that approximately 42% of those repatriated went unidentified which according to Arlington historian Micki McElya was “a staggering figure, to be sure, but not as large as might have been expected given the carnage, field burials, and the absence of formal identification measures.”[255] How America chose to appropriately memorialize soldier death took an added dimension when considering that nearly half of sacrificers went nameless (which does not include the percentage of Confederate unknowns).

The memorialization became rooted in causes fought for as very little could be distinguished about the individual himself. Unknown soldiers would come to represent much more than a single life cut short in the context of conflict; they would become part of the fabric of public mourning as the remains literally could have been anyone’s. Lincoln’s vision of a dualistic objective cemetery would be aided by unknown remains because it forced society to accept the sacrifice on even playing fields. As has been mentioned numerous times, military cemeteries were not perfect in their implementation of Lincoln’s vision; but with unknown soldiers, there was little to debate in terms of civic religion. Graves of unknowns were sentimentally America’s and were adopted as one of their own, with the ability to do so in universal principles of equality.

Micki McElya continues to describe public attachment to unknown remains from the Civil War: “Those who could never be identified, remaining forever unknown, were perhaps the most emblematic of collective loss and honor, prefiguring the place and

[255] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 111.

effect of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, established in Arlington more than fifty years later."[256] One set of unknown remains could be as personal as one grieving next of kin and as universal as belonging to the nation. The unknowns of the Civil War became the origins for later memorializations around the world and as Walt Whitman (1819-1892) described in his poetic brilliance "And everywhere among these countless graves—everywhere in the many Soldiers Cemeteries of the Nation, (there are over seventy of them)—as at the time in the vast trenches, the depositories of slain, Northern and Southern, after the great battles—not only where the scathing trail pass'd those years, but radiating since in all the peaceful quarters of the land—we see, and see, and ages yet may see, on monuments and gravestones, singly or in masses, to thousands or tens of thousands, the significant word UNKNOWN."[257] Little did Whitman realize just how significant the word unknown would become in the fiber of American military memorialization. Even though unknown tombs were established prior to 1921, it would be the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that would become the holy of holies within the American military cemetery temples to nationalism and civic religion.

Arlington was familiar with unknown burials as Montgomery C. Megis had ordered remains from the Manassas battlefields to be brought to Arlington in September 1866. Meigs chose a location just a few yards from the Lee's mansion in what was formerly the rose garden and workers began digging the twenty foot deep and twenty foot circumference mass grave. The crypt was designed to be the first memorial to unknown soldiers in the cemetery and one reporter described the mass burial as being "A more terrible spectacle can hardly be conceived than is to be seen within a dozen

[256] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 111.
[257] Whitman, Walt, "The Million Dead, too, summ'd up -- The Unknown.", (1875).

rods of the Arlington Mansion,... Down into this gloomy receptacle are cast the bones of such soldiers as perished on the field and either were not buried at all or were so covered up as to have their bones mingle indiscriminately together. At the time we looked into this gloomy cavern, a literal Golgotha, there were piled together, skulls in one division, legs in another, arms in another, and ribs in another, what were estimated as the bones of two thousand human beings."[258] The burial was completed and a stone sarcophagus designed by Meigs himself was attached above the sealed vault. Along the face of the monument was an inscription which testifies of Lincoln's vision to recognize soldiers sacrifice as spiritual in nature and for the nations future:

> "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[259]

Martyrs represent those who gave their lives for a sacred spiritual cause. It is clear that higher and holier objectives were part of the memorialization of the Civil War dead. Lincoln envisioned it at Gettysburg, and Meigs executed the vision with the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns at Arlington.

From its inception, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns played a central role in Decoration day services as the location of collective honor. Similar to how the modern Tomb of the Unknown has become the most sacred location within the "nation's most

[258] Quoted in Bigler, Philip. *In Honored Glory: Arlington National Cemetery, the Final Post.* United States: Vandamere Press, (1994), 30.
[259] Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Edwin M. Stanton, Oct. 13, 1866, NARA RG 92, Office of the Quartermaster General. As also quoted from a picture taken by the author while visiting Arlington National Cemetery.

sacred shrine", the Civil War Unknowns monument was that location prior to 1921. Records show that the concluding event of many Decoration Day observances was a procession to the tomb to place flowers at its base. As people have gathered at Arlington National Cemetery to honor, memorialize, and mourn the military dead; they have done so at tombs consecrated to those who gave both life and identity to the higher and holier objectives of Lincoln's vision.

On a global perspective following World War 1, the idea to memorialize an unknown soldier killed during the conflict is credited to Reverend David Railton (1884-1955) who served as a military chaplain for the British Empire during the war. According to his own memoir published in "Our Empire" November 1931 Vol. VII, Railton describes the origins of the idea and how "it came to me. It was somehow sent to me– I know not how– in the early part of 1916. It came by inspiration…":

> "I came back from 'the line' at dusk. We had just laid to rest the mortal remains of a comrade. I went to a billet in front of Erkingham, near Armentieres. At the back of the billet was a small garden and in the garden, only about six paces from the house, there was a grave. At the head of the grave there stood a rough cross of white wood. On the cross was written in deep black pencilled letters 'An unknown British Soldier' and in brackets underneath 'of the Black Watch'.... How that grave caused me to think!...
>
> So I 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'".[260]

It would not be until August 1920 that Railton would write a letter to the Right Reverend Bishop Herbert Ryle (1856-1925), dean of Westminster Abbey, proposing the idea of

[260] Railton, David, Rev., "Our Empire", November 1931, Vol. VII.

burying an unknown soldier with a “real” battle flag at the Abbey. Three days later a response came that Ryle was in favor of the idea but could not act without permission from the War Department. If that permission came, Ryle would see to the burial with all due diligence.

Months passed without further communication between Railton and Ryle. Then on October 19, 1920 a brief letter was received by Railton which provided him the solace of confirmation that his proposal had been approved:

> “Dear Mr Railton,
>
> The idea which you suggested to me in August I have kept steadily in view ever since. I have been occupied actively upon it for the last two or three weeks. It has necessitated communication with the War Office, Prime Minister, Cabinet and Buckingham Palace. The announcement which the Prime Minister will, or intends to, make this afternoon, will show how far the Government is ready to co-operate. Once more I express my warm acknowledgement and thanks for your letter.
>
> Yours sincerely
> Herbert E. Ryle, Bp.
> October 19, 1920”[261]

Once the announcement was made, the funeral for Britain's unknown would quickly come to fruition as the ceremonies took place twenty three days later on the two year anniversary of the armistice ending World War 1.

The funeral for Britain’s unknown expressed similar sentiments established by Lincoln at Gettysburg that military deaths had higher and holier purposes and that their gravesites are representations of nationalism and principles of civic religion. After being chosen, transportorted, and embellished with a casket of the finest materials; the

[261] Letter received by David Railton in response to his proposal for an unknown burial at Westminster Abbey from Reverend Herbert Ryle, Quoted in “Our Empire”, November 1931, Vol. VII.

remains were presented to King George V (1865-1936) who accepted them with a wreath of red roses and bay leaves. Attached was a handwritten card which stated “In proud memory of those Warriors who died unknown in the Great War. Unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold they live.”[262] Next the funeral procession, including King George and other members of the royal family, other prominent politicians, and high ranking military personnel traveled to the north end of Westminster Abbey for the beginning of the funeral service.

The opening hymn sung by the choir and clergy as individuals were filing into their seats only solidified the sacred spiritual nature of military death. For Lincoln and the American Civil War, the spiritual connection had direct ties to abolition and how America was in the process of a “rebirth” of emulation. The funerals for unknowns following World War 1 in numerous nations included the spiritual connection of global resurrection which would once again shed light on a darkened mourning world:

“O valiant Hearts, who to your glory came
Through dust of conflict and through battle-flame;
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,
Your memory hallowed in the Land you loved.

Proudly you gathered, rank on rank to war,
As who had heard God’s message from afar;
All you had hoped for, all you had, you gave
To save Mankind- yourselves you scorned to save.

Splendid you passed, the great surrender made,
Into the light that nevermore shall fade;
Deep your contentment in that blest abode,
Who wait the last clear trumpet-call of God….

These were His servants, in His steps they trod,

[262] “The Kings Card”, Presented to Unknown Warrior, November 11, 1920, courtesy of Westminster Abbey Records and Archives.

Following through death the martyr'd Son of God:
Victor He rose; victorious too shall rise
They who have drunk His cup of Sacrifice.

O risen Lord, O Shepherd of our Dead,
Whose Cross has bought them and whose Staff has led–
In glorious hope their proud and sorrowing Land
Commits her Children to Thy gracious Hand."[263]

A moment of two minute silence was observed at eleven and the funeral proceeded with additional hymns and prayers offered by both clergy and attendees. Once the services concluded, the King dropped a handful of French soil on the grave and initiated a public procession past the gravesite. Thousands would pay their respect after which bags of soil from the battlefields of Europe would fill in the grave and a temporary memorial stone was placed over the crypt.[264] The Unknown Warrior who gave his life and identity during World War 1 was now resting among the kings and queens of England, a fitting location as a geographic temple of British nationalism.

Not quite a full year later, a second ceremony occurred where the permanent memorial stone was placed over the gravesite with the inscription: "Beneath this stone rests the body of a British warrior unknown by name or rank brought from France to lie among the most illustrious of the land and buried here on Armistice Day 11 Nov: 1920, in the presence of his majesty King George V his ministers of state, the chiefs of his forces and a vast concourse of the nation. Thus are commemorated the man multitudes

[263] "The Supreme Sacrifice", as published in, "The Funeral Service of a British Warrior on the Second Anniversary of the Signing of the Armistice", November 11, 1920, Courtesy of Westminster Abbey Records and Archives.
[264] Scholarly works covering the history of Britain's Unknown Warrior include: Scott, Mark., *Among the Kings: The Unknown Warrior, an Untold Story.* United Kingdom: Colourpoint, (2020); Richards, Andrew., *The Flag: The Story of Revd David Railton MC and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior.* United Kingdom: Casemate Publishers Ignition, (2017); and Gavaghan, Michael. *The Story of the Unknown Warrior: 11 November 1920.* United Kingdom: M and L Publications, (1995).

who during the Great War of 1914-1918 gave the most that man can give life itself. For God For King and country for loved one home and empire for the sacred cause of justice and the freedom of the world. They buried him among the kings because he had done good toward God and toward his house." (punctuation included and normalized)[265] At that same ceremony, General John Pershing of the United States addressed the crowd and awarded the British soldier the American Congressional Medal of Honor. Thus forever connecting the allies, alongside France and Italy, and each nation's respective tombs honoring their unknown soldiers.[266]

France would bury their unknown soldier at the base of the Arc De Triomphe in Paris on January 28, 1921 and Italy would do the same on November 4, 1921 at Altare della Patria in Rome. Each of the European nations would set the stage for the United States which would bury their unknown at Arlington National Cemetery on November 11, 1921. How each unknown was chosen, memorialized, and embraced as a national symbol in each nation had their own individualized components and yet the continuity between the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy shows that higher and holier objectives were at the forefront of honor. Lincoln envisioned that military cemeteries would be geographic temples of civic religion representing sacrifice and freedom. With the addition of the American unknown at Arlington, Lincoln's temples would take on a new role at home and abroad.

Before shifting to the American example, one argumentative point is needed when discussing the comparisons between nations and unknown soldiers. It is clear that America was inspired by the European counterparts in terms of rituals, architectural

[265] Memorial slab covering tomb of Britain's Unknown Warrior buried at Westminster Abbey.
[266] "The Placing of the American Congressional Medal of Honour Upon the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior", October 17th, 1921, service program, courtesy of Westminster Abbey Records and Archives.

style, choice of location, and other aesthetics; but in essential nature and purpose, America drew more inspiration from the Civil War unknown monument. From the onset, the tomb at Arlington was driven by universal crusading principles to expand civic religion. European tombs for unknown soldiers were nationalistic first and foremost and any reference to crusader rhetoric was minimal if present at all. Each nation made nationalistic decisions to distinguish their tomb from others, however the United States made those decisions in the context of spreading civic religion.

In conjunction with honoring one specific unknown soldier from each European nation, the United States initiated the legal process to do the same for one of their own. The logistics were magnified due to the distance between the battlefields and home soil but ultimately were handled in similar manners as the European nations. Amidst growing political pressure at home and abroad (to be discussed further in the following chapter), the United States was facing a daunting question as to whether or not to repatriate the remains of soldiers back to American soil. The army's Grave Registration Service began searching thousands of makeshift cemeteries in the attempt to locate, identify, and properly mark American gravesites immediately following the armistice. Statistics provided by official military records and presented by Arlington historian Robert Poole as a miracle in of itself suggest that only 2.2% of American deaths were classified as unknown.[267] The unknown soldier destined for America was to be chosen from a very small number of potential candidates.

Legislation began December 21, 1920 under the jurisdiction of Representative Hamilton Fish (1888-1991) of New York for the “bringing to the United States of a body

[267] Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 143-146.

of an unknown American killed on the battle fields of France, and for burial of the remains with appropriate ceremonies."[268] Interestingly enough, a location was not immediately agreed upon and multiple opinions were presented as to where the gravesite should be located. General Peyton C. March (1864-1955), who was initially against repatriation, as part of his sentiments to keep remains in Europe stated that "We have no national arch like the Arc de Triomphe, or national building like Westminster Abbey in which has been interred countless bodies for centuries."[269] Clearly March was showing an understanding and recognition that England and France had an easier choice of location, one that would represent the nation as a whole. In his mind there was not a location within the United States that reached that level of nationalism deserving of the tomb. However, others around March saw Arlington National Cemetery as the logical location because it met both objectives of Lincoln's vision.[270]

The final decision for Arlington came down from congress on February 4, 1921 and was one of the concluding legislations of presidential duty for Woodrow Wilson.[271] Once Arlington was officially selected as the location of the unknown's tomb, the process of appropriately memorializing began. The *New York Times* wrote "His tomb should be a shrine for the 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,

[268] H.J. Resolution 426, 66th Congress, 3rd Session, December 21, 1920, NARA RG 407, Box 562, File 293.8.
[269] Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 147.
[270] Other discussed locations for the unknown burial included the crypt originally intended for George Washington under the Capitol Rotunda and Central Park in New York City.
[271] Wilson had desired a third term but the Democratic Party chose not to re-nominate him, instead nominating James M. Cox from Ohio.

men of the South as well as men of the North, who fought for the Stars and Stripes."[272] Between February and November, the attention to detail and recognition of higher and holier objectives for what this one gravesite represented to American and global citizens showed dedication to Lincoln's vision. The United States was to be a nation worthy of emulation and their commitment to one unknown, although chronologically after other nations, would become the figurehead to follow.

Orders were promptly given to the Quartermaster Corps to find remains of an American soldier that met criteria to ensure "so as to preclude the remotest possibility of future identification as to his name, rank, organization, service or the battlefield on which he fell".[273] Naturally, anonymity of the remains was the greatest desire of the government, but there was also a dual opposite expectation that the remains were positively American and were a battlefield casualty. In one month's time, graves registration files were combed over and "after a final search of the records of unknown dead for any evidence of identity, special Quartermaster Corps teams chose four bodies to be exhumed as possible recipients of the honors. Four others were selected as alternates should the exhumation of any of the first four reveal evidence of identity."[274] The repatriation work took place on 22 October 1921 with one body being retrieved from the American cemeteries located at Aisne-Maine, Meuse-Argonne, Somme, and St. Mihiel. Following mortuary preparation, each of the bodies were placed in identical caskets and transported to the French town Chalons-sur-Marne for final selection.

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[272] The *New York Times,* December 9, 1920; note the date as being months prior to the final decision from congress. Other articles during those months suggest hometown support for the idea of burying the soldier in Central Park as well as the Capitol Rotunda.

[273] Brig Gen. William Lassiter, memorandum to Army chief of staff, Sept. 8, 1921, NARA RG 407, Box 563, File 293,8; Quoted in Poole, Robert M.. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery.* United States: Bloomsbury USA, (2010), 149.

[274] Stark, M. W.., Mossman, Billy C., *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals, 1921-1969*, United States: Department of the Army, (1972), 4.

Waiting for the caskets was a throng of both American and French delegations led by Major General Harry L. Rogers (1867-1925) who had been chosen to make the final selection of which unknown would become the one American unknown. However, after learning that France had given the selection honor to an enlisted soldier, Rogers decided to do the same. His choice was Sergeant Edward F. Younger (1898-1942) who was on assignment as one of the six pallbearers sent to Chalons-sur-Marne from Germany. In a first hand account entitled "I Chose the Unknown Soldier" written fifteen years after the events, Younger described his experience that October day with reverence and honor to the higher and holier purposes of what the unknown would mean to America. He remembered the "overwhelming" feeling that accompanied the honor and then recalled:

> "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?"
>
> 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."[275]

[275] Younger, Edward F., "I Chose the Unknown Soldier", *This Week,* (November 8, 1936).

One of the simplest tasks during Sergeant Younger's military career, and yet the single most important in terms of lasting impact.[276] In 1930, the *Washington Post* helped pay and organize a trip to Arlington National Cemetery for Sergeant Younger. It was the first time that he had visited the tomb of his "comrade" and ceremonies were held in order for him to re-enact his placing of white roses on the casket nine years prior.[277] Younger would pass away in August 1942 and was buried in Section 18 at Arlington, thus forever connecting him to the unknown whom he brought there.

The unknown's journey to Arlington would consist of memorials, celebrations, and government recognition as the remains traveled across France to the port city of Le Havre. Just prior to being taken aboard the U.S.S *Olympia*, the minister of pensions and future war minister of France, Andre Maginot would present America's Unknown with the Cross of the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. France's highest medal would become the first of many that America's Unknown would receive as they shoved off on October 25, 1921 from the land where he gave his last breath towards the land he called home.

That sacred journey would take fifteen days as the *Olympia* docked at the Washington Naval Yard on the morning of November 9, 1921. The Associated Press reported "America's unknown dead is home from France at last, and the nation has no honor too great for him. In him, it pays its unstinted tribute of pride and glory to all those sleeping in the far soil of France. It was their home-coming to-day; their day of days in the heart of the nation and they must have known it for the heart beat of a nation defies

[276] Of note, the remaining three unknown candidates were then transferred to the Meuse-Argonne Cemetery where they continue to rest in peace in graves No. 1,2, and 3, Row 1, Block G.
[277] Hassell, Duncan. "Humble Soldier Who Selected Unknown Will Honor Comrade," *Washington Post,* (May 29, 1930).

the laws of space, even of eternity."[278] Even though the nation was honoring the one unknown destined for Arlington, there was also a sense of unifying all of the soldier dead yet to be returned. Once docked and to the tune of "Onward Christian Soldiers" the remains were transported off ship and made their way to the Capitol rotunda where they would lay in state under continuous sentinel guard until the final leg of the journey to Arlington.[279]

On the morning of the state funeral, the cortege left the Capitol rotunda to make the approximate five mile journey to Arlington and the newly constructed (and still not completely finished at the time of funeral) gravesite adjacent to the Memorial Amphitheater. The location of the gravesite was described as "High on a wooded ridge beside the Potomac, America's nameless hero will sleep bivouacked with the brave of many wars. Everywhere about his simple tomb,... stands monuments and headstones on which are graven names that also are written imperishably in the pages of glory that make the nation's history."[280] To many the location fit the sacredness of not only the day but specifically the soldier. It was a day of added nationalism and civic religion as Arlington added one crusader to the hallowed grounds.

Participants that day included President Warren G. Harding, former presidents William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson, General Pershing and other high ranking

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[278] Simpson, Kirke Larue, "The Unknown Soldier": Complete Texts of the Service of the Associated Press, as Sent from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 9, 10 and 11, 1921, United States: Associated Press, (1921).

[279] The remains would be placed atop the Lincoln catafalque with his head facing France and feet towards Arlington; and an estimated 90,000 people passed by during the public mourning/ visitation hours. The Associated Press labeled it as "A river of humanity, American men, women, and children, Americans by heritage, Americans by election, flowed all day today and far into the night… a slow but overwhelming torrent of humanity" (Associated Press Night Report, Thursday, November 10).

[280] Simpson, Kirke Larue. "The Unknown Soldier": Complete Texts of the Service of the Associated Press, as Sent from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 9, 10 and 11, 1921, United States: Associated Press, (1921).

military personnel, members of Supreme Court, Congress, and thousands of citizens who lined the streets and crammed into the cemetery for the opportunity to be a part of the sacred and solemn day. The cortege arrived at Arlington at eleven fifteen and prepared for the ceremonies which were scheduled to begin at noon sharp with a nation wide two minute moment of silence. During the forty-five minute wait, dignitaries from around the globe took their seats and technicians did final tests on the microphone/ amplifier technologies as the funeral was destined to become the first presidential speech broadcasted live to the entire nation.

The invocation was offered by Army Chief Chaplain, Colonel John T. Axton (1870-1934) who once again enlarged and raised to higher and holier purposes the event of the day by praying: “Help us fittingly to honor our unknown soldiers who gave their all in laying sure foundations of international commonwealth. 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.”[281] Notice the multiple usage of soldiers plural, and the recognition of America’s role in defending and expanding principles of civic religion. As much as America was honoring the one unknown, the sacrifice of all soldiers was not lost in the moment. The honor of being the literal representation of America’s unknown fell upon one soldier, but the figurative honor went to all.

Secretary of War John W. Weeks (1860-1926) began the speaking portion of the funeral by declaring 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

[281] Axton, Colonel John T., “Invocation at funeral of unknown soldier”, Quoted in Simpson, Kirke Larue, "The Unknown Soldier": Complete Texts of the Service of the Associated Press as Sent from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 9, 10 and 11, 1921, United States: Associated Press, (1921).

sustain a great cause, for which he gave his life…. Whether he came from the North, the South, the East or the West, we do not know. 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."[282] The cause for which he died represents an extension of Lincoln's fifty years earlier that the United States was to be a nation worthy of emulation. America's sacredness and destiny was fabricated by soldier sacrifice to defend and expand civic religion.

It was then President Harding's time to address the crowd and he as well called upon higher and holier purposes to not only the sacred occasion for which they were gathered but also the sacred purposes of America's soldiers moving forward. Two principles from his speech are worth mentioning in context of the tomb of the unknown soldier. First, President Harding provides a sacred reason to the cause of the his death was for the survival of humanity and American civic religion:

> "We do not know the eminence of his birth, but we do know the glory of his death. He died for his country, and greater devotion hath no man than this. He died unquestioning, uncomplaining, with faith in his heart and hope on his lips, that his country should triumph and its civilization survive. As a typical soldier of this representative democracy, he fought and died, believing in the indisputable justice of his country's cause. Conscious of the world's upheaval, appraising the magnitude of a war the like of which had never horrified humanity before, perhaps he believed his to be a service destined to change the tide of human affairs
>
> On the threshold of eternity, many a soldier, I can well believe, wondered how his ebbing blood would color the stream of human life, flowing on after his sacrifice. His patriotism was none less if he craved more than triumph of country; rather, it was greater if he hoped for a victory for all human kind. Indeed, I revere that citizen whose confidence in the

[282] "Solemn Journey of Dead", *New York Times*, November 12, 1921, 1.

> righteousness of his country inspired belief that its triumph is the victory of humanity."[283]

The course of history had been altered and challenged by military conflict and American soldiers had answered the call to defend principles which they held sacred. These include the concepts of freedom, liberty, sacrifice, republicanism, and a notion of spiritually driven destiny. For Lincoln, the Civil War and the institution of slavery threatened the long term survival of those principles; Harding would expand those principles to a global nation and America as the defender of humanity.

Secondly, Harding would directly tie the occasion to Lincoln by using the same language found in the Gettysburg address as to the hope and expectation placed upon the living who carry on the deads deeds:

> "Standing today on hallowed ground, conscious that all America has halted to share in the tribute of heart and mind and soul to this fellow American, and knowing that the world is noting this expression of the Republic's mindfulness, it is fitting to say that his sacrifice, and that of the millions dead, shall not be in vain."[284]

For both Lincoln and Harding there were still unfinished objectives to be met. There was reason for hope and yet tasks still remained to ensure that the sacrifices given by soldiers were to be considered worthy. Not in the individual sense, but rather in a communal sense. The body of the unknown soldier at Arlington became both individual and national, both mine and ours once the funeral was complete. Grieving mothers and widows of missing and presumed dead soldiers could take solace that the remains were individually theirs; as well as the nation could collectively adopt him as theirs. Never had

[283] Harding, Warren G., "Address at the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery", November 11, 1921, courtesy of the American Presidency Project.
[284] Harding, Warren G., "Address at the Burial of an Unknown American Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery", November 11, 1921, courtesy of the American Presidency Project.

one set of military remains become so closely connected to the fabric of American history and the higher and holier ambitions of what America represented.

It is clear that the American Tomb of the Unknown was inspired by the actions, motivations, rituals, and even architectural styles of France and Great Britain in regards to the unified efforts to memorialize unknown soldiers. Each nation had a common goal and executed in common matters. However, the United States was unique in that it had historical precedent to build upon in creating soldier memorialization. The United States may have fallen in line with World War 1 unknown ceremonies but the essential nature of America's specific actions stemmed from the Civil War Unknown Memorial. President Harding symbolized the sentiment that American death was to be honored in both nationalistic and crusading objectives. As the only nation who had previously memorialized soldiers' deaths, the United States both followed trends and followed traditions when creating the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington.

Another brief note which bears repeating, when comparing the three major allied nations which created tombs for their unknown soldiers was the rhetoric comparing nationalism vs. universal principles. Even though discourse is evident that France and Great Britain made comments regarding universalism, their specific rhetoric was centered on patriotism/ nationalism. Whether the European nations were simply recognizing American contribution or recognizing American presence at their ceremonies; universalist language was present. However, when analyzing on a deeper level the purposes of decisions made by nations for military cemeteries, France and Great Britain was nationalistic and patriotism driven without any long term plan to

expand their civic religion. Universal principles were present in France and Great Britain but they were not prevalent in their purposes to honor the soldier dead.

Once the funeral ceremonies concluded at the end of Harding's speech, the procession moved from the Memorial Amphitheater to the eastern plaza where the final burial would take place. After hymns were played by the Marine Band, prayers were offered, and several wreaths and other military awards given by representatives of other nations (including the headdress of Chief Plenty Coups of the Crow Nation) were performed. The casket was lowered into the tomb and in another dualistic representation of what American military cemeteries represented: "A last touch of the spirit of France awaited the dead… Over the floor of the narrow crypt in which he will sleep forever, soil from France had been spread; earth from the country where his death blood was poured out on a stricken field that it might remain free soil. It was brought with the casket from France and forever the nameless one of America who died for France and for America will rest on French soil here in his own home earth."[285] The unknown would forever rest on both American and French soil. Then as the casket was lowered people wept, "carried away by the symbolism of patriotism which this unknown American embodied."[286]

Historian Micki McElya concluded her analysis of the World War 1 unknown with this poetic consideration, "Although the ritual was borrowed from antiquity and the recent ceremonies of European allies, the Unknown of the First World War provided a remarkably literal enactment of the U.S. mott, *E Pluribus Unum*– 'Out of Many, One'".[287]

[285] Simpson, Kirke Larue. "The Unknown Soldier": Complete Texts of the Service of the Associated Press as Sent from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 9, 10 and 11, 1921, United States: Associated Press, (1921).
[286] "Solemn Journey of Dead", *New York Times*, November 12, 1921.
[287] McElya, Micki. *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery.* N.p.: Harvard University Press, (2016), 188-189.

American military cemeteries had represented sacrifice and other principles of civic religion up to 1921, however the burial of America's unknown at Arlington dramatically lifted the role military cemeteries would play to higher and holier ambitions. It could be argued that following 1921, military cemeteries now had a tangible connection to Lincoln's vision. In simple terms, the dead deserved dedication to their sacrifice, the one unknown at Arlington and the many others at home and abroad.

There is a clear distinction and separation in the chronology of American military cemeteries in their first one hundred years. The first fifty years dealt with domestic challenges to nationalism and civic religion, while the second added foreign opportunities. Military cemeteries would be imperfect, but they were among the first to embrace the dualistic abolitionist objectives set forth by Lincoln. Between 1862 and 1921, nationalism was the greater focus as cemeteries were being developed geographically and ideologically. With the burial of the unknown soldier at Arlington, as well as others from World War 1, the United States would be able to embrace civic religion principles more fully. Crusaders were no longer overcoming challenges on domestic soil. World War 1 was truly when expanding civic religion became a conversion process to a global citizenry.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery would continue to develop as time progressed. Originally the tomb/ crypt was covered with a flat top marble slab and was guarded by both civilians and military personnel during daytime hours beginning in 1925 to discourage inappropriate behavior at the tomb.[288] Legislation was passed in 1926 to complete the tomb and in 1928 architect Lorimer Rich

[288] Due to the pilgrimage component of the tomb, many visitors would spend hours contemplating and there are records of picnics and other recreational activities occurring "on" the tomb.

(1891-1978) and sculptor Thomas Hudson Jones (1892-1969) won a national design contest for their simple marble sarcophagus submission. Both men were World War 1 veterans and Lorimer Rich would later be buried at Arlington, once again connecting the tomb with those most closely associated with its history. Their design was completed and unveiled to the public in 1932 with its neoclassical figures of Peace, Victory, and Valor, detailed carved wreaths along the facade, and the simple inscription “Here rests in honored glory an American Soldier known but to God” on the western/ amphitheater side.

Round the clock guards went into effect on July 1, 1937 and the honor has been given to members of the 3rd U.S. Infantry commonly referred to as the “Old Guard” since 1948.[289] Sentinels are present 24/7 365 days a year regardless of weather and adhere to the Sentinel's Creed established in 1971 which provides a succinct purpose to their specific mission to honor the unknowns.[290] The United States truly became a nation worthy of emulation with the development of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington. As time progressed the tomb would continue to evolve into a sacred location to honor not only those who had sacrificed their lives for the nation but also to re-establish commitment to their causes. When war once again broke out in Europe in the 1930s, a new generation of Americans were called upon to defend American civic religion and Lincoln’s vision for what military cemeteries represented to the world.

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[289] The first individual to be awarded the “Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Identification Badge” was William Daniel who would later be buried at Arlington National Cemetery following his death in 2009.

[290] “Sentinel's Creed”, Arlington National Cemetery, courtesy of the Department of Defense and Arlington National Cemetery. ““My dedication to this sacred duty is total and whole-hearted. In the responsibility bestowed on me never will I falter. And with dignity and perseverance my standard will remain perfection. Through the years of diligence and praise and the discomfort of the elements, I will walk my tour in humble reverence to the best of my ability. It is he who commands the respect I protect, his bravery that made us so proud. Surrounded by well meaning crowds by day, alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance.”

As already discussed, England and France provided the earliest examples for the United States to follow with their commemorations of unknown soldiers. In 1921, Italy and Portugal also created monuments/ tombs for their soldiers killed during World War 1 as the global movement commenced. Other nations that created monuments/ tombs designated for unknown soldiers during the twentieth century include but not exclusively: Canada (2000), China (1958), Greece (1932), Russia (1967), Turkey (1960), Ukraine (1957), and technically the Confederate States of America (1981) as remains were found in 1979 on one of the battlefields of the Vicksburg Campaign and were re-interred at Beauvoir, the former home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis in Biloxi, Mississippi.

A simple sarcophagus adorns the gravesite. Inscriptions include “The unknown soldier of the Confederate States of America”, “known but to God”, and a poem written by Abram J. Ryan (1838-1886) who is known as the “poet priest of the South”. The poem itself has no reference to either nationalism or civic religious principles but rather emphasizes the fearless soldiers who “held the foeman at bay”.[291] Even a century later, similar sentiments were being portrayed as to the purpose of the Civil War. The South was defending their ways of life, while the North was crusading principles of civic religion in an attempt to convert/ defeat heretics. Thus again showing that military cemeteries were on the forefront of implementing those ideals which people should and would accept for the progress of society.

A final component that sets the United States apart from other nations in regards to their “original” tombs/ monuments designed for unknown soldiers was that the United States chose to expand the tomb as wars commenced. Following World War 2 plans

[291] Images, “Tomb of the Confederate Unknown”, inscriptions found thereon, Biloxi, Mississippi, (1979).

were put into place to add the remains of an unknown soldier to the tomb at Arlington but the quick entry into the Korean War put those plans on hold. At the conclusion of the Korean War, legislation and plans were put into place for a dual funeral honoring soldiers from both wars. The ceremony took place on May 30, 1958 with President Dwight D. Eisenhower awarding the medal of honor to both soldiers and officially expanding the tomb of the unknown. Another expansion took place in 1984 with a burial of unknown remains from the Vietnam War. However, those remains were exhumed and tested with advancing DNA technologies and were positively identified as Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie. At the family's request the remains were moved to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri. Following the removal of Lt. Blassie's remains, the Vietnam crypt was to remain empty and symbolize soldiers confirmed dead that have no grave.

It also is noteworthy that each of the additions to the tomb, whether that be World War 2, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, represented an American conflict where their objectives were rooted in defending and spreading American civic religion. The unknowns therefore from those wars also represented the soldier's crusades against enemies of American nationalism and civic religion. Lincoln's vision of a dualistic proposed military cemetery, or in this case a specific gravesite came to fruition. Other nations chose to not expand because their original tomb could very easily be expanded symbolically to represent all soldiers who died in the name of nationalism. The United States however needed to ensure that with each progressive war that the memory of civic religion was not lost in the specific conflict.

During the centennial celebration year of 2021, historians and staff at Arlington produced educational modules, historical lectures, and an updated interpretive guide centered on original photographs over time at the tomb. Their underlying goal was to increase public awareness of the site and help re-establish its position as one of the most sacred locations within the United States. The most anticipated portion of the centennial events was a recreation of the funeral and granting public access to the tomb for a flower placing. Over the course of two days, thousands would cross the plaza normally reserved for the tomb sentinels and have a brief second of private commemoration.[292]

To conclude, a brief analysis of the secondary scholarship regarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington as well as interpretations of the unknown soldiers globally would be beneficial in how Lincoln's vision relates. Perhaps the most comprehensive work covering unknown soldiers is Laura Wittman's *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Modern Mourning and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body* (2011). Her base argument is that the origin and creation of unknown soldier memorials were used by political parties on all sides of the spectrum to further advance their agendas. Going against the established interpretation that focuses on the collective mourning success, Wittman challenges the variety of "usage" from differing nations centered on "political agents (seeking) to channel public mourning" and how that historical interpretations of unknown memorials were "considered to be a political success story, whereby the state was able to overcome partly lines to give discontented, traumatized populations an outlet for grief that otherwise would have caused social instability and

[292] Tomb sentinels were still present during the public flower placing access as "the mat" was relocated to the east side of the tomb, thus ensuring the continued 24/7 guard. Also of note was the overwhelming public support of the flower placing that Arlington chose to do a similar ceremony on Memorial Day 2022.

revealed long-standing cultural divides within each nation, and among them."[293] Using Italy as the major case study, Wittman shows that the unifying memorial of an unknown soldier became the centerpiece of numerous political angles; ultimately arguing that the remains of unknown soldiers became political tools in the political machine.

World War 1 historian Jay Winter only spends a couple paragraphs considering unknown memorials in his landmark study *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (1995); instead focusing on larger cemeteries and memorials as they were used to create locations of mourning. However, he does point out the difference between the victorious allies and defeated Germany in honoring unknowns: "The German approach to this question was bound to entail greater difficulty and ambiguity. A number of projects were formulated, but they lacked the power to focus attention on one sacred site. The absence of any consensus on the meaning of the war, the origins of the defeat, and the place of the military within German political culture ensured that the idea of burying an unknown soldier… had a divisive as much as a unifying effect."[294]

Both scholars connect to Lincoln's vision in the dichotomy of the living and dead. At Gettysburg, Lincoln established the notion that it was the dead soldiers that created the sacred spaces of civic religion. However, it was the living who ensured that sacredness continued. It was the dead who spoke, but ultimately it was the living who interpreted their voices. Emma Login, who specializes in historical monuments, took a more architectural and holistic approach when studying war memorials and how the interpretations of dead voices have been re-examined and transformed to match

[293] Wittman, Laura. *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Modern Mourning, and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body.* United Kingdom: University of Toronto Press, (2011), 7.
[294] Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, (1998), 28.

contemporary needs.[295] Regardless of time and location, memorials and tombs dedicated to unknown soldiers have played a central role in developing the collective sacredness of soldier sacrifice. Particularly within the United States who have engaged in a multi-faceted purpose to soldier sacrifice, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington represents the single most sacred location within the American military cemetery system at home and abroad. To use Biblical terminology; American military cemeteries are the tabernacle in the wilderness, Arlington is the holy place, and the Tomb of the Unknown is the “most holy place”.

One of the more unique recent scholarly works is Patrick K. O’Donnell’s *The Unknowns the Untold Story of America’s Unknown Soldier and WW1’s Most Decorated Heroes who Brought Him Home* (2018) which chronicles the wartime experiences of the eight soldiers given the honor of being the pallbearers for the unknowns’ casket.[296] Each of the mentioned authors who have considered tombs dedicated to unknowns are not necessarily wrong in their individual interpretations but they have all missed how unique the American example is in terms of standing for universal principles of civic religion over and above patriotism. Recognizing the nationalistic overtones is clear but scholars have overlooked the civic religious undertone as part of the American tomb.

Lincoln envisioned that soldier’s sacrifice would show America's and the global citizenry that the United States was the defenders of universal principles of civic religion. Honoring soldiers was the expectation not merely the necessity of war. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington has become the center of American

[295] Login, Emma. *Set in Stone? War Memorialisation as a Long-Term and Continuing Process in the Uk, France and the USA*. United Kingdom: Archaeopress Publishing Limited, (2016).
[296] O'Donnell, Patrick K., *The Unknowns: The Untold Story of America's Unknown Soldier and WWI's Most Decorated Heroes Who Brought Him Home*. United States: Grove Atlantic, (2018).

nationalism and civic religion.[297] No better location exists that appropriately commemorates service, sacrifice, freedom, liberty, and equality. Lincoln established the ideal, and the United States met those lofty expectations with their soldier “known but to God” where on November 11, 1921 “America’s Unknown Hero was at rest in his majestic shrine… He lies unknown but not unhonored nor unsung”... “He was home, the Unknown, to sleep forever among his own.”[298]

If such honor and prestige was given to one soldier who could not be identified from the carnage of World War 1, then what would be the honor given to the thousands who could be identified and were now lying across the war torn battlefields of Europe? Nations answered those questions differently, but for the United States, honoring one meant the desire to honor all. Following World War 1 newly established cemeteries would spread across not only American soil but also on foreign soil. These foreign cemeteries will be the focus on the proceeding chapter and how diplomacy and Lincoln’s vision would expand the geographic temples of American civic religion to nations around the globe.

[297] Journalist Michael Sledge suggested this concept in his *Soldier Dead how we Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor our Military Fallen*, Columbia University Press, (2005) when he detailed that on the outset of writing his book that he nor some of his close friends knew much if anything about the subject of military death except that “most of us had visited the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery”.
[298] Simpson, Kirke Larue, "The Unknown Soldier": Complete Texts of the Service of the Associated Press, as Sent from Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 9, 10 and 11, 1921, United States: Associated Press, (1921).

Chapter 7: Still Serving Their Country

The unprecedented decision to return the bodies of all military deaths back to United States soil during the Spanish- American War was made with relative ease, even amongst strong varying opinions. Military cemeteries were embarking on a new era of their history with a unified nation where soldiers and sailors who gave their lives did so under a common flag. Size and scale also played into the decision, the war lasted less than four months and only an approximate three thousand lives were lost. Never downplaying the death toll as being insignificant, the realities of World War 1 presented challenges unforeseen by the decision to bring every soldier home. Even after entering the war in its later stages, the United States saw one hundred and sixteen thousand soldier deaths scattered throughout the battlefields of Europe.

Precedent set twenty years prior was being questioned by politicians and military personnel alike. As discussed in the previous chapter, the decision to repatriate one unknown soldier was met with criticism and conflicting ideas as to how, when, and where. Therefore, what would happen when considering repatriating all Americans who died defending and expanding American civic religion during the war to end all wars? Determining what to do with the soldier dead was part of a larger cultural theme described as the “new death” by historian Pearl James. She argues that Americans had opportunities to be included in the grim realities of death but often chose not to involve themselves. Ultimately the realities of death were culturally determined by the extent writers chose to include it in their works and those writings helped establish American

modernism post World War 1.[299] Similar to the American Civil War where death was so prevalent, the global community was required to reconsider attitudes toward death.

A brief nation by nation introduction sets the stage for how the United States engaged in the "matter-of-fact dimension to this issue (the return of the dead), of which everyone touched by the war was aware. The problem was where and how to bury the dead of the war…. The cultural history of the Great War was not only a matter of representations; real bodies were there in every theatre of military operations. Real friends and families in their millions mourned their loss, and wanted to give them a final, dignified resting place. That task was fraught with difficulty."[300] Answering the large how and where questions became the biggest challenge to each nation as all dealt with differing factors to consider into their individual equations. Those factors would certainly include the number of dead soldiers, the amount of distance potential repatriations would need to cover, whether the nation was victorious or defeated, and diplomacy internationally as well as with domestic citizens who were aware of what other nations were doing in regards to their military dead.[301]

Yet an underlying commonality was felt nation by nation: "their occupants (military dead in cemeteries) would continue in no small measure to do what they were doing– what they gladly, proudly, and gloriously did– when they gave their lives: they would still be serving their country."[302] Or as World War 1 expert Lisa Budreau has

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[299] James, Pearl, *The New Death: American Modernism and World War I,* United States: University of Virginia Press, (2013).
[300] Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, (1998), 22.
[301] For a unique perspective on how military cemeteries have been used for diplomatic purposes see Lemay, Kate Clarke, *Triumph of the Dead: American World War II Cemeteries, Monuments, and Diplomacy in France*, (United States: University of Alabama Press, 2018).
[302] O'Ryan, General John F., "Though Dead, They Can Still Serve", *New York Times,* (December 19, 1919).

explained, “National Cemeteries (speaking specifically of foreign ones following World War 1) became instruments of public diplomacy, as did monuments, designed to win sympathy and induce a sense of awe and obligation abroad.”[303] The dead were to be used as symbols of nationalism, patriotism, and civic religion. In addition to the ever so present reality of mourning loved ones which was kept at the forefront of decisions.[304]

France had one of the most unique relationships with answering the how and where questions of their military dead. Given the fact that the vast majority of battlefield deaths occurred on French soil, the French played an enormous role in setting standards and expectations. Described as “battlefield clearing”, soldiers and governments quickly attempted to organize themselves for the daunting task of repatriation. One estimate suggests that there were three thousand makeshift cemeteries on the Western Front as a result of the fighting.[305] Early in the conflict, the French government passed legislation that agreed to provide financial backing to the creation of military cemeteries as well as enlarging existing cemeteries for the burial of soldiers.[306] That original legislation was not specifically for and only designed for French soldiers, but also was to be in effect to cover allied burials as well.

From the earliest stages of the war there was a sense of international understanding that military burials would be done in a form of “togetherness” one with

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[303] Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 7.
[304] George Mosse argued that “The purpose which the fallen were made to serve was given true meaning when their resting places became shrines of national worship and when monuments erected in their honor became the focus of the public’s attention.”, see Mosse, George L.. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, USA, (1990), 80.
[305] Meyer, Richard, “Stylistic Variation in the Western Front Battlefield Cemeteries of World War 1 Combatant Nations”, *Markers XVIII* annual Journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies, Greenfield, Massachusetts, (2001).
[306] Archives Nationales, F2/ 2125, Law No. 1588, (December 17, 1915); Referenced and footnoted in Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, (1998), 23, footnote 15.

another. With little to zero historical precedent in terms of military cemeteries on the continent, European nations would be faced with new opportunities to honor the dead. Yet, similar to the experiences of the United States during the Civil War, much of the official and lasting decisions as to where and how would not be answered until the conclusion of the war. Soldier burials during the war were out of necessity scattered with little consistency as to how, where, and the level of sacredness attached to the burial.[307]

Between December 1915 and September 1920, France not only dealt with the reality of military death on the battlefield but also the diplomatic challenges of a mourning nation who had the most direct access to those deaths. Private citizens petitioned the government for the rights to bring their loved ones home but were denied almost without fail.[308] This reality often led to tension between the citizenry and the government. Then two weeks after the Armistice was signed, a Commission on Military Cemeteries was established (November 24, 1918) with the expectation to create and maintain military cemeteries for France's honored dead and made it illegal for private repatriations and reburials. Or in other words, France was attempting to monopolize military death squarely and solely on the government. All of France's honored dead would rest in military cemeteries, but public pressure became too much as legislation would be passed allowing for individual/ private access to remains.

Ultimately, during the two year period between the creation of the Commision and the updated legislation allowing for individual/ private access to dead loved ones in 1920, France was weighing numerous options as to how and where to bury the dead.

[307] See Dickon, Chris. *The Foreign Burial of American War Dead: A History.* United States: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2011).
[308] Jay Winter details numerous examples of petitions, the decision from the government, as well as the private "entrepreneurial flair" used by "private enterprise" to disregard the government in favor of bringing their loved ones home; Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 23-25.

Once the concession was made in 1920 that families had the right to their loved ones' remains, it would take another almost three years before the “conclusion” of France’s efforts to rebury the war dead in either a designated military cemetery or at another cemetery of the families choosing. France provides an example of how other nations prioritized nationalism first and foremost in their creation of military cemeteries and thus strengthening the dissertation thesis that America’s cemeteries are unique and distinct in their dualistic objectives.[309]

Considering how difficult of a challenge answering the how and where to bury military death was for allied nations following the conclusion of the war; there was relative simplicity when answering those questions for the enemy nations. Specifically focusing on Germany, they were not in a position to put much effort into the burial of their soldiers once the war was over. Few Germans desired to return to the battlefields to appropriately bury the dead and few from the allied nations wanted them to do so. However, the German War Graves Commission was established in 1919 and began to work within the international expectations to locate, maintain, and care for war graves beyond their borders. Early efforts by Germany were limited but there was precedent set that would play a larger role in World War 2. More will be discussed in the following chapter about the international relationships between the allied nations (United States, France, and Great Britain) and the belligerent nations (Germany and the Soviet Union) in terms of objectives and honoring causes of death by their respected soldiers; but it

[309] French headstones in military cemeteries are arguably the simplest in design from World War 1 as their crosses only identify (when possible) name, unit, and date of death. They also include the generalized statement “died for France” which aids the dissertation thesis that other nations emphasized a singular objective of promoting nationalism.

suffices for now that each nation individually began answering the how and where questions of military death.[310]

Specifically within the World War 1 chronological context, military cemeteries were developed between nations like the early American cemeteries from the Civil War; necessity was the leading factor. Once the hostilities ceased, nations were granted more flexibility to create purpose to the death toll. In the immediate aftermath, German and other enemy soldiers buried throughout Europe would be protected under articles 225 and 226 of the Treaty of Versailles:

> "The Allied and Associated Governments and the German Government will cause to be respected and maintained the graves of the soldiers and sailors buried in their respective territories.
>
> They agree to recognise any Commission appointed by an Allied or Associated Government for the purpose of identifying, registering, caring for or erecting suitable memorials over the said graves and to facilitate the discharge of its duties.
>
> Furthermore they agree to afford, so far as the provisions of their laws and the requirements of public health allow, every facility for giving effect to requests that the bodies of their soldiers and sailors may be transferred to their own country.
>
> (226) The graves of prisoners of war and interned civilians who are nationals of the different belligerent States and have died in captivity shall be properly maintained in accordance with Article 225 of the present Treaty.
>
> The allied and Associated Governments on the one part and the German Government on the other part reciprocally undertake also to furnish to each other:
>
> A complete list of those who have died, together with all information useful

[310] Recognizing and fully understanding that the Soviet Union was an ally during World War 2 but relationships quickly soured between the nations and the emergence of the Cold War. Therefore, deeper analysis of Germany and the Soviet Union are better suited to be discussed in context of that chronology.

for identification;

All information as to the number and position of the graves of all those who have been buried without identification."[311]

Simply stated, the peace treaty expected each nation to do the necessary actions to ensure that military burials were treated with pragmatic but honored principles. Respecting the dead, regardless of nation, was the highest priority when answering the how and where to bury soldiers. Naturally and as expected this was done to various levels, but dead soldiers were given respect by civic religious premises. Each nation took the responsibility with their own as the first priority and yet nations adhered to the treaty and "took care of" the dead buried in their respective territories.

Commissions were established to oversee the work of locating, properly marking, and maintaining military specific cemeteries in each nation. Great Britain established the Imperial War Graves Commission in 1917 and immediately made the decision to follow historical precedent by not returning the remains back to their home country.[312] Soldiers representing the Empire/ Commonwealth were to be buried where they fell and that early and consistent decision by officials allowed for a more unified acceptance between citizens and public officials. Herein shows once again that military cemeteries from other nations demonstrated a single folded mission to honor nationalism and patriotism. Even though cemeteries were geographically spread throughout nations, each one was designed as a shrine to the motherland.

[311] Knox, Philander C. *Treaty of Versailles*, Articles 225-226, [Washington, Govt. print. off, 1919].
[312] One exception was made for the "Unknown Warrior" who was returned to Westminster Abbey as discussed in the previous chapter.

Scholarly analysis is the deepest, longest, and strongest in Great Britain regarding their history with military cemeteries.[313] This coincides with the fact that Great Britain has the largest organization of military cemeteries of all the nations; spanning over 150 countries, 23 thousand cemetery locations, and commemorating 1.7 million war dead.[314] One brief interpretation that bears mentioning in regards to Great Britain and the expansive geographic reach of military cemeteries; even though they were located throughout the globe, they were originally designed to glorify the British Empire. Cemeteries that fell under the British flag were not designed to be nationalistic in terms of Australian, Canadian, Indian, or a host of other "countries" that were part of the empire but rather nationalistic and imperialistic notions. Truly, British Commonwealth cemeteries as a result of World War 1 were focused on honoring the motherland.[315]

One monument and cemetery particularly of interest from Great Britain is the Dar es Salaam African Cemetery and Memorial established in 1927. Located in modern day Tanzania, the cemetery and memorial was dedicated to African soldiers (also known as Askari) who fought and died during World War 1. The fact that Britain dedicated a memorial to African soldiers is noteworthy in-of-itself, but the inscription found on the monument shows the uniqueness of America's dualistic objective cemeteries. Along with a bronze sculpture of a soldier with rifle and bayonet and two pictorial plaques of soldiers on the sides of the pedestal; included is a simple inscription

[313] A brief overview of recent published works include: Summers, Julie, *Remembered: the history of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, United Kingdom: Merrell, (2007); Longworth, Philip, *The Unending Vigil,* United Kingdom: Pen & Sword Military, (2010); and Lawson, Catherine. *A Guide to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission,* United Kingdom: Third Millennium Publishing, (2018).
[314] Numbers as of the end of 2022, see official statistics provided by the archives division of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
[315] As respective nations gained independence from Great Britain, the transitional period of military cemeteries is unique nation by nation with varying levels of individual nationalism and with different chronological timeframes. For example Canada would honor an unknown soldier of Canadian descent in 2000 in a new memorial in Ottawa.

which reads “if you fight for your country, even if you die, your sons will remember your name.”[316] A clear reference to the nationalistic notions of military cemeteries. Although dedicated to soldiers fighting for larger principles of civic religion, the objective of the monument is singular in nature. Thus further establishing that the United States truly led the global push towards a dualistic objective of both honoring nationalism and furthering principles of civic religion.

The Imperial War Graves Commission (named changed to Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960) was originally headed by Sir Fabian Ware (1869-1949) who held leadership positions in the organization until 1948. Considered too old to fight on the frontlines during the war, he led a unit of mobile ambulance drivers under the direction of the British Red Cross. It was in this capacity that Ware saw firsthand the realities of battlefield death that would alter the direction of his service to his beloved Great Britain.[317] Ware began to make note of battlefield gravesites and over time he would become the face of Great Britain's efforts to appropriately memorialize their war dead. A parallel connection would be that Fabian Ware was the Montgomery C. Meigs for Great Britain, the man who oversaw and greatly influenced early commemoration efforts.

As historian Jay Winter describes in his benchmark study, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning the Great War in European cultural history* (1995) regarding “collective remembrance”; military cemeteries were higher and holier than other forms of remembrance because it “embodies a more enduring achievement and a more

[316] See monument inscription for “Askari Monument” also referred to as the “Dar es Salaam African Memorial”.
[317] A masterful biographic and narrative account of Fabian Ware and his work in the Imperial War Graves Commission is; Crane, David, *Empires of the Dead: How One Man's Vision Led to the Creation of WW1's War Graves*, United Kingdom: William Collins, (2013).

universal language, drawing on particular traditions but, on occasion, transcending them."[318] There was to be a sacredness attached to the sacrifice and that sacredness was both old in terms of nationalism but also new in military cemetery commemoration. The debate on when and where to bury military personnel was embedded in the desire to honor the heroes who died protecting the homeland. European nations focused on nationalism first and foremost with little recognition of larger universal principles.[319]

The United States, on the other hand, had another objective to honor those who died promoting American civic religion as well as defending the homeland. Up to the creation of foreign cemeteries, it could be argued that nationalism was the first objective of the dualistic objectives set forth by Lincoln. However, World War 1 became the tipping point for when spreading and expanding civic religion started to overshadow promoting nationalism. Both objectives had always been present within America's military cemeteries, but priorities evolved over time with specific conflicts. All military cemeteries regardless of nation and conflict of origin have similarities, but the dualistic objective of Lincoln distinguished America's representations as not only geographic temples of nationalism but also temples to honor crusaders who expanded civic religion.

When the work was concluded on World War 1 memorials, monuments, and cemeteries (ironically within a year of the second world war commencing), Fabian War produced an "account of the work" done by the Imperial War Graves Commission and Ware contemporary Edmund Blunden succinctly summarized the dignity placed within military cemetery grounds: "All who find the opportunity to enter some of those many

[318] Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, (1998), 79.
[319] A 1914 poem entitled "The Soldier" by Rupurt Brooke summarizes England's singular objective: "If I should die, think only this of me: that there's some corner of a foreign field That is forever England." The decision to not allow repatriation was one done with a singular purpose of spreading British imperialism.

cemeteries, in so many parts of the world, or even to see such pictures of them … must be impressed and even astonished at the degree of beauty achieved by the creators and guardians of these resting-places."[320] Great Britain exercised an enormous amount of effort in creating their "nationalistic" military cemeteries and Ware was proud to show off those efforts to citizens of the Empire.

One such visitor was King George V of Great Britain in 1922. The story is worth considering briefly as it relates to the nationalistic purpose of honoring military dead of World War 1. Attempting to avoid the pomp and circumstance of traditional royal visits to foreign nations, King George V visited no less than ten military cemeteries during his three day "pilgrimage" in Belgium and France. He specifically desired to visit cemeteries representing not only those from Great Britain but also ones which held the remains of soldiers from other parts of the empire.[321] At the conclusion of his three day pilgrimage, King George V made a declaratory speech intended for those within the "single-hearted assembly of nations and of races which form our Empire":

> "Never before in history have a people thus dedicated and maintained individual memorials to their fallen, and, in the course of my pilgrimage, I have many times asked myself whether there can be more potent advocates of peace upon earth through the years to come, than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war. And I feel that, so long as we have faith in God's purposes, we cannot but believe that the existence of these visible memorials will, eventually, serve to draw all peoples together in sanity and self-control, even as it has already set the relations between our Empire and our allies on the deep-rooted bases of a common heroism and a common agony."[322]

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[320] Ware, Fabian, *The Immortal Heritage*, United Kingdom: University Press, (1937), 15-16.
[321] For a detailed firsthand account of the trip, those who attended, and events at each location along the journey; along with original photographs see: Fox, Frank, *The King's Pilgrimage.* United Kingdom: Hodder and Stoughton, (1922).
[322] King George V, Speech given at Terlincthun Military Cemetery, 13 May, 1922, Quoted in Fox, Frank, *The King's Pilgrimage*. United Kingdom: Hodder and Stoughton, (1922).

Not even the royal family was spared from the “common agony” felt around the world as Prince Maurice of Battenburg, a cousin to King George V, was killed and buried in the Ypres Town Cemetery. Prince Maurice’s gravesite was of particular importance for King George to visit during his pilgrimage and significant time was spent mourning at the location.

The significance of King George’s pilgrimage to numerous cemeteries in May of 1922 suggest that early attempts to memorialize the war dead did in fact take on a nationalistic objective regardless of nation. There is little doubt that international diplomacy was required, but once those barriers were overcome, each cemetery became an extension of their respected motherland.[323] Thus forever establishing on a global basis the single-sided objective of military cemeteries: they were created to honor the sacrifice given in defense of the homeland. The King concluded with a simple hope that “I fervently pray that, both as nations and individuals, we may so order our lives after the ideals for which our brethren died, that we may be able to meet their gallant souls once more, humbly but unashamed.”[324] The ideals spoken of represent universal principles of civic religion and yet each nation outside of the United States chose to place those ideals under the banner of nationalism. In the specific case of the United States, the principles of civic religion were not under the banner of nationalism but rather flying on the opposite side. Symbolizing the dual purpose objective of American military cemeteries both at home and abroad.

[323] This phenomenon needs further study as to why each nation was adamantly advocating national cemeteries and not “universal cemeteries” where multiple nations were represented among the dead.
[324] King George V, Speech at Terlincthun, as quoted in, Fox, Frank, *The King’s Pilgrimage.* United Kingdom: Hodder and Stoughton, (1922).

President Woodrow Wilson had idealistic visions for what the United States was to represent to the world even amongst a policy of isolationism. To him the early years of World War 1 was Europe's to fight. However, when American ideals were threatened by the expansion of belligerent nations, Wilson promoted that the United States was the beacon of freedom to the world. Although historians and biographers traditionally vary greatly as to his realization of "Wilsonianism" dreams, there is little doubt as to what he intended and wanted America to be.[325] In a speech given in 1916, Wilson declared a summative vision of America's role in defending right and wrong: "We want the spirit of America to be efficient. We want American character to be efficient. We want American character to display itself in what I may perhaps be allowed to call spiritual efficiency—clear, disinterested thinking and fearless action along the right lines of thought. America is nothing if it consists merely of each of us; it is something only if it consists of all of us. And it cannot consist of all of us unless our spirits are banded together in a common enterprise. That common enterprise is the enterprise of liberty and justice and right."[326] Perhaps in ways not yet critically analyzed, military cemeteries would become Wilson's greatest achievement of "spiritual efficiency". Even though Wilson would leave office as American military cemeteries were in their infancy in Europe, they would become geographic representations of his "Wilsonianism" dreams in later years as they honored both nationalism and principles of civic religion.[327]

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[325] Recent biographies of note include; Brands, H. W., *Woodrow Wilson,* New York: Henry Holt and Company, (2003); Cooper, John Milton, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography.* United Kingdom: Vintage Books, (2011). It is also noteworthy to consider Wilson as the public figure and Wilson as the private citizen. Being considered as one of the most spiritual presidents, but also with racial tendency flaws provides a unique foundation when applying it to American civic religion and military cemeteries.

[326] Wilson, Woodrow, "An Address in Pittsburgh on Preparedness", (29 January, 1916), *Addresses of President Wilson, January 27-February 3, 1916,* 13.

[327] Note that Wilson left office March 1921: the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was in November of that year and the American Battle Monuments Commission was officially organized in 1923, a year before his passing.

The United States had the biggest challenge of all the allied nations in determining the answer as to how and where military death would be handled following the war for two reasons: First, there was already precedent set that remains would be repatriated back to the United States; and second the remains were spread across terrain an ocean away. Neither France nor Great Britain experienced those challenges and therefore the United States experience was unique. Would all of the American crusaders of nationalism and civic religion be brought back to home soil? Or would they all remain overseas in a reversal of precedent? Or was there an opportunity to honor the dead as defenders of nationalism and civic religion no matter where they rested in death?[328] That was the challenge and biggest unknown question of American military cemeteries following World War 1.

Originally the care for soldiers' remains fell under the American Graves Registration Service which was established in August 1917. The man who oversaw those efforts was Chaplain Charles C. Pierce (1858-1921) who had served during the Spanish-American War and had invaluable experience in locating, identifying, and relocating remains as part of what was then called the “burial corp”. During his time serving in the Philippines, Chaplain Pierce helped initiate numerous new protocols which not only helped with the identification process but also raised the honor provided to soldiers who died in service. These new protocols would include gathering as much information regarding the death and remains as possible in an attempt to deduct an identification; providing a new uniform for personnel to be buried in; and perhaps his

[328] Documentation advocates that the first American battle deaths from World War 1 occurred November 1917 just east of Verdun. The three killed soldiers were buried in a small cemetery the following day in a ceremony presided over by French general Paul Bordeaux where they remain to this day.

greatest recommendation to have personnel wear identification badges (dog tags in modern terminology).[329]

After arriving in France in October 1917, Chaplain Pierce would oversee the temporary burial of seventy three thousand remains as the war progressed. The Graves Registration Service blossomed to approximately seven thousand enlisted personnel with six thousand of those being African American soldiers.[330] Although racial challenges still existed amongst the living, as evident by the drastic racial ratio in a task deemed undesirable, the development of military burials irregardless of rank, race, or religion had been accepted. American civic religion had seen one lasting success in honoring sacrifice amongst the cities of the dead. Once again, military cemeteries were not perfect in their implementation but were on the leading edge of progressive civic religious principles.

Military veterans Addie W. Hunton and Kathryn Magnolia Johnson, two African-American women, co-authored a self reflective work entitled *Two Colored Women with the American Expeditionary Forces* (1920) wherein they summarize a first hand account of the challenge to reach Lincoln's dualistic objective. After describing the tremendous and sacred task of reburying the dead and which soldiers were given the responsibility they conclude:

> "Strange that the value of such a task did not gather full significance in the minds of all American soldiers. Strange that when other hands refused it, swarthy hands received it! Yet, perhaps, not so strange, 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

[329] Hirrel, Leo P., "The beginnings of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service", *Army Sustainment Magazine,* (July- August 2014 issue).
[330] Statistics provided by American Battle Monuments Commision; See historical interpretive guides at the Visitor Center at Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery where these six thousand soldiers are honored.

> placing of this task– the most sacred of the whole war– 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."[331]

For African-American soldiers, the fight took on numerous meanings and in numerous different theaters. Yet it is also clear that the dualistic objectives of Lincoln's vision for military cemeteries was aiding in the overall progression towards equality.

Further discussion and chronicling the efforts "sexton-soldiers" provided is a much needed area of research. Their service would provide new angles and interpretations of not only military and social history, but also cemetery studies. Hunton and Johnson finish their thoughts on cemeteries with "May we not hope that as the heart of this homeland finds its way to those American shrines in France, a real peace, born of knowledge and gratitude, shall descend upon us, blotting out hate and its train of social and civil injustices? Then shall we realize the value and meaning of the pain and sacrifice of these dark-browned heroes of ours."[332] It would not be until the conclusion of World War 2 that the military would officially be desegregated; and not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s that society would progress towards social equality. Yet, military cemeteries were on the leading edge of that movement, as had always been the case.

When World War 1 concluded, the efforts of the War Graves Registration Service during the two year period of active conflict produced a 97% successful identification

[331] Hunton, Addie W.., Johnson, Kathryn Magnolia, *Two Colored Women with the American Expeditionary Forces*, (United States: AMS Press, 1920), 234-235.
[332] Hunton, Addie W.., Johnson, Kathryn Magnolia, *Two Colored Women with the American Expeditionary Forces*, (United States: AMS Press, 1920), 239.

rate of military personnel killed.[333] This astonishing fact greatly aided the post war efforts of deciding where and how to bury soldiers who died not only defending American nationalism but also in spreading American civic religion to a global community. Beginning almost immediately, the War Graves Registration Service would repatriate remains to centralized locations awaiting word from both the government and next of kin as to where final disposition would take place.[334] Chaplain Pierce would remain in France until 1919 when he was relocated to Washington D.C. organizing the repatriation efforts until 1921 when both he and his wife suddenly passed away from illness while back in France representing America in the development of overseas cemeteries.[335] Both he and his wife would eventually find their way back to Arlington as they are buried in Section 15a as a final tribute to his incomprehensible efforts towards achieving Lincoln's vision for military cemeteries.

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Chaplain Charles C. Pierce and the War Graves Registration Service, American soldiers killed in Europe would have the opportunity to be honored both at home and abroad. As the precursor to the American Battle Monuments Commission, the War Graves Service became the official representative between the government, the American citizens, and the honored soldiers buried in Europe. As historian Thomas H. Connor introduced in his landmark

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[333] The *ABMC Guide* published in 1938 records 4,431 "unknown" soldiers; the number is the total of unidentifiable remains, buried at sea, and unrecoverable remains.

[334] Remains were scattered across some 23,000 separate locations across the battlefronts and were centralized into 700 temporary cemeteries awaiting official decisions; see Hirrel, Leo P., "The beginnings of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service", *Army Sustainment Magazine,* (July- August 2014 issue).

[335] Further reading on the Graves Registration Service includes: *History of the American Graves Registration Service: Q.M.C. in Europe,* United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, (1976); and *Graves Registration Technical Manual*, United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, (1941). For a modern secondary scholarly analysis see also Budreau, Lisa M., *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America,* 1919-1933. United States: NYU Press, (2011).

publication *War and Remembrance The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission* (2018) regarding the relationship America desired to create with military cemeteries abroad was that “Both the living and the dead associated with each cemetery,... represent in powerful and lasting ways the essence of our national values–most specifically, the causes and principles for which Americans have been willing to fight and die far from home.”[336] From the onset, military cemeteries abroad were designed not only with nationalism in mind but in a larger sense the expansion of American civic religion.

The remainder of the chapter will discuss this growing unique sentiment that American military cemeteries had dual purposes in their objectives. Up to the conclusion of World War 1, the duality of American military cemeteries had only internal enemies to overcome; but beginning in 1918 an external enemy presented opportunities for the duality of American cemeteries to crusade into Europe. The vision set forth by Lincoln at Gettysburg would be the premise for the American experience of military cemeteries on foreign soils. They were to be dualistic in their objectives with civic religion being the first cause and nationalism an equal second. Over time, France and Great Britain would trend towards honoring the crusading aspects of civic religion in military cemeteries but that component was not at the forefront. America’s military cemeteries truly were unique and distinct from other national counterparts.

The five years between the conclusion of the war and the official legislation creating the American Battle Monuments Commision (1918-1923) saw much of the foundational decisions made regarding how and where to bury American soldiers. By

[336] Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 9.

the time the commision was formally organized, work on the eight permanent cemeteries in Europe was already underway; the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington had been created; and perhaps most importantly the decision as to where to bury soldiers had been finalized. That decision ultimately was given to the next-of-kin. Soldiers would either remain in Europe in one of the newly established cemeteries, brought back to the United States for burial in a national cemetery, or returned to the family for private burial.[337]

However, the governmental decision was not done lightly nor without controversy. Secretary of War Newton Baker (1871-1937) went on record before the war ended that all European burials would be temporary and that the American government held firm to the precedent of returning the bodies of all its soldiers: “The War Department wishes to reiterate its pledge to parents and relatives, that no body will remain abroad which is desired in this country and that no effort will be spared to accord fitting and tender care to those which, by request of the families concerned, will remain overseas in the Field of Honor.”[338] Yet not everyone agreed with the sentiment either in principle or functionality. On each extreme, leading voices advocated for all or none when it came to American soldiers buried in Europe. It was clear that the “third” option was to compromise in the middle, but ultimately it was the most aligned with civic religion.

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[337] 74,770 letters were sent out in March 1919 to the “next-of-kin” with 63,708 received back by January 1920. The final statistics were 61% repatriated back to a location of the families choosing with the remaining 39% to remain in Europe which constituted just over 29,000 European burials. See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 22.

[338] For example see, “To Bring Back our Dead; Burials in France During War Will Only be Temporary”, *New York Times*, (September 5, 1918). Quoted in Sledge, Michael. *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor Our Military Fallen*. United Kingdom: Columbia University Press, (2007), 136.

More detailed accounts of the varying opinions as to where final burial would be and the arguments made by each side have been provided by Thomas Conner, Lisa Budreau, Kirk Piehler and others.[339] One specific and telling opinion came from former president Theodore Roosevelt who strongly advocated for leaving soldiers in Europe making the famous declaration that "where the tree falls there let it lie". Which is a telling perspective when considering it was declared as the next-of-kin for his son Quentin who died in July 1918 in France.[340] Even the decision process of creating military cemeteries took on the dualistic objective of Lincoln in the aftermath of World War 1. Could soldiers be honored with nationalistic sentiment regardless of burial location? Would civic religion be expanded if every soldier was brought back home? In the end compromise and choice became the opportunity to fulfill Lincoln's vision for America's cemeteries.

Interestingly enough, one of the most consistent sentiments for those desiring European burials was the notion of permanently establishing American ideals through cemeteries. General John J. Pershing advocated as such: "I believe that, could these soldiers speak for themselves, they would wish to be left undisturbed where, with their comrades, they fought the last fight." He would then continue and further develop the idea that cemeteries would become locations of civic religion: "The graves of our soldiers constitute, if they are allowed to remain, a perpetual reminder to our Allies of the liberty and ideals upon which the greatness of America rests."[341] From an early

[339] See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 15-23; Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933.* United States: NYU Press, (2011), "Part I Repatriation" and; Mosse, George L., *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United States: Oxford University Press, USA, (1991).
[340] Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933.* United States: NYU Press, (2011), 70.
[341] Pershing, John J., "Leave Our Dead in France, Advises General Pershing", *New York Times*, (August 21, 1919), Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 19.

stage there was the expectation and hope that American cemeteries on the European continent would provide the dual purpose of honoring nationalism and expanding civic religion through the sacrifice of soldiers.

This notion of permanently creating a location of American ideals on the European continent was also briefly strengthened due to a legislation in France that barred the removal of soldiers to foreign nations. Among numerous reasons there was concern in Europe that public opinion would change if the United States brought the remains of their soldiers home as neither France nor Great Britain were doing so. As one official from the Imperial War Graves Commission wrote, “the American decision and announcement makes our responsibility much more difficult than it would have been,... we have already received letters referring to it from relatives who desire a similar concession and I do not know what answer to give.”[342] It is noteworthy that each of the major allied nations made different decisions regarding what to do with their military dead. Yet, they all had to work within or accommodate each other's decisions. Therefore, the legislation however, did not restrict the reburial to centralized locations within France.[343] When next-of-kins in the United States were making one of the most challenging decisions of their own lives and they were doing so with no guarantee as to when or even if their choice would be adhered to.

France would ultimately repeal the legislation under a new political regime and growing pressure from the United States in September 1920. Almost immediately, the Grave Registration Service began shipping remains destined for reburial in the United

[342] Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933.* United States: NYU Press, (2011), 42.
[343] Hayes, Ralph, *The Care of the Fallen; (A Report to the Secretary of War on American Military Dead Overseas)*, United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, (1920).

States as well as continually evolving the European cemeteries. According to the Graves Registration Service records, there were also 454 bodies repatriated to nations other than the United States. These families were immigrants to the United States and their children had left to fight in the war to eliminate the bondage their ancestral homelands were under by the axis powers. The next-of-kin asked for the remains to be repatriated to those ancestral homelands and thereby creating new individual temples wherever those remains were laid to rest. Thus providing another example that military cemeteries were on the leading edge of expanding principles of civic religion.[344]

By the end of 1922, a mere 27 months after the first bodies were received back in the United States, all of the 46,352 requested bodies had been returned and a new era of American military cemeteries had begun.[345] The question as to when and where American soldiers would be buried had been answered by the beginning of 1923. Even though there were obstacles along the way, given the magnitude of the task, nations were generally pleased with the immediate results of handling the military dead. In the five years following the armistice, all nations established nationalistic driven cemeteries but one question still remained for the United States: how would military cemeteries continue to spread American civic religion and how would that message be presented to the global citizenry?

One example of how American civic religion was presented to a global citizenry was the completion and dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on May 30, 1922. Consider the timing of construction and the synonymous construction of

[344] For a longer explanation as to where these 454 remains were repatriated see Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933.* United States: NYU Press, (2011), Chap 6 “Make Way for Democracy”, 51-62.
[345] There are examples of next-of-kin changing their mind in both circumstances, either changing to bringing the remains home or to leave them in Europe.

military cemeteries throughout Europe during the midst of World War 1.[346] Present at the dedication ceremonies was Chief Justice and former President William Howard Taft, sitting President Warren G. Harding, President of Tuskegee Institute Dr. Robert Moton (who would deliver the keynote address), and over 50,000 spectators which included veterans from both sides of the Civil War. In a touching tribute, Robert Todd Lincoln also attended the dedication ceremonies which honored his father. After an invocation by Reverend Wallace Radcliffe, Dr. Moton stood and addressed the crowd with words which echoed those now engraved on the memorial walls behind him.

His opening paragraph recounted a history of events which he labeled as those that "laid the foundations of our national existence upon the bedrock of liberty." He described the military conflicts and how each had its origins in either defending or expanding liberties to American citizens. Then he declared in solemn passion the dichotomy of American liberty:

> "Freedom is the life blood of the Nation. Freedom is the heritage bequeathed to all her sons. It is the underlying philosophy of our national existence.
>
> But at the same time, another influence was working within the Nation. While the Mayflower was riding at anchor preparing for her voyage from Plymouth, another ship had already arrived at Jamestown. The first was to bear the pioneers of freedom, freedom of thought and freedom of conscience; the latter had already borne the pioneers of bondage. Here, then, upon American soil within a year met the two great forces that were to shape the destiny of the Nation."[347]

[346] Construction began on the Lincoln Memorial in 1914 and was completed eight years later in 1922. Also consider in context that the Lincoln Memorial Dedication ceremony took place six months after the funeral for the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.
[347] Moton, Dr. Robert, "Address at the Dedication of the Lincoln Memorial", (May 30, 1922), Courtesy of the National Park Service Archives.

He then continues to describe the experiences and battles between the forces of liberty and freedom to those of African- American realities. That sixty years had passed since Lincoln stood firm in the face of sectional division with the goal of unification and that Lincoln had not died in vain because "slowly through the years that noble spirit has been permeating every section of our land and country." Yet the greatest connection to Moton's speech and Lincoln's vision came as he concluded:

> "And now the whole world turns with anxious heart and eager eyes toward America. In the providence of God, there has been started on these shores the great experiment of the ages– and experiment in human relationships, where men and women of every nation, of every race and creed, are thrown together. Here we are engaged, consciously or unconsciously, in the great problems of determining how different races can not only live together in peace but cooperate in working out a higher and better civilization than has yet been achieved….
>
> With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, I somehow believe that all of us, black and white, both North and South, are going to strive on to finish the work which he so nobly began to make America an example for the world of equal justice and equal opportunity for all who strive and are willing to serve under the flag that makes men free."[348]

It is clear that Lincoln's vision for what military cemeteries could represent had resonated with Dr. Moton. There was still work to be done, and in the very least progression had been made. The world was looking at the United States as the beacon of hope following World War 1 and the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial and the impending overseas cemeteries were to be temples worthy of emulation.

The notion of perpetuating overseas cemeteries (there were brief discussions to repatriating all soldiers once World War 2 broke out) becomes a monumental shift in the

[348] Moton, Dr. Robert, "Address at the Dedication of the Lincoln Memorial", (May 30, 1922), Courtesy of the National Park Service Archives.

purpose of American military cemeteries and reiterates Lincoln's larger, higher, and holier vision. Even though American military cemeteries had always had a dualistic objective by honoring patriotism and nationalism as well crusading American civic religion; the ratio prior to the decision to establish overseas cemeteries leaned to the first objective. Following World War 1, the ratio shifted in that soldiers who were repatriated back to the United States led the nationalistic sentiment while soldiers who remained overseas became crusaders for larger causes. The dualism of American military cemeteries would now have two homes, the homeland and the adopted global stage.

That secondary question of how cemeteries would express and expand civic religion would be the main focus of the American Battle Monuments Commission following their official establishment in 1923. By that time eight military cemeteries from World War 1 were already well established in France, England, and Belgium and therefore the agency's main responsibility was not creating the cemeteries but rather beautifying and memorializing.[349] President Woodrow Wilson and General John J. Pershing had helped create the forward looking vision at Memorial Day speeches in 1919 at the Suresnes and Meuse-Argonne cemeteries respectively. Wilson declared that soldiers "though buried in a foreign (land), are not buried in an alien soil. They are at home, sleeping with the spirits of those who thought the same thoughts and entertained the same aspirations."[350] Those same thoughts and same aspirations could be labeled as principles of civic religion, sleeping as defenders of freedom. General

[349] The eight cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the ABMC from World War 1 in alphabetical order are as follows: Aisne-Marne, Brookwood, Flanders Field, Meuse-Argonne, Oise-Aisne, Saint Mihiel, Somme, and Suresnes American Cemeteries.
[350] Wilson, Woodrow, "Remarks at Suresnes Cemetery, (May 30, 1919) in Link, Arthur S., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 59: 607.

Pershing expressed that the cemetery at the Meuse-Argonne, and in extension all overseas cemeteries would always represent “a sacred plot … consecrated as a shrine where future generations of men who love liberty may come to do homage.”[351] From the onset, the reason for military cemeteries in Europe was rooted in principles of civic religion and honoring those crusaders who died in the defense and expansion of it.

Between 1923 and 1933 numerous decisions were made and executed by the ABMC and those hired for specific responsibilities to ensure the proper message was represented by these newly created cemeteries in Europe. One of which was to ensure equality of treatment, respect, and maintenance as the military cemeteries in the United States.[352] There was to be no distinction of honor, prestige, or sacredness between a military cemetery in the United States (particularly Arlington as the face of the system) and those established in Europe. Those who rested in those cemeteries died for the same dualistic purposes and therefore deserved the same recognition. Although not yet fully developed by scholars and historians, the efforts of the ABMC was to ensure that the military dead would still be serving their country as perpetual reminders of American civic religion on the European continent just as those lying at home were doing the same.

Historian Ron Robin has argued that “the American burial grounds were not meant to be mere memorials; they were designed primarily as representations of the American spirit abroad and as a political ‘foothold in Europe’,... They were planned to evoke a common national cause rather than mourn the death of young soldiers.” Robin

[351] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 31-32.
[352] See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 28; for a press release from President Warren G. Harding which detailed his desire for the “same as here” philosophy of European military cemeteries.

would then continue: “The monuments and tombstones were there to ‘represent the United States’ and not necessarily to commemorate the fallen.”[353] Although understating the role of mourning the fallen, Robin’s argument holds sway when considering the expansion of civic religion through military cemeteries. Those national causes of which Robin spoke of include sacrifice, freedom, representation, and others that “stand forever as symbols of America, our spirit and our aesthetic.”[354] To the creators of American military cemeteries an underlying question was what story would those cemeteries tell? The obvious answer was to honor nationalistic sacrifice, but was there more to the story in regards to civic religion?

To answer that particular question regarding the story to be told, a brief analysis of the individual described as the “chief of national remembrance” is necessary and that individual was General John J. Pershing (1860-1948).[355] Born in 1860 Missouri and a life-long soldier who experienced conflict from the Indian Wars of the late nineteenth century through the growing concern of a second world war. Biographies of “Black Jack” are numerous and expansive as he represents the only living soldier to ever ascend to the rank of General of the Armies. However, published works are limited in his post World War 1 life and role with the American Battle Monuments Commission which represented nearly thirty years of his distinguished career.[356] The story of American

[353] Robin, Ron, “A Foothold in Europe: The Aesthetics and Politics of American War Cemeteries in Western Europe”, *Journal of American Studies*, April 1995, Vol. 29, No. 1, (April 1995), 55-72.
[354] Louchheim, Aline, “Memorials to Our War Dead Abroad”, *New York Times,* (Jan 15, 1950), Sec. 2, p 10.
[355] Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 50.
[356] A brief introduction to Pershing biographies include: Vandiver, Frank E., *Black Jack: The Life and Times of John J. Pershing*, United Kingdom: Texas A&M University Press, (1977); McNeese, Tim. *John J. Pershing*, United States: Infobase Learning, (2013); and Perry, John, *Pershing: Commander of the Great War*, United States: Thomas Nelson, (2011). There is also a new endeavor to publish his personal correspondence during the war by the University of Kentucky Press in a number of volumes: *John J. Pershing and the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, 1917-1919: April 7-September 30, 1917,* United States: University Press of Kentucky, 2021.

military cemeteries in Europe cannot be told without the perspective of General Pershing as a leading voice and example of how they accomplished Lincoln's dualistic vision.

From the onset of armistice, Pershing was directly involved in the memorialization process for the United States on both sides of the Atlantic. He attended both memorial services and awarded the American Medal of Honor to the unknown soldiers of France and Great Britain, as well as being present at the funeral service at Arlington for the American unknown. Pershing was elected chairman of the board of commissioners for the ABMC in 1923 and served in that position until his death in 1948. Any discussion and decision regarding military burials in Europe, Pershing was directly involved and the ABMC followed his example: "led by a man with a uniquely profound connection to the soldiers who, in his view, had won a great victory for a noble cause, and animated by a strong desire to portray and preserve the memory of that victory in shrines that would outlast time itself,..."[357] Pershing's fingerprints can be found in nearly all of the major cemetery developments in Europe. In a similar trend found within this particular dissertation, scholars and historians are not necessarily wrong in their interpretations of Pershing but rather have missed a crucial component in their analysis. Bypassing or limiting Pershing's experiences with the ABMC and dead soldiers in Europe casts a shadow where the full picture becomes blurred.[358]

With the logistical and organizational systems in place, the ABMC began their first year in service considering four major objectives: "to commemorate by suitable

[357] Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 51.
[358] See the "Pershing, John Joseph, Papers" housed at the *Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division,* Washington D.C. for the most extensive collection of primary documents etc. covering the General's life.

memorials and markers the services of the American Forces in Europe;... to secure supervision over the locations, designs, materials and inscriptions of memorials that might be erected abroad by Americans;... to provide for the maintenance of any memorials it decided to build;... to complete the historical photographic record of the war."[359] Note once again the lack of mention towards creating, building, executing, and so forth of the cemeteries themselves. The cemeteries were already in place and the ABMC under Pershing therefore only had to construct the historical interpretation as "places to which one may go with a sentiment of respect and peace, as into a church or a sacred place."[360]

One of the biggest argument points for the ABMC was total control over monuments within the cemeteries and along the battlefields of the war. Historical precedent showed that without major restrictions on monument building, it would create a landscape on monuments and not a landscape of memorialization. General Pershing and the other commissioners all agreed that the memorialization in Europe was not going to turn into a Gettysburg type landscape. Following the Civil War, monuments numbering in the hundreds dotted the geography of Gettysburg and historical interpretation, particularly for the cemetery, got overshadowed. Therefore, the ABMC was extremely limited in the amount of monuments at the European sites.[361] The focus and effort was placed on keeping the dead at the forefront of decisions. To truly honor

[359] American Battle Monuments Commission, Annual Report for 1924, ABMC Records, entry 3, box 2.
[360] Moore, Charles, *The Autobiography of Charles Moore,* 2: 253, Manuscript/Mixed Material. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.
[361] Ultimately the ABMC built memorial chapels in each of the eight cemeteries and an additional eleven monuments throughout Europe. A drastic change from Civil War monument memorialization.

the sacrifice of soldiers, their deaths needed to remain the central point of the ABMC memorialization efforts.[362]

Along with the restriction of monuments, the ABMC specifically dealt with questions about the headstones themselves within the cemeteries. Temporary wooden headstones in the shape of the Latin Christian Cross had been used during the immediate years following the war. Numerous reasons exist as to why, but foundationaly they were easy to maneuver when needed due to the fluidity repatriation efforts and the cross had come to symbolize sacrifice to the global community. The debate over headstones became the commission's first true challenge. Just as there were differing opinions regarding the removal of all, some, or none of the remains from Europe; so too were there differing opinions as to not only the shape of the headstone but also the material to be used. Following the example of the Imperial War Graves Commision of Great Britain, the ABMC had two principles to adhere to: the “idea of permanence in mind” and “to make the graves themselves the most striking feature in the cemetery and the one to which the attention is irresistibly attracted.”[363] Interestingly enough, each nation answered those principles differently with the United States ultimately falling back to the notion of spreading American civic religion and in this context that included the Christian history of the nation.

Although unofficial expectations were made prior to the final decision from the ABMC to have the European headstones mirror those found in national cemeteries at home; the leadership and personal preference of General Pershing authorized marble

[362] General Pershing declared at a November 1927 board meeting that monuments should not “overshadow the cemetery” in any situation and the commission strove to meet that expectation. See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 88.
[363] “Information Obtained at Conference with Chief of Imperial War Graves Commission in London”, (June 23, 1924), ABMC Records, entry 4, box 4.

crosses for all European headstones. The lone exception came for soldiers/ next-of-kin who claimed Jewish heritage to which their headstones would be shaped as the Star of David. With the addition of memorial religious chapels for public mourning built on prominent locations in each cemetery, it is clear that the original commissioners saw the need to embrace and exhibit the religious undertones of their mission. As discussed at the onset of this dissertation, American civic religion includes religiosity of the United States as a Christian nation. Military cemeteries therefore have a unique connecting thread with higher and holier purposes, which has always included a sense of promoting the triumph of good over evil. Yet, the allowance of the Star of David was a monumental turning point for American civic religion in that it shows one example of how the United States was expanding and beginning to accept universalistic notions of religion.

Lincoln forever endowed military cemeteries with a spiritualism of the "new birth of freedom" where "To gain public support, war's purposefulness was emphasized rather than its tragedy, as death in battle became a noble deed for a worthy cause…. Within this process, war death assumed a mythical, cultlike status in which each soldier was worthy of tribute."[364] Whether it was Lincoln in 1863, or General Pershing in 1923, there was always an attempt to connect military death with higher and holier purposes. The dead were mourned individually but collectively there was also a recognizable sense of moving forward as a nation.

Continuing the religious undertones of American military cemeteries in their multi-faceted purposes of honoring nationalism and crusading civic religion, Charles H. Brent (1862-1929) who served as the Senior AEF chaplain suggested that the

[364] Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), *25.*

"American central field of honor" was a place for "commemoration of the dead" and that the efforts to build cemeteries in Europe was "a work of love carried through by a sense of reverence for that sacred dust which, though mingled with the soil of France, is forever American."[365] Those who advocated for the burial of American soldiers in Europe, particularly in France as the center of the battlefront, saw those cemeteries not as borrowed places of geography for military dead. Rather, cemeteries in Europe became American soil with American soldiers representing American ideals. The cemeteries were designed to be considered as sacred quasi-religious locations for not only the dead but also the living. They were to become holy ground by which European citizens would come in gratitude for American involvement; and as will be discussed in the following chapter, places of sacred pilgrimage for mourners of loved ones lost in defending and expanding American principles of civic religion.

Pershing himself advocated for advancements in civic religion as his experiences on the battlefronts of military conflict prepared him with unique insights to the battlefronts of societal challenges. Speaking about Jewish soldiers, Pershing stated in 1926 that "As citizens among us they have always done theri full part. When the time came to serve their country under arms no class of people served with more patriotism or with higher motives than the young Jews who volunteered or were drafted and who went overseas with our other young Americans."[366] The inclusion of headstones in the shape of the Star of David solidifies Pershing's stance on the contributions performed by all American soldiers regardless of religion. As the United States was in an era known as the "Social Gospel" movement during the early 20th century, military

[365] Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. B*odies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933.* United States: NYU Press, (2011), 70.
[366] Pershing, John J., *The Sentinel,* (December 17, 1926), p. 21.

cemeteries were once again on the forefront of progressing civic religion. The expansion of religiosity and religious acceptance within American crusading soldiers shows that cemeteries took another step towards accomplishing Lincoln's vision as sacred temples to the dead.

In terms of Pershing's attitudes towards racial progression, his character has been questioned as to the extent of feelings and their complexities.[367] There are conflicting statements found within his personal correspondence regarding African-American troops and their place as part of the military. Yet it is clear that Pershing recognized the distinction between society and the military: "You will, of course, appreciate my position in this matter, which, in brief, is that negroes are American citizens. My Government, for reasons which concern itself alone, has decided to organize colored combat divisions and now desires the early dispatch of one of these divisions to France. Naturally I cannot and will not discriminate against these soldiers"[368] The best example of Pershing's non-discrimination comes through military cemeteries where he oversaw the burial of American soldiers with no preferential treatment. Each of the dead were provided the same honor befitting their sacrifice and Pershing helped progress principles of civic religion in both religious and racial terms during his tenure serving with the ABMC.

To conclude the ABMC's efforts to emphasize the sacredness of honoring both nationalism and civic religion, consider the inscriptions on the memorial chapels found within the cemetery grounds. Three inscriptions state in almost word for word

[367] For example, the ABMC has an online educational module for students wherein the question prompt asks was General Pershing a racial egalitarian or racial bigot?
[368] Pershing, General of the Armies John Joseph, *My Experiences In The World War – Vol. II* [Illustrated Edition], (United States: Lucknow Books, 2014), 45.

construction: “This chapel has been erected by the United States of America in grateful remembrance of her sons who died during the war” (Somme, Oise-Aisne, and Saint-Mihiel cemeteries). A simple inscription that begins the concept of remembrance and yet other inscriptions provide more detailed accounts as to what and who are to be remembered. At the Suresnes and Meuse-Argonne cemetery memorial chapels the inscription reads: “This memorial has been erected by the United States of America as a sacred rendezvous of a grateful people with its immortal dead”. Both of these inscriptions have nationalistic undertones but the inscription at the Flanders Field cemetery chapel provides insight into the second purpose of American military cemeteries: “This chapel has been erected by the United States of America in memory of her soldiers who fought and died in Belgium during the world war. These graves are the permanent and visible symbol of the heroic devotion with which they gave their lives to the common cause of humanity.”[369] It is clear that sentiments presented in one form of documentation, inscriptions on memorial chapels, suggest that those initiating the memorials had in mind the dualistic purposes of what Lincoln suggested military cemeteries would represent. There was a cause for which American soldiers gave their life for and the cemetery needed to honor those causes as well as the humanistic side of nationalistic mourning.

The five years immediately following the armistice ending World War 1 saw a drastic increase in military cemetery history. Prior to 1918, only the United States had truly embraced the concept of federalizing the military dead of their nation. Experiences

[369] Inscriptions provided by the ABMC official reports and photographs of the chapels, seeConner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 90-95 for additional analysis of the memorial chapels, their inscriptions, designs, artwork, etc.

during the Civil War and the Spanish-American War had provided the United States certain precedents regarding how, when, and where dead soldiers would not only be buried but also memorialized. As the death toll skyrocketed for participating nations, decisions were made and represented the first international growth and development of military cemeteries. France and Great Britain chose certain paths to honor their dead by not allowing personal claim to loved ones. All soldiers of those nations belonged to the nation and with very few exceptions were buried in national cemeteries at or near where they fell.

To the concern of France and Great Britain for public relations reasons, the United States allowed for the next-of-kin to decide where to bury American soldiers. However, there was no guarantee as to when and how. Those questions would ultimately be decided through international diplomacy. Although there were strong arguments for and against an all or nothing approach (either repatriating all or none), the United States gave certain ownership of the military dead back to the people.[370] That decision also falls in line with the notion of civic religion and how one of the values of American history is giving the people power of choice, loosely defined as democracy. Military cemeteries were created in eras of necessity, but were constructed in eras of nationalism and increased civic religion.

Perhaps Lisa Budreau summarized the existence of American military cemeteries abroad when she declared that “National cemeteries overseas offered the ideal opportunity for the state to preserve the myth of the fallen soldier while maintaining military esprit de corps. Here, on the adorned landscape of camaraderie and memory,

[370] A principle that as history progressed France and Great Britain would become more involved with. The United States is still the only nation to have achieved the dualistic objectives of military cemeteries but other nations have begun to embrace larger universal themes rather than strict nationalistic ones.

the United States could leave its footprint of national might and influence abroad."[371] Building military cemeteries on home soil is easy to instill a nationalistic feeling of honor, sacrifice, and patriotism. Ensuring those same sentiments are felt within military cemeteries on foreign soil is not as easily accomplished. For example, the Soviet Union attempted to feature their version of universal ideologies under the banner of communism but ultimately failed due to the limited geographic scope that communism would have over the course of the Cold War.[372] Only military cemeteries of the United States truly came to circumnavigate the globe while featuring universal ideological rhetoric, American civic religion.

However, Lincoln had always envisioned a dualistic purpose for military cemeteries. They were to honor the dead by expanding the causes of truth and virtue to the living. No matter the geographic location of the cemetery, "national might" could be memorialized. By the time the American Battle Monuments Commission was established in 1923; the United States had already repatriated all of the American soldiers whose next-of-kin had requested the remains brought home, had already established the eight European military cemeteries, and had already enshrined the unknown soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. Therefore, the government agency who oversaw foreign commemoration would be allowed the freedom to do just that. The years between 1923 and 1945 would be centered specifically on ensuring Lincoln's vision would be embraced by the American people as well as a global citizenry. Soldiers were to be honored not only for their nationalistic patriotism but also for their dedication

[371] Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 48.
[372] Soviet cemeteries will be analyzed and discussed further in a later chapter as part of the discussion of how international relationships were affected during the Cold War.

to higher and holier principles of civic religion. Truly, the initial objective of official legislation, construction, and American commemoration was to honor the wishes of Lincoln that “these dead shall not have died in vain” and the wishes of Pershing that “time will not dim the glory of their deeds.”[373]

[373] Pershing, John J., “Our National War Memorials in Europe”, *National Geographic Magazine*, (January 1934), 36.

Chapter 8: Time Will Not Dim the Glory of Their Deeds

Once the official establishment of American military cemeteries on the European continent was secured in 1923 with the creation of the American Battle Monuments Commission, those involved began the process of attempting to appropriately balance commemorating vs celebrating the soldier dead. As historian Lisa Budreau summarized "In the aftermath of the First World War, the United States was not alone in its uncertainty as to how it might best memorialize the war and its sacrifices in a fully satisfying way."[374] Nations continued to wonder how and what is the proper content of memorialization. Everything up to 1923 was foundational and building the framework by which memory of the war could be represented. The commemoration years, defined here as 1923-1938 became the era where military cemeteries in Europe were culturally beautified in order to create a geographic landscape to honor American civic religion.

The official travel guide published by the ABMC in 1938 suggested that "There are eight permanent American military cemeteries in Europe. These have been developed by the United States Government into places of distinguished beauty and no American who travels in Europe should fail to visit as many of them as his time will permit."[375] There was an expectation that military cemeteries in Europe would become tourist attractions; a dichotomy which becomes the initial discussion point of this specific chapter.[376] Unfortunately the desire to have visitors was met with unforeseen challenges

[374] Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 163.
[375] *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, A History, Guide and Reference Book*, Prepared by the American Battle Monuments Commission, United States Government Printing Office, (1938).
[376] "Cemeteries offered visitors a potential encounter with the authentic on a personal level, particularly in the presence of a loved one's grave. There, on what may have been the former front line, memories of the deceased could mingle with imagination.", Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 174.

that prevented individuals from actually making the voyage across the Atlantic. However, one of the major concerns from veterans groups was the notion that America would forget soldiers and thereby the memory of the war would be lost. Even though visitors by statistical standards were not as expected, the cemeteries themselves were created to welcome and instill patriotism and principles of civic religion.[377]

The debates on where and when to bury the dead had been answered and considered permanent by the federal government. Families were afforded the choice to final disposition of remains and then in good faith and had to trust that the federal government would take care of their loved ones. There were natural hesitations by family members, but the responsibility placed on the shoulders of government officials would not be lost on those making decisions. The central question for military cemeteries during the commemoration era was simple: when people visited the sites, what experience was expected and what memory of the war did the cemeteries, monuments, and memorials want to portray? For General Pershing, the answer to that central question was a simple "perpetual reminder to our Allies of the liberty and ideals upon which the greatness of America rests."[378]

Commemoration and memory of World War 1 has become a favorite subfield of historiography for scholars.[379] As discussed in the previous chapter, Lisa Budreau has

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[377] See Edmunds, Palmer D., "Should We Forget the War?", *American Legion Weekly*, (December 5, 1925), also Keene, Jennifer D., *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America,* United Kingdom: Johns Hopkins University Press, (2003), provides a unique perspective on the Legions efforts to control the memory of the war.
[378] Pershing, General John J., "Leave Our Dead in France", *New York Times*, (August 21, 1919).
[379] A brief list of publications includes: Kammen, Michael G., *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*, United States: Vintage Books, (1993); Dawson, Graham with Michael Roper and T.G. Ashplant, Editors, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, United Kingdom: Routledge, (2015); Bodnar, John, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, United States: Princeton University Press, (2020); and Fussell, Paul, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, USA, (2013).

set the benchmark with her *Bodies of War* but other scholars also deserve brief recognition. Historian George Mosse in his introduction to *Fallen Soldiers Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* declared that "Mourning was general, and yet it was not to dominate the memory of the First World war as it might have done. Instead, a feeling of pride was often mixed in with the mourning, the feeling of having taken part and sacrificed in a noble cause…. They were often torn between their memory of the horror of war and its glory:..."[380] This summary aligns with the efforts put forth by the American Battle Monuments Commission that commemoration was designed to balance mourning and honor; sadness and pride. Military cemeteries were to be both retrospective for the dead and prospective for the living.

Mosse is often quoted for his coinage of the term "cult of the fallen soldier" wherein he argues that the brutal realities of mass casualties resulted in nations attempting to find purpose and meaning to those deaths into something transcending: "The cult of the fallen provided the nation with martyrs and, in their last resting place, with a shrine of national worship."[381] Arguing that the dead had as much of a voice in commemoration as did the living. These dualistic voices connected Lincoln's vision at Gettysburg with those efforts produced during the commemoration period. It was for the living to decide how much vanity was to be had in the deaths of soldiers, and the living during the commemoration period specifically sought to honor through appropriately balancing mourning the past and celebrating the future. This was to be done specifically with geography as according to French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, memory would

[380] Mosse, George L., *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United States: Oxford University Press, USA, (1991), 6.
[381] Mosse, George L., *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United States: Oxford University Press, USA, (1991), 35.

best endure if it could be attached to a fixed geographic location.[382] Military cemeteries and the monuments constructed in Europe would become the fixed locations where memory could be deployed to affect the future.

The original commemorative program of the ABMC consisted of four major construction areas: building the non-sectarian chapels at each of the eight already established cemeteries, landscaping each of the cemeteries as well as installing permanent headstones, erecting monuments and memorials elsewhere throughout Europe to showcase major campaigns and engagements, and constructing the Allied Expeditionary Forces memorial in Washington D.C.[383] The first two objectives were met and discussed in the previous chapter, but one additional comment is fitting in the larger theme of commemoration in regards to the headstones agreed upon by the ABMC. In 1928, the commission settled upon the final two aspects as to what was to be engraved on the headstones on either side of the stone respectively.

On the front side of either the Latin Cross or Star of David; if the identity was known, the soldier's name, rank, unit, date of death, and home state would be included. If the remains were deemed unidentifiable the inscription would read “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier (in some instances a ‘Comrade in Arms’) known but to God”. Discussions were also had to include whether the soldier was “Killed in Action” or “Died of Wounds” and to mark any soldier who had received military decoration during their service. The first suggestion never materialized and the only decorations

[382] Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory (Heritage of Sociology Series)*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, (1992), 202-203.
[383] See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), Chapters 2-4.

typically included were the Medal of Honor (in gold lettering), the Distinguished Service Cross, and the Distinguished Service Medal.[384]

As for the back of the stone, the ABMC unanimously supported a recommendation to allow families to submit a "quotation or term of endearment" on the back of the stone. This also followed precedent set by Great Britain which had allowed families to do the same on the front of their headstone designs. The response in Great Britain was inspiring and produced thousands of unique insights into how the war affected families throughout the commonwealth.[385] However, of the nearly thirty thousand requests sent out to families, only nineteen total would be ultimately inscribed on the headstones in Europe. More responses were sent in to the government but we deemed "pedestrian" (i.e. "killed in action") and therefore unworthy of display.[386] More study needs to be done as to why these "quotations or terms of endearment" did not resonate with American families but it does suggest adherence to larger themes of civic religion that individualism was secondary to common unity.

The cemeteries and the headstones in specific were to suggest equality among the dead. Attention was to be given to the simplicity of unity rather than the complexity of individuality. Ultimately, the ABMC desired for the cemetery to speak for itself as one geographic temple of civic religion with thousands of individuals commemorated within and under the higher and holier ideals. Another unique example of the commission's desire to portray a sense of unity and equality was to rearrange the layout of each

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[384] Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 70.
[385] A particular favorite example from a British headstone simply states "Death divides but memory clings", see also Batten, Sonia Letitia, *Memorial Text Narratives in Britain C.1890-1930*, United Kingdom: University of Birmingham, (2011).
[386] North, Thomas, *One Soldier's Job,* Unpublished, undated memoir in the possession of the ABMC headquarters, Quoted from Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 70-71.

cemetery. Once the final numbers regarding burials were determined, workers from the Graves Registration Service once again repatriated remains so that there were no “empty spaces” within the cemetery. Visitors walking among the grounds would witness a landscape where headstones were equidistant, equisized, and equally honored.

The years between 1923-1937 were driven by the desire to create places of nationalistic honor while expanding geographic temples of American civic religion. However, those years were also hampered by bureaucratic realities. Funding for beautification of the cemeteries as well as the erection of monuments, memorials, and chapels took time to be approved. Determining the material, the content matter, as well as the overall message of each construction project was challenging as numerous voices wanted to be heard. To say that little was accomplished during these fourteen years would be false, but most of the efforts were behind the scenes and slow developing. Burial work at the cemeteries had been completed for nearly a decade and yet there was still the notion of producing a final product worthy of the soldier dead and their sacrifice.

As the final monuments were nearing completion, members of the ABMC Board realized that their original mandate was coming to a close. General Pershing, who was in his seventies, had also hinted that his public service would also conclude once the dedication ceremonies were accomplished. Therefore specific attention was placed on an interesting dichotomy of not forgetting the reason for the cemeteries, memorials, and monuments but also to appropriately send off the general and the commission. All of the memorials and monuments were dedicated between May and October of 1937, representing the twentieth anniversary of the United States joining World War 1. As

much as the desire was to create pomp and circumstance with these dedications, the overall experience was more subdued.

Six dedication ceremonies were held on Memorial Day of 1937 with General Pershing attending the one held at Romagne. Generally speaking the ceremonies were similar to previous Memorial Day celebrations, with a combination of speakers and other events held throughout the day. The other five ceremonies were attended by a variety of politicians, military personnel, and the first woman to give an address at a military cemetery.[387] The overall sentiment of speeches on that day were to recall the sacrifices made by soldiers but also to recall the causes for which they died, said General Pershing "In the fullness of youth, our heroic dead were the very flower of young American manhood,... Proud of their country and its traditions they knew no fear but had faith in the righteousness of their cause."[388] Thus re-establishing the dual objective of American military cemeteries; increasing nationalistic sentiment as well as expanding principles of civic religion.[389]

President Franklin D. Roosevelt aided in the final rush to ensure that all of the construction and dedication ceremonies were accomplished by the end of 1937. He had previously called the cemeteries and other sites under the jurisdiction of the ABMC as "America's tangible symbols abroad of the gratitude which we bear to those who served

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[387] See Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018),127. The woman was Florence Becker who served as the president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution at the time.
[388] Pershing, General John J., "Speech at the dedication ceremonies", Romagne National Cemetery, (May 30, 1937), Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 127.
[389] "The American memorials were meant, after all, to symbolize the strength and permanence not only of the nation's resolve to honor the soldiers of the Great War, but of its devotion to the ideals for which the men had fought. The enshrinement of past deeds in marble and granite, it was hoped, would forever remind new generations of their responsibility to defend what others had died for." Summarized Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 134.

and died in the World War." and provided the final political push to ensure finances and other logistical plans were in place.[390] The final dedication took place in October and as American Legion representative Harry Colmery (1890-1979) stated at the dedication of the Aisne-Marne monument that the cemeteries were "a permanent reminder of the last grim twilight of the War and the final victory… Their task is done. Ours remains before us."[391]

When all of the dedications were completed in October 1937, the American government had spent 4.4 million dollars in establishing, beautifying, and memorializing cemeteries throughout Europe.[392] It had taken twenty years to complete the commemoration period, but the end results were well regarded by citizens on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Legislation was secured regarding relationships with the cemeteries and memorials of both the ABMC and the War Graves Registration Service by the beginning of 1938, essentially bringing an unofficial close to the commemoration period. Many in the government were unsure if there was a future for the ABMC due to their foundational objectives of memorializing being accomplished, but those discussions were tabled for a time in favor of celebrating the end of an era. However, time would prove that America would once again be thrust into a global war only three years later and questions regarding military death would once again have to be answered.

Before shifting forward to America's experiences with military cemeteries from World War 2, one more topic of commemoration and memorialization needs to be

[390] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 129.
[391] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), *134*.
[392] Considering America was in the depths of the Great Depression, the amount of money spent was inspiring and shows America's commitment to the war dead.

considered as part of the dualistic purpose of increasing nationalism and spreading principles of civic religion. During the commemoration period the federal government authorized an unprecedented program which allowed mothers and widows of fallen soldiers to visit their graves in Europe. Known as the Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimages, mothers and widows who had not remarried were invited as special guests of the American government to travel to Europe after congressional legislation was passed in March 1929. These pilgrimages were designed to give hope, comfort, and solace that the decision to leave the remains of loved ones in Europe was not done in vain.[393] Members of the ABMC knew that some of the most honored visitors to European cemeteries were those who sacrificed a loved one and efforts were not lacking in ensuring that the grounds equaled that sacrifice.[394]

If soldiers were crusaders and martyrs for the expansion of American civic religion, then the women who followed their path to military cemeteries were missionaries for those same causes. Enormous efforts were put into place to ensure that these missionaries were welcomed to cemeteries where the message was unmistakingly clear. By nature, the Gold Star Mothers traveled to Europe to first and foremost mourn the loss of their loved ones. However, in a larger view these mother missionaries could represent American values to their hosts in Europe as well as fellow Americans. At the conclusion of the war, many began searching for meaning and these

[393] For more detailed scholarship regarding Gold Star Mothers see Fenelon, Holly S., *American Gold Star Mothers: A History, 1928-2010,* United States: Platform Press, (2010); Fenelon, Holly S., *That Knock at the Door: The History of Gold Star Mothers in America,* United States: iUniverse, (2012); and Graham, John W., *The Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages of the 1930s: Overseas Grave Visitations by Mothers and Widows of Fallen U.S. World War I Soldiers,* United Kingdom: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, (2005).

[394] Lotte Meyer has argued that the Gold Star Mother Pilgrimages were the first opportunity for the ABMC to “show off” the newly completed cemeteries in “Gold Star Pilgrimages”, *Markers XX*, 32.

mother missionaries were one of the greatest resources for the government and military to provide that meaning to American society.

Between 1930- 1933 a total of 6,654 Gold Star Mothers and widows (95% were mothers) accepted the invitation to travel to Europe on the government's expense to visit the gravesite of their loved one. This represented approximately twenty percent of the potential candidates for the pilgrimages and included opportunities for every mother regardless of race. One mother in particular described her experience as one that provided confirming solace in the government's stewardship over her son, "The body of my only son lies in Romagne Cemetery, France, because I trusted my Government to forever care for and guard the ground in which these heroes were placed"... She continued, "not until I saw for myself did I realize the wonderful preparation, care, and protection the United States has provided…. I have been anxious ever since that every mother whose son's body lies overseas should have this great boon granted her, so that she may (be) forever satisfied that her decision to allow the tree to lie where it had fallen was the wise one."[395] Those who had the financial capabilities to visit Europe on their own had traditionally done so by the 1930s but for these 6,654 individuals it represented perhaps the only time they would ever mourn at their loved ones grave.

Discussions had occurred basically from the time next-of-kin were provided the option to leave the remains in Europe to include a government funded pilgrimage. New York congressman Fiorello LaGuardia (1882-1947) had proposed legislation as early as 1919 but the first bill to reach congress was not until December 1923.[396] Inquiries were carried out regarding the potential cost, the potential candidates, and the potential

[395] Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 187.
[396] See House Resolution 4109, 68th Congress, December, 1923.

timeline for these pilgrimages with the expectation that “personal touch and kindly consideration will at all times be necessary.”[397] It is also noteworthy that these conversations were being led by women in an era of increased democracy and the Constitutional amendment granting the right to vote. Women were using their voices to produce political movement, and the Gold Star Mothers made sure that American civic religion extended to them as their sons extended it to the world.[398]

One individual who greatly influenced the eventual passage of Gold Star Mother pilgrimages in 1928 was Mathilda Burling (1881/2-1958), a Gold Star Mother herself as her son was buried at the St. Mihiel American Cemetery. She was tenacious and brash in her desire to see the legislation passed.[399] There were debates as to the “hierarchy” of those designed to be included in the legislation but on March 2, 1929, President Calvin Coolidge signed into law the “act to enable the mothers and widows of the deceased soldiers, sailors, and marines of the American forces… interred in the cemeteries of Europe.”[400] Final amendments were made up to May 1930 when the first voyage set sail for Europe with 231 guests of honor. Those first Gold Star Mothers were trailblazers for future pilgrimages while the overall sentiment was summarized by Senator Robert Wagner (1877-1953) of New York:

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[397] Reprinted in the published hearing “To Authorize Mothers”, House of Representatives Committee on Military Affairs, Washington DC, (January 27, 1928).
[398] The International Council of Women published a volume of writings in 1916 wherein the statement “God made two, a man and a woman, to rule the home– the state is but a larger home. Woman must take her place right in states. The Mothering of the nations has been left out by legislatures, to the world’s great detriment. Especially is the mother in her right place in determining international questions, for the lives of her sons are at stake.” Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 196-197.
[399] Language used by Burling at one of the congressional committee meetings suggests her disbelief in the fact that there was even a debate on whether to approve this pilgrimage: “I cannot believe that the Senate of my country will deny us the privilege of paying a visit to those holy graves of our heroic sons abroad”, see “To Authorize Mothers”, (January 27, 1928).
[400] Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), 202.

> "(The pilgrimages will be a good thing for the cause of peace, in that Europe has thought for some time that we in the United States are entirely devoted to class materialism, and these mothers will show that this country has been… making a spiritual sacrifice due to the war. This pilgrimage will help in many ways. It will do far more to bring about a better understanding, showing that we have a spiritual side to us, than anything that has been done heretofore by our diplomats and other representatives."[401]

There reached a point where the voices in support of these pilgrimages became too loud to overlook. Yet when legislation finally passed, most of the controversial discussion points were brushed aside for the common acceptance to honor sacrifice. Taking everything into consideration, many believed at the end of the day that it was the least the government and nation could do for those who had sacrificed all.

Once in Europe, and specifically once at the cemeteries the pilgrimage had three basic objectives: "the prompt and accurate conduct of the pilgrim to the grave in which she was interested, the distribution of flowers or wreaths,... (and) the taking of a photograph at the grave."[402] The visits were not designed to be full of pomp and circumstance, they were designed to express gratitude at the sacrifice provided by both the living and the dead. Returning mothers and widows consistently praised the cemeteries themselves as places of serenity and honor. Said Marion Brown in her diary after seeing her husband's grave, "The most beautiful spot on earth… row of marble crosses each exactly like the other. The order and simplicity make for it's greatest

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[401] Wagner, Senator Robert F., to Hon. John J. Boylan, House Office Building, Washington DC, (January 26, 1928), reprinted in "To Authorize Mothers and Unmarried Widows of Deceased World War Vets Buried in Europe to Visit Graves", Hearing before the Committee of Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 70th Congress, First Session, (January 27, 1928).

[402] Ellis, Richard, "Report on the Activities in Europe of the American Pilgrimage Gold Star Mothers and Widows, 1930", Quoted in Budreau, Lisa M.. *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933*. United States: NYU Press, (2011), *207.*

beauty."[403] Many considered their decision to leave the remains in Europe a wise choice after seeing firsthand the amount of effort placed to ensure that their loved ones were not forgotten.[404] Military cemeteries truly were temples where principles of civic religion were embraced and expanded through the active role of women and progressivism.

The Gold Star Mother pilgrimages were another victory for the long term goals of American civic religion in that women played an activist role in pushing forward the legislation but also for the racial component of who was invited to participate. By allowing black and other minority individuals the same opportunity to travel abroad, military cemeteries continued to be on the leading edge of racial progressivism and equality. Naturally there were conflicting interpretations and emotions when President Hoover announced that the pilgrimages were to be segregated on the grounds of protecting travelers through the "separate but equal" philosophy. Noted civil rights activist W.E.B. Du Bois added his thoughts to the debate when he referenced the overwhelmingly black majority of those who served in the Graves Registration Service and how "Black hands buried the putrid bodies of white American soldiers in France. (Yet,) Black mothers cannot go with white mothers to look at their graves."[405] It was clear the precedent and practice were not perfectly aligned with the principles of civic religion and yet American military cemeteries were "more perfect" than was society as a whole.

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[403] Quoted in Meyer, Lotte Larsen, "Mourning in a Distant Land: Gold Star Pilgrimages to American Military Cemeteries in Europe, 1930-1933", *Markers XX*, Annual Journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies, ed. Richard Meyer, Greenfield, Massachusetts, (2003), 31; another mother was quoted as saying "I looked at those 14,000 crosses of young men, I thought surely our country must have been purified by their sacrifice, and I believe every mother will feel that," 39.

[404] Another example of pilgrimages to European cemeteries were those conducted by the American Legion and other veteran organizations. The commemoration period presented plenty of opportunities for American citizens to visit, memorialize, and analyze how the American messages of civic religion were being presented.

[405] Du Bois, W.E.B., "As the Crow Flies", *Crisis* 37, no. 7, (July 1930), 221.

All told only a few hundred minority Gold Star Mothers and Widows accepted the invitation (6 of the 48 total pilgrimages were exclusively for black mothers), but on one such pilgrimage they were addressed by General Pershing who gave thanks to their sacrifice and added that "when they looked out over the white crosses of the cemeteries where their sons and husbands lie, that the sacrifice was not in vain, and that their memories would be tenderly cherished down through the years."[406] To General Pershing there was no difference in the sacrifice, honor, and memorialization based on race. He knew the contributions of minority soldiers in every aspect of the war and ensured that in death there was a truer sense of equality than experienced in society.[407] Another example of how although not perfect in its execution, military cemeteries provided foundational building blocks for the expansion of civic religion.

When the commemoration period came to an end in the late 1930's, peace had lasted just long enough for nations around the world to bury their dead, build and dedicate monuments and memorials, and begin to analyze how the desired message was being interpreted by visitors.[408] Military cemeteries had led a tempered crusade against enemies of civic religion, but before the figurative and alliterative dust had truly settled, a new enemy was on the horizon. With the outbreak of World War 2 in 1939, America was thrusted into nearly the same debates experienced twenty years prior. Whether considered fortunate or not, there was little discussion as to the role of military

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[406] Pershing, John J., Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune,* (June 9, 1931), Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission.* United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018)*,* 82.

[407] I.e. the non-segregated burials found within the American military cemeteries in Europe. Even though the military was still segregated, society was segregated, and the philosophy of "separate but equal" was loosely interpreted; Pershing believed that cemeteries could provide a baseline of equality for society to emulate long term.

[408] One interesting note regarding visitors to the sites is that as of the end of 2018 no American President had visited the Meuse-Argonne Cemetery in its nearly 100 hundred years of existence.

cemeteries once America joined the war following the attacks on Pearl Harbor. The questions surrounding military death were re-asked, but ultimately never completely reconsidered to find a different solution. World War 2 cemeteries were expansions of the already established geographic expansion of American civic religion.

The only two major differences was the scale of the war in terms of geography and the total number of military dead. American soldiers were killed on three separate continents as well as the vast oceans that separated them. If the logistics of World War 1 were daunting, then an additional three hundred thousand dead soldiers and the expansive territory where their remains were located was astronomical. Burying the dead was done as tradition suggested in honored haste as the war continued to press on. However, plans were already being put into motion to ensure that the honored dead of World War 2 received equal treatment. Nations were already discussing the diplomatic logistics of either adding to previous cemeteries or creating new ones; they were already adjusting precedents to fit a larger scale war; and they were already discussing the desired messages to be portrayed at those hallowed grounds.

As briefly discussed in a prior chapter, there were unique differences as to how the allied nations commemorated the dead in comparison to the defeated nations. A longer analysis is beneficial in the context of the conclusion of World War 2. Legislation was in place that the dead from enemy nations were to be appropriately cared for but as expected there was less of an emphasis on the enemy dead as well as diplomacy between former enemy governments. Similar to the defeated Confederacy, private organizations and interest groups took the lead in carrying out memorialization of the war dead rather than the governments. In Germany the *Volksbund Deutsche*

Kriegsgräberfürsorge (German War Graves Commission) was established in 1919 and took the leading role in organizing commemoration. However, due to the Treaty of Versailles and the fact that the vast majority of their war dead fell on foreign soil, the organization had a limited amount of actual control over the dead.[409]

If American military cemeteries were designed to increase nationalism and expand civic religion, then German cemeteries were designed to almost portray no message at all. The lack of any specific message ultimately would become the message conveyed. The proud German nation was not about moral victories and over beautifying their war cemeteries.[410] Historian George Mosse summarized that "all military cemeteries symbolized wartime camaraderie, but in Germany absolute uniformity dominated the entire design. Strict rules governing the uniformity of all military cemeteries were fixed from the beginning."[411] Camaraderie may not be an exact synonym for nationalism or even the civic religion principle of equality, but it is true that allied nations emphasized brotherhood more than the defeated nations.

Another example of how German cemeteries were designed to be different from the allied nations was the closed off "fortress" design. Favored by Hitler, chief architect Robert Tischler created structures intended to be seen from a distance as an imposing feature on the horizon. In the open spaced center was an "altar" to the nation which sat above a mass grave for all the soldiers buried therein. Showing again that absolute

[409] German war cemeteries located in France from both world wars were not transferred to German government control until 1966.
[410] "The manager of the German Association of Landscape Architects tells us in the journal of the *Volksbund* that, unlike the English or French, the Germans do not disguise the tragic and heroic death of the fallen by planting colorful flowers. They confront it instead, for to affirm the tragic is a sign of culture, while mere civilization seeks to ignore it." Quoted in Mosse, George L.. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United States: Oxford University Press, USA, (1991), 85.
[411] Mosse, George L.. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars.* United States: Oxford University Press, USA, (1991), 85.

uniformity was the intended but not specifically pursued message. Each known soldier was then given a plaque that was attached to the inner wall, but there was a clear emphasis of nation over individual.[412] Germany's emphasis on nation first strengthens the dissertation thesis by recognizing that every nation attempts to increase love of nation through their military cemeteries; but it also strengthens the concept that America's cemeteries have the additional objective of spreading civic religion.

As for the Soviet Union and Japan, both nations developed cultural cemeteries that instilled nation over individual. Historical culture was the most pressing message that the Soviet Union and Japan desired to instill when creating military cemeteries. Simply described; Germany, the Soviet Union, Japan, and in variations Italy as well, over radicalized the nationalistic objective of military cemeteries. No matter the nation and no matter the era, all military cemeteries adhere to the first objective of increasing nationalistic feelings. Those buried within the cemetery grounds died defending the motherland and each motherland was worth defending. More research needs to be done regarding how, particularly the Soviet Union may have attempted to spread communist principles in their cemeteries but overall it would be safe to argue that American military cemeteries are distinctly unique in their dual objective.[413]

Before shifting forward to the creation and development of the fourteen World War 2 American military cemeteries, a brief overview is necessary on what occurred at the eight World War 1 cemeteries during the conflict. During the approximately two years prior to the United States joining the war, the ABMC debated on the safety of

[412] See for example the *Totenburg War Cemetery*, located at El Alamein North Africa and *Tobruk German Cemetery* located in Libya.
[413] Garfield, John, *The Fallen: A Photographic Journey Through the War Cemeteries and Memorials of the Great War, 1914-18,* United Kingdom: Spellmount, (2008); for a nation by nation photographic example of how military cemeteries were designed and redesigned from the world wars.

working personnel as well as the protection of the cemeteries and monuments. The individual who played a central role was Captain Charles G. Holle (1898-1989) who served as the officer-in-charge of the Paris office of the ABMC. During the early years of conflict, he was in consistent communication with General Pershing regarding the status of the cemeteries and monuments.

One of the most difficult discussions was if and when to remove Americans from their stations, “I fully realized all the adverse aspects and effects of what might be bluntly called deserting our cemeteries, particularly to the relatives of the men buried there, and therefore was reluctant to withdraw our personnel until forced to. On the other hand I could see no justification for jeopardizing the safety of our employees and their families by keeping them too long in situations in which they could accomplish absolutely nothing.”[414] General Pershing reciprocated the feeling to the State Department by declaring, “The Commission’s duties, particularly with respect to the cemeteries, constitute a responsibility of great trust and honor, and I feel it incumbent upon us to continue to carry out these duties under the direct supervision of our established organization unless circumstances of a most compelling nature should make this impracticable.”[415] There was clearly a notion of honoring the dead by not “deserting” in the face of danger, and it fits into the larger theme of Lincoln’s desire that the dead shall not have died in vain.

Unfortunately the time came when the safety of American personnel was threatened and necessitated a return to the United States. Even though the cemeteries

[414] Holle, George C., Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 150.
[415] Pershing, General John Pershing quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 160.

and monuments were never completely abandoned, their well being was in hands of a devastating global war. Over the course of the conflict a handful of well-being checks were organized by the ABMC wherein after one particular visit Captain Holle wrote to General Pershing that, “Considering the general destruction over the entire northern France, I believe we are very fortunate to have suffered such slight damage to our memorials.” He continued the thought by including that he had also observed “a number of French, German, and British World War cemeteries on our trip and saw no evidence of deliberate damage or vandalism.”[416] Thomas North also mentioned similar sentiments in an unpublished memoir in possession of the ABMC archives where he summarized that “the German troops treated the cemeteries with respect.”[417] To claim that cemeteries and memorials were miraculously or even coincidentally spared from significant damage would be far fetched and unfounded. No matter the nationality, principles of a common warrior ethos proved that cemeteries were treated with higher and holier actions to honor the dead. Although motivations varied amongst nations, the warrior ethos found within soldiers desired to let them rest in peace amidst the conflict.

Prior to America’s official entry into the war, Memorial Day celebrations were held at the Brookwood American Cemetery in the United Kingdom. By the time of the ceremonies Britain represented the last major allied power yet to fall under German control and calls were growing louder to American military aid. Reverend Marcus A. Spencer prayed that day at the ceremonies and evoked Lincoln-like language for the United States to step up and once again the dualistic objectives of military cemeteries. Spencer supplicated: “We pray Thee that as America has been led by Thee to aid

[416] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 150.
[417] North, Thomas, *One Soldier’s Job,* 1: 34-35.

without stint from afar, she may now hold back no longer. May she take that further step of complete brotherhood of aim and of arms, of risk and of sacrifice. So may we as a nation pledge the last full measure of devotion that the cause of freedom shall not perish from the earth."[418] America had established itself as the principled crusaders for civic religion around the globe and following the attacks on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the United States once again were placed into the position to expand civic religion through the creation of military cemeteries.

Much of the logistical questions regarding cemeteries were simply re-established from World War 1. This would include that bodies were temporarily buried to be repatriated at the conclusion of the conflict and that next-of-kin would be given the option as to where final burial would occur.[419] However, as much as American cemeteries from World War 2 were similar from their earlier counterparts, there were a handful of adaptations in the design and messages presented. In a way, the World War 2 cemeteries were to be more bold in their architectural declarations towards America's role in world affairs. The message was to still include principles of civic religion in equality, simplicity, and democracy but memorials and cemeteries from World War 2 wanted to remind the world just how much America had done to protect and preserve the world from "evil influences".

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[418] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 165.

[419] In 2008 John J. Toffey wrote a memoir describing the details of his father's death in Italy in 1944 and the decision his mother and grandmother made to leave his remains overseas: "Though the decision was technically Mom's, she felt strongly that Deo (Grandmother) should have a say in the matter…. When Jack Senior died in 1936, he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery….. To bring Dad's body back and have it buried there with the same honors must have been a compelling option. However, back then, the quick return of flag-draped, ice-packed caskets by plane to Dover Air Force Base was many years in the future; it might be years before bodies would be coming home. To have Dad's body brought home for eventual burial at Arlington would have meant for all the family a revival of all the grief that had attended the War Department telegram."; Quoted in Piehler, G. Kurt. editor, *The United States in World War II: A Documentary Reader.* (United Kingdom: Wiley, 2012), 246.

One of the biggest adaptations was the decision very early on by the ABMC that there was not a need to build large-scale monuments on top of the cemeteries and memorial chapels. Said the official announcement: “that the permanent cemeteries, with their memorial chapels and museums would constitute monuments to the military operations as well as memorials to the dead, and that the duplication by the erection nearby of large monuments is, in general, unnecessary.”[420] Not that the large monuments overshadowed the cemeteries from World War 1, but the desire was to allow the World War 2 cemeteries to shine themselves. It would take fifteen years (almost identical to the timeline from World War 1) for all the cemeteries and memorial chapels to be constructed and dedicated and those fifteen years represents the next emphasis on how nationalism and civic religion was expanded by the military dead.

The final number of cemeteries from World War 2 ended up being fourteen, but the proposed locations varied literally from the four corners of the globe. Obviously, locations throughout Europe were discussed and decided upon but the greater debate was how many and where cemeteries would be located from the Pacific and African Theaters. Suggestions ranged from Iceland to Italy, and Hawaii to the Philippines but concerns about accessibility became a major factor. There were also concerns about jurisdiction over a proposed cemetery in Hawaii as the objectives of the ABMC stated that they oversaw memorials on foreign soils and how a cemetery in Northern Africa would be received by the general public. In the end fourteen sites were chosen and the repatriation burial work was completed by the middle of 1951.[421]

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[420] Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 191.

[421] In alphabetical order the fourteen World War 2 cemeteries are located in the following locations: Ardennes American Cemetery (Belgium), Brittany American Cemetery (France), Cambridge American Cemetery (United Kingdom), Epinal American Cemetery (France), Florence American Cemetery (Italy), Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery (Belgium), Lorraine American Cemetery (France), Luxembourg

One decision regarding the location of military cemeteries was adhered to with honorable dedicated effort; the dead were not to be buried, even temporarily, in enemy territory. The dualistic purposes of military cemeteries had its limitations during the conflict and crusaders were to be given honor of resting on friendly soil. Emiel Owens, an army artilleryman veteran wrote in sacred detail an experience in the closing months of 1944 fighting in the battle of Hurtgen Forest which describes the convoy of trucks carrying the remains of dead soldiers away from the battlefield.

> "The next morning, while we were replenishing our ammunition supply, I noticed trucks passing my gun position at a slow pace. The truck drivers appeared to be driving slowly to protect their cargo. At first, I thought they were ammunition trucks returning from the front a few hundred yards ahead of us. The column was more than a mile long, and the trucks were evenly spaced. They continued passing by for such a long time that it seemed the convoy would never end. Then, as one truck came by, I thought I saw a wristwatch-clad arm swing out from under the tarpaulin covering one of the truck beds. I walked a few paces to the road and pulled the end of the tarpaulin up to find that the truck's cargo consisted of dead American soldiers just killed in the forest. The dead soldier with the wristwatch was laid flat on his back– a short lifetime etched on his young face– one that would see no more birthdays, anniversaries, or even the smile on a future grandchild's face. These killings were different from those occurring on the beaches on D-day and in the fighting across France. In those cases, our soldiers died and were buried in friendly territory. The army had, and still has, a policy of not burying our dead soldiers in enemy territory, so they were being hauled out to receive proper burial on hallowed grounds."[422]

Owens then continues describing the scene by discussing the racial components of the process where African-American soldiers assigned to 611th Quartermaster Graves

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American Cemetery (Luxembourg), Manila American Cemetery (Philippines), Netherlands American Cemetery (Netherlands), Normandy American Cemetery (France), North Africa American Cemetery (Tunisia), Rhone American Cemetery (France), Sicily-Rome American Cemetery (Italy), and the Suresnes American Cemetery (France) was the only cemetery to be utilized for burials from both World Wars.

[422] Quoted in Piehler, G. Kurt. editor, *The United States in World War II: A Documentary Reader.* (United Kingdom: Wiley, 2012), 92.

Registration Company were given the duty of classifying and burying the dead. In near impossible to imagine circumstances, African-American soldiers were asked to participate in dualistic objectives of military cemeteries. Although still experiencing segregation and racism within the military and society, African-Americans played a crucial role in seeing Lincoln's vision through to completion.

As has been discussed at numerous times in the dissertation, military cemeteries were not perfect in implementing Lincoln's vision. It could be argued that deciding to remove bodies from enemy soil for temporary burial is an anti-dualistic objective decision as cemeteries on enemy soil would have greatly advanced the crusader image of soldiers. However, certain pragmatic decisions had to be made to further the objective in the long term. The public backlash of burying soldiers on enemy soil would have created a firestorm that was easily avoided.[423] Also recognizing that even though racial components were still prevalent amongst the living, cemeteries were organized with no distinction to race, religion, or other factors. Providing another example that American military cemeteries were on the forefront of expanding principles of civic religion as they honored nationalism through military death.

Dedicating the military cemetery sites would take place over nine years with the final dedication occurring in 1960. There was a huge push from not only the ABMC to finish the work but also from lobbyists who did not want visitors to experience an unfinished memorial to the dead. General George Marshall (1880-1959) wrote to President Truman and expressed his concern "what is my firm conviction, that he (President Truman) cannot afford politically to have a series of uncompleted cemeteries

[423] Fully recognizing burials in Italy from World War 2 would technically be on enemy soil but their surrender in July 1943 and the fall of the Fascist regime allowed for flexibility in the definition of "enemy soil" for the military and citizens alike when making decisions following the war.

abroad with others completed and thousands of visitors going over there each year to visit the graves of their sons and husbands."[424] This is not to argue that the building of cemeteries and memorials were done in haste but rather done without hesitation. Soldiers who had given their lives and the families they left behind required continued progress towards expanding civic religion.

As General Matthew Ridgway (1895-1993) summarized at the Suresnes American Cemetery dedication ceremonies: "we stand not only on the soil of France, but on the soil of freedom; and our words go not to America alone, but to all people of all lands to whom life without freedom is worse than death."[425] There was a more conscious effort placed on the World War 2 cemeteries on the second objective of military cemeteries of expanding civic religion than there was at the World War 1 counterparts. Both established the notions that the dead were to be memorialized as defenders of nationalism but the World War 2 cemeteries engaged in another higher and holier level of recognizing the glory of the dead. One form of evidence was the sculptures commissioned within the cemeteries which showcased America's youth as crusaders, victors, and peace bearers.[426] Herein once again that military cemeteries since the time of Lincoln were designed to have a two folded objective of honoring nationalism and expanding civic religion as crusading soldiers died for the causes of freedom.

When all completed, the fourteen World War 2 cemeteries would hold the remains of just over ninety-two thousand soldiers with names of the missing matching

[424] Marshall, General George C., Quoted in Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 203.
[425] Ridgway, General Matthew, "Remarks at Suresnes American Cemetery Dedication", press reports of the Suresnes Ceremony, see ABMC Records, box 174.
[426] See "American Youth" located in the Normandy American Cemetery and a depiction of "American Crusader" on the facade of the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery Memorial Chapel.

and exceeding those numbers on the walls of remembrance. Adhering to principles of equality and civic religion, there was no preferential treatment for any soldiers with the exceptions of General George Patten and Quentin and Theodore Roosevelt Jr.[427] Soldiers were buried with no recognition of rank, race, or religion. Once again showing that military cemeteries continued to be on the leading edge of American equality and civic religion. No matter the continued racial conflict occurring amongst the living, the honored dead in military cemeteries showed that “brothers in arms” was more than a simple slogan. Death did not discriminate or segregate soldiers, and therefore the dead were not discriminated nor segregated in their burials.

This lack of discrimination and segregation included the few women who were buried overseas. For both world wars, women were granted opportunities to serve in various responsibilities however the likelihood of death was drastically lower. For those women who did die, the expectations and respect granted to men were equally met. Thus furthering the progressive implementation of Lincoln’s vision set forth at Gettysburg that the military dead were to be honored for their crusader-like sacrifice to expand civic religion. One brief example of women burials, which would represent similar components for all overseas cemeteries, comes from the Normandy American Cemetery where of the 9,386 burials and 1,557 names on the wall of the missing include a total of four women.

Of these four women buried at Normandy American Cemetery, three of them are African-American which provides another example of how military cemeteries were on the leading edge of civic religion progressivism. Their gravesites are located reverently

[427] Detailed accounts as to why and the debates regarding both Patten and Roosevelt preferential treatment is provided in,Conner, Thomas H.. *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission*. United States: University Press of Kentucky, (2018), 209-215.

throughout the cemetery with no acknowledgement of either being a woman or being African-American. These soldier crusaders were buried alongside their fellow comrades in a way that suggested that their sacrifice was on equal footing to those around them.[428] As much as the living continued to struggle with aspects of racism and gender equality throughout the early 20th century, military cemeteries provided a pristine example of how equality could be met. Visitors to military cemeteries from the world wars, either at home or abroad, would have no distinguishing visual cues as to the gender or race of those honored beneath the headstones. Lincoln's vision of progressive equality with civic religion was being implemented in those sacred fields of sacrifice.

To conclude the discussion on how military cemeteries from World War 2 represent Lincoln's ongoing vision of dualistic objectives, one additional adaptation proves beneficial. The inscription for unknown soldiers from earlier wars had read "Here rests in honored glory *an American soldier* known but to God", but the updated inscription for World War 2 replaced American soldier with "comrade in arms". It was felt that "comrade in arms" was more inclusive of all fallen military personnel regardless of branch of service. Not a drastic change, and few would even recognize the difference, but the principle of equality and inclusivity was on the mind of cemetery decision makers. The unknowns were to be remembered as comrades first, a notion that civic religion was expanding to show equality not only in burial practices but also in language written in stone.

[428] The three African-American women buried at Normandy American Cemetery are Pfc. Mary J. Barlow, Pfc. Mary H. Bankston and Sgt. Dolores M. Browne who all served as part of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Division. See burial records Normandy American Cemetery courtesy of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

World War 2 was the most devastating conflict in modern history and altered the way of life for millions of people around the globe. Over four hundred thousand Americans lost their lives fighting to defend and expand American nationalism and civic religion as they answered the call to serve. Cemeteries once again became a tragic reality for families across the United States. The American government provided burial locations which showcased their dedication to Lincoln's original vision for what military cemeteries were to represent to the living. Nationalism and the expansion of civic religion became the underlying and overarching sentiments for visitors when on the hallowed grounds. General Pershing's theme statement had firmly been realized, "This memorial testifies to our faith that we whom they pass their torch can uphold and will maintain the principles for which these men died. Time would not dim the glory of their deeds."[429]

By the end of the World War 2 foreign cemetery dedications in 1960, the United States had approximately one hundred and fifty military cemeteries on domestic soil and throughout the world.[430] By that time it could be suggested that of the two objectives provided by Lincoln's vision, expanding civic religion began to overshadow honoring nationalism due to the United States self appointed responsibilities to maintain global order/ peace. Ever since Gettysburg, military cemeteries attempted to appropriately balance honoring nationalism and expanding civic religion, but at the conclusion of World War 2 the balance shifted civic religion as the leading purpose rather than nationalism.

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[429] Pershing, General John J., "Remarks at Dedication Ceremony of Chateau-Thierry Monument", (October 7, 1937).

[430] Approximate numbers include 73 Civil War and Reconstruction era cemeteries, 44 cemeteries throughout the United States established between 1890-1960, and the 26 foreign cemeteries under the ABMC.

As the Cold War continued to challenge global peace throughout the second half of the 20th century, the dualistic objectives of American military cemeteries had been firmly established. Attention could now be turned to educating the general public to ensure that efforts would be appreciated. Arlington National Cemetery continued to be the flag bearer and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier continued to the location of general pilgrimage, however efforts were initiated to more fully bring military cemeteries to the people. To conclude, a basic overview of military cemeteries up through the current day shows that advancements in society only had a minor effect on the historical realities of military cemeteries.

Since the beginning of the Cold War up through modern times, military cemeteries have gone through very little changes. Not to argue that the changes are insignificant as each can be a huge step towards the expansion of civic religion, but to say that very little has changed regarding military cemeteries in the last sixty years. A brief analysis of four major/ minor developments since the 1950's provide the final arguments for the dissertation on how American military cemeteries are unique from other nations counterparts due to their dualistic objectives. Those four developments which have occurred are: (1) with advanced transportation options, the military adopted the notion of "concurrent return" when it came to battlefield deaths; (2) with advanced technologies in DNA testing, the government funds agencies to recover the identities of unknown soldiers; (3) the National Cemetery Administration deciding to expand the number of cemeteries closer to veterans so that all who desire to be buried in a military cemetery can be afforded that honor; and (4) the authorization of various emblems of belief to adorn headstones. Each of these advancements help solidify America's

ambition to create equality among its soldiers and the desire to spread principles of civic religion.

Beginning with the Korean War, and thanks to a number of different factors, soldiers who were killed away from home were brought back to the United States as soon as safely possible.[431] The initiation of what was labeled "concurrent return" forever altered military death and eliminated one of the biggest strains on the government and individual families. Decisions would no longer have to be made on whether to leave the remains on foreign soil. Even though there were temporary collection areas for remains, they were understood as temporary as each soldier would be sent home. Once again the United States was on the forefront of military cemetery developments as they were the first nation to depart "from the long established practice of leaving remains in battlefield cemeteries or isolated locations until after the cessation of hostilities."[432] However, concurrent return presented new challenges of how much access should the public have in terms of media coverage of flag draped caskets being returned to their loved ones.[433] Concurrent return has been the policy for the United States since 1950 and unless a future conflict presents unforeseen obstacles, all American deaths will continue to be brought home. Thus continually establishing that nationalism and civic religion will be a part of the fabric of the American experience because of military cemeteries.

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[431] These factors include but are not limited to the advancement of transportation technology, public sentiment against leaving soldiers specifically in South Korea but also against Asian nations in general, and the burden of logistics when dealing with next of kin and foreign nations.

[432] Sledge, Michael. *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor Our Military Fallen.* United Kingdom: Columbia University Press, (2007), 78.

[433] Legislation has been passed, edited, and reconsidered with each progressive military conflict. I.E. the Freedom Act following the September 11 attacks.

A second component of military cemeteries that has developed over the last sixty years is the advancement of DNA technologies to help with the recovery of identities. As much as the unknown soldier has been a part of the story of military cemeteries, the likelihood that there will ever be another unknown is astronomical. The experience of the Vietnam War Unknown at Arlington provides a perfect case study as to the notion that time and technology will prevail. Even though there will most likely never be another "new" unknown, there are still "past" unknowns to be recovered and identified. That responsibility rests on the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) whose main headquarters is located in Oahu, Hawaii.

Their mission is simple and yet profound, to "provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation" and according to agency spokesperson Major Leah Ganoni their work is "a chance to make good on that warrior ethos they beat into us at basic training: Never leave a fallen comrade,... Whatever I do every day is some kind of way to pay that back. … I will do whatever it takes, in some small way every day, to make sure they're not forgotten."[434] According to official release statements from the year 2021, the DPAA accounted for and identified one hundred and twenty one soldiers from World War 2 and the Korean War. An average of one soldier every three days shows just how advanced technology is aiding in the accounting of unknown soldiers, and the effort put into the agency proves America's desire to ensure that all sacrifice is personally recognized.

The third development was another timeline of domestic cemetery expansion. Between 1973- 2022 an additional forty five national cemeteries were established

[434] Britzky, Haley, "Inside the agency working to bring every missing US service member home", *Task and Purpose,* (September 12, 2022); The author herself also is quoted as declaring that "the goal is for us to go out of business".

throughout the country. These cemeteries are located in both larger population areas where a second cemetery was needed to care for the growing number of eligible veterans, as well as in more remote areas with no designated national cemeteries.[435] To ensure that all veterans were presented an opportunity for burial in a military cemetery, the government realized that an era of expansion was needed. With additional cemeteries in the final legal stages, as well as the number of burial spaces available, veterans are near guaranteed burial in a military cemetery if desired. The expansion of national cemeteries over the last sixty years is another simple example of the dualistic objectives being adhered to. Nationalism and civic religion have been expanded as cemeteries have expanded in number and region.

Finally, the last major development over the past sixty years of military cemeteries is the increase of religious emblems of belief authorized to be used on headstones. As discussed in previous chapters, the Christian Latin Cross and the Jewish Star of David were the only religious emblems to be seen within the grounds of military cemeteries. With the democratization of religion, numerous new emblems have been approved by the federal government. As of the end of 2022, there are seventy eight different emblems for veterans to choose from.[436] Approximately half of the emblems are versions of the cross for the different Christian denominations but other unique emblems include the hammer of thor, the Muslim Crescent, Atheism, and a simple heart. Veterans are not required to have an emblem of belief on their headstones but the over seventy additional options is once again a victory for civic religion.

[435] Miramar National Cemetery in San Diego is an example of a second cemetery for a large population center following Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery and the Snake River Canyon National Cemetery in Buhl, Idaho is an example of a remote cemetery.
[436] See official list “emblems of belief” provided by the National Cemetery Administration and VA.

In November 1863, Abraham Lincoln contextualized the purposes for military cemeteries as sacred temples to honor nationalism and to expand principles of civic religion. Following his Gettysburg Address the federal government has been constantly deciphering how to ensure that Lincoln's vision was fulfilled. Although not perfect in its execution, military cemeteries have always been on the forefront of state sponsored progressive ideals of civic religion. Soldiers who have fought and died wearing the American uniform have been both defenders of American nationalism and crusaders for American civic religion. The warrior ethos has been best realized through the equality and honor of the dead. No matter the conflict, no matter the region of the world, and no matter the soldier; American military cemeteries have been temples where the sacredness of sacrifice has been honored.

Epilogue: Their Name Liveth For Evermore

In every British Commonwealth military cemetery with more than one thousand burials, a stone of remembrance is placed on the grounds with the simple words “their name liveth for evermore”. Taken from the Biblical verse Ecclesiasticus 44: 14, it was suggested by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) to adorn the stone altar designed by Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) as a homage to the dead. Yet it is the living which experience those messages and through the living which names lives for evermore. Therefore, the biggest challenge for nations around the globe in terms of military cemeteries was always appropriately balancing honoring the dead while also protecting national objectives for the living. Which means in basic definition military cemeteries are, regardless of nationality, places of remembrance for the living and places where the dead are not to be forgotten. The question therefore is how and what is to be remembered?

By nature, American military cemeteries have always had these dualistic purposes of honoring nationalism and expanding civic religion but scholars have missed and fallen short in their interpretations. The value military cemeteries can bring to historiography has yet to fully be explored. This dissertation has attempted to begin and advance the scholarly research towards military cemeteries and how they fit into the thread of American history. As John F. Kennedy stated in his inaugural address in 1961, “Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.”[437] For one hundred years, military cemeteries were a

[437] Kenndy, John F., text of “First Inaugural Address”, (January 20, 1961).

crucial part of the American war experience and suggest a nation which contemplated the larger purposes of those deaths.

Modern interpretations by leading scholars, such as David Blight and others, suggest that Reconstruction was a failure but their reasoning is overstated because they have neglected military cemeteries. Or in the very least scholars have overlooked military cemeteries as a crucial component of American history and therefore their interpretations are not as complete as desired. Reconstruction was not perfect but the level of success is greater than interpretations suggest because military cemeteries saw success in terms of civic religion that other components of society did not. Since the Civil War, the United States has been on the forefront of progressive notions on how to honor the dead of military conflict. Even prior to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, which represents the origins of dualistic objectives for military cemeteries, the United States had begun the process to progressively change the discussion as to how and why soldier deaths needed to be memorialized.

Throughout this dissertation, it has been shown that Lincoln's vision was to create sacred geographic locations which would 1- promote nationalism and 2- expand civic religion. Military cemeteries in their "celestial" form were designed to improve the nation, specific communities, and the individual American. This would include the "forgiving process" required to "convert" to American civic religion through pragmatic concessions such as ex-confederates allowing their dead to be buried in the same cemetery as colored troops. Death represented the great democratic equalizer of life, and military cemeteries represent the great equalizer for a non-perfect society.

Following the Gettysburg Address, the United States had been constantly attempting to reach higher and holier realities for the living through military death. It would take almost exactly one hundred years before the vision became reality, but during that time period military cemeteries were always steps ahead of society as a whole in terms of civic religion. Once again, military cemeteries were not perfect representations and yet they were advanced in recognizing equality among soldiers. As scholars continue to debate the validity of civic religion not only in history but also as a component of current society, military cemeteries would be a logical place to conduct further research. From this dissertation, there have been a number of specific areas of cemetery studies where further research would be beneficial in creating a fuller picture to analyze. In chronological order the following concepts/ themes would be the authors suggestions for further, more in-depth analysis to consider.

Beginning with items prior to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, more research could be done on military burials from each of the wars leading up to the Civil War. It is known that burials were done in haste and on the battlefields themselves, but little has been done to better understand military death prior to the Civil War.[438] Even with that, much more could be done on the first cemeteries from the Civil War that were established prior to Gettysburg. There is also room to analyze how much or how little Lincoln was involved in cemeteries leading up to his assassination. He formulated the objectives of military cemeteries, but how much involvement or knowledge was he aware of in the creation of the Civil War cemeteries themselves? Creating a stronger foundation of

[438] One such example is the Battle of New Orleans from the War of 1812 where General Andrew Jackson defeated the British army and there is no historical record or evidence as to where the deceased British soldiers were buried.

military cemeteries prior to Gettysburg and Lincoln's views on cemeteries in a larger sense would greatly benefit scholars moving forward.

The second concept which further analysis would be beneficial is the general idea of how cemeteries are healers for society, particularly military cemeteries. One of the greatest challenges of military cemeteries was always the balance between honoring the dead and recognizing causes for which soldiers died for. In the context of the American Civil War, military cemeteries were presented with the notion of honoring Americans but those Americans were split. As was discussed in the chapters covering the Reconstruction era cemeteries, controversies were passionate. The immediate cemeteries were specifically designed to not cross borders in terms of Union and Confederacy, but there was a quick shift towards reconciliation and national healing. Although not perfect in its implementation, military cemeteries were among the first to allow for history to be in the past and began the forgiving process.

Cemeteries have a unique quality to heal. Researchers have only just begun the process of better understanding their role in American history in terms of healing. With ongoing emphasis on societal health and individual well being, cemeteries have been overlooked as places of comfort, healing, and revitalization. It is no coincidence that another conflict which Americans fought against an outside foe was the final catalyst to push unification through military death. Yet, military cemeteries were on the forefront of societal change even prior to the Spanish-American War. As the global wars raged, military cemeteries would once again be specifically designed as places of healing and comfort. Those established overseas were done so with the intent to show gratitude and debt to the living for the sacrifice of their deceased loved ones. One component of

particular note is that military cemeteries outside of Europe and outside of Arlington National Cemetery were also places of healing but so much attention is given to the flag bearer cemeteries that others have become relegated in prominence but not in stature.

Thirdly and finally, another area of further research would be comparisons between American objectives and those of other nations, particularly the Soviet Union. The entire premise of the dissertation is that American military cemeteries are unique and different from all other national counterparts. One possible caveat would be whether the Soviet Union pushed communism civic principles along with their nationalistic overtune. Although not specifically covered, the Soviet Union would have a similar historical trajectory to that of the United States but their military cemeteries would not have the same foundational purposes due to cultural differences. Scholars would benefit to increase study of communist country cemeteries to those from democratic nations. Analyzing messages, purposes, and execution of military cemeteries from democratic and communist nations would be a valued addition to Cold War historiography.

Ultimately, military cemeteries would benefit from more narrowed and specific study by scholars. However, larger themes of historiography would also benefit from considering how military cemeteries were part of the historical context. To better understand the Civil War, research how the dead were treated as the war progressed and as emotions got more raw. To better understand the Reconstruction era, research how military cemeteries were locations of mourning, healing, and motivations. To truly better understand American history, studying military cemeteries will open new interpretations. In a field driven by human interactions in the past, cemeteries are a

common interaction that all have experienced. More specific cemetery and military cemetery analysis would provide a clearer picture of the past.

In the summer of 2022, a team of archaeologists excavated a tract of land adjacent to the Red Bank Battlefield Park in New Jersey. The Revolutionary War battlefield saw the deaths of 14 American soldiers and 377 German Hessians. As was customary of the time, the dead were hastily buried and were left to the graces of local citizens, nature, and time. Shockingly, the team uncovered the remains of 13 Hessian soldiers. According to Jennifer Janofsky, a historian at Rowan University there are "maps that indicate burial spots" from the area and "This is not one of them."[439] Discoveries such as this one continue to happen around the globe. Whether by happenstance or by specific archeological digs, remains of soldiers are being discovered and in turn being given the recognition they rightfully deserve from their home nations.[440] Soldiers continue to serve, they continue to sacrifice their all for their nations, and they continue to be honored at military cemeteries around the globe but particularly in the United States. Lincoln's dual objectives of honoring nationalism and spreading civic religion can be seen on a daily basis as one visits these hallowed grounds.

Although military cemeteries have seen little recognition by scholars and the public alike, they have been a central thread in the fabric of American history. Just as Lincoln was "met on a great battle-field of that war", Americans continue to meet at military cemeteries around the globe to ensure that the "unfinished work" is ever more

[439] See Katz, Brigit, "Archaeologists Uncover Remains of 13 Hessian Soldiers at Revolutionary War Battlefield", *Smithsonian Magazine*, (August 4, 2022).
[440] Another example is the continued recovery efforts from a 1952 C-124 crash in a remote Alaskan glacier where 52 military personnel perished and Army National Guard members search in a limited amount of weeks per summer to locate any possible remains to provide closure to family members. As of 2022 45 of the 52 soldiers have been positively identified.

progressing towards perfection. “All men are created equal” may be the simplest and most profound statement from Lincoln. Military cemeteries were not perfect in the execution of that belief, but they were and continue to be on the forefront of democratic principles. Soldiers have perished for the causes of truth and civic religion from the earliest days of the Republic, and military cemeteries are the constant reminder that “this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.” Through their deaths, American nationalism and civic religion were expanded. Military cemeteries granted new generations of Americans to visit these sacred temples and “conceive” their own sense of liberty. Visiting these sacred temples breathes new life into those who understand that the cost of freedom was the final breath of those who so nobly consecrated and dedicated their lives. Thankfully, the world continues to note what Lincoln said at Gettysburg. The challenge therefore which remains is to ensure what “they did here” is never to be forgotten.

When visiting American military cemeteries, an emotional harmony is present, regardless of nation, color or creed. This reality is in large part thanks to Lincoln’s sacred dialogue and the notion that Americans have considered the relationship between soldiers and commemoration as holy from its earliest beginnings. Military service, in the minds of its people, is as much an American institution of civic religion as democracy itself. One major oversight however is that the attention often given by individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole to the sacred and spiritual realities of military cemeteries have rarely received the same attention by scholars.[441]

[441] Schultz, Kevin M., and Paul Harvey. “Everywhere and Nowhere: Recent Trends in American Religious History and Historiography.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion 78,* no. 1 (2010): 129–62.

The narrative of military cemeteries is often overshadowed by those of more cheerful countenances. Tales of heroic victories receive much greater attention than those of tragic misfortune. Except, few things in life stir the soul more than to experience the death of military personnel; a reality which every generation of American has had to endure.[442] Spanned across the soils and waters of the globe are graves known and unknown of over one million American soldiers.[443] When adding the number of military veterans who came home alive and have subsequently passed away, the number of military gravesites is staggering. There should be little doubt, but still too few recognize the importance of military cemeteries and the relationship American society has developed with them as part of the great beacon of hope to the world.

One of the grimmest truths of war is that not every soldier comes home alive. How the United States has navigated through that truth becomes the foundation of this study. In a world of division and discord, the universal unifying principles of military death and military cemeteries is a vastly needed topic of reference for scholars and society alike. When walking the grounds of military cemeteries, the spectrum of human emotions can be felt. Those feelings will be the center of the narrative and will be developed by connecting the ebb and flow tension between civic religion and military cemeteries.

Visitors to military cemeteries often come away with an emotional experience that transcends the person, place, or thing. The emotional sentiments found within military

[442] Taking the widely accepted start and ending dates of military struggle suggests that America has been in military conflict every 30 years on average. If a generation is defined as a 25 year period, then every generation has directly been affected by war. The question is not if Americans are faced with military death, but rather when and how.

[443] Once again taking in the widely accepted death tolls from American conflict, the greatest of which comes from the Civil War, World War I, and World War II which tally over one million themselves without additional death tolls from other wars.

cemetery grounds provides a newfound sense of belonging to something bigger than one self. It has been stated that bereavement "is one of the only ways Americans can imagine themselves as one; being 'together' with millions of others through expressions of mourning bypasses or transcends the many ways in which people are divide- by religion, by ideology, by class, by region, by race, by gender."[444] As people visit military cemeteries, few have the personal connection of bereavement. Of the over 400,000 buried at Arlington, a visitor may have a personal connection with a single grave; but more likely the visitor is not personally connected to any one soldier, rather they are connected to the cemetery itself. The universal vision of Lincoln solidifies that the United States is one nation under God; and that nation is both the United States but also the nationhood of mankind. American military cemeteries are both expressions of patriotism and temple-like expressions of civic religion which unite the brotherhood of all mankind.

[444] Doss, Erika. *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America.* United Kingdom: University of Chicago Press, (2012), 93.

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