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SHRINES OF THE HONORED DEAD



*A Study of the National
Cemetery System*



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THIS BROCHURE CONSISTS OF A SERIES OF SIX ARTICLES WRITTEN BY MR. EDWARD STEERE, HISTORIAN, OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL. THESE ARTICLES APPEARED IN "THE QUARTERMASTER REVIEW," OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE QUARTERMASTER ASSOCIATION, DURING 1953 AND 1954, AND ARE REPRODUCED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE QUARTERMASTER REVIEW.



Origins of the National Cemetery System



By EDWARD STEERE

A RAPID survey of funerary cult through the ages reveals a universal desire to confer special honors on the warrior dead. Despotic and democratic states alike have sedulously cultivated this urge, one seeking enhancement of its glory and prestige in the eyes of its subjects, the other endeavoring to deepen a sense of devotion to the commonwealth in the hearts and minds of its citizens.

The custom of autocratic Sparta requiring that every hoplite returning from battle bear his shield, or be carried home upon it, indicates the existence of a purposeful burial policy, along with stringent regulations governing the accountability of military property. Again, the cemetery of the *Hotel des Invalides*, where the bones of Napoleon Bonaparte are entombed with those of many martial heroes of the French monarchy, attests that authoritarian states have not been remiss in honoring the memory of great captains who die in their service.

The democracies of ancient and modern times have accorded similar honors with greater elaboration of method and deeper expression of feeling. Thucydides,

the Athenian general and military historian, has described, in a celebrated passage, the funeral ceremony of 436 B.C., when the dead of the first year of the Peloponnesian War were returned to Athens and buried in the state cemetery. The bones of the deceased, he relates, were borne in cypress coffins, one for each tribe. Accompanying the cortege was an empty bier "decked for the missing, that is for those whose bodies could not be recovered."

The dead were then laid to rest in the public sepulcher, which, according to Thucydides, was situated in the most beautiful suburb of the city and in which all who fall in battle were buried, "with the exception of those slain at Marathon, who for their singular and extraordinary heroism were interred on the spot where they fell." In accordance with long-established customs, a man chosen by the state pronounced an appropriate panegyric. On this occasion Pericles delivered his immortal funeral oration.

It is a melancholy fact of history that only within recent times has a modern democratic state attempted to emulate the Athenians in the homage they paid their warrior dead. On 17 July 1862 the Congress of the United States enacted legislation which authorized the President "to purchase cemetery grounds . . . to be used as a National Cemetery for soldiers who shall have died in the service of the country."

Following hostilities with Spain in 1898, recognition was given in an appropriation for necessary funds to the obligation of recovering the remains of those who fell in war beyond the seas and returning them to the homeland. Again, in providing suitable burial places for those servicemen of World War I whose next of kin desired that they rest at the place of death, the United States government subscribed to a principle identical to the one recognized by Athens



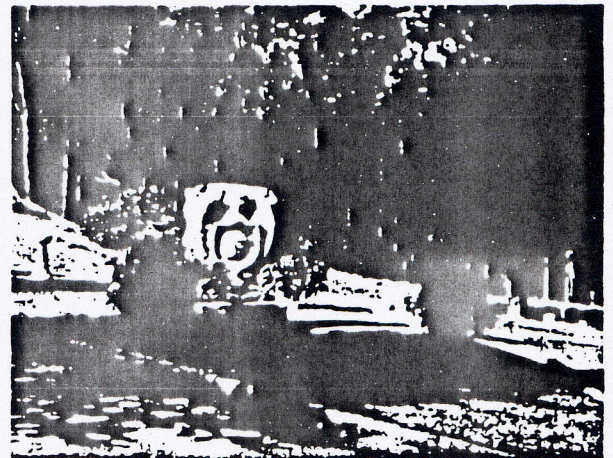


Early view of National Cemetery established 1862 at Alexandria, Va.

in the case of the dead of Marathon.

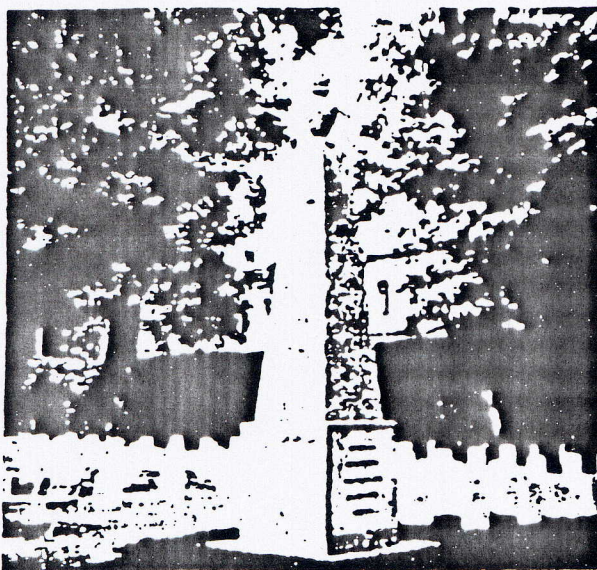
In the application of both principles—return of remains to the homeland and burial abroad—modern America goes far beyond the compass of Athenian burial policy. Decision in each individual case as to disposition rests, not upon official edict, but, subject to reasonable restrictions, with the relatives of the dead.

American burial policy during the latter half of the nineteenth century reached its present state of refinement by marked improvements in processes of body identification. Much of this improvement, however, may be attributed to the fact that existence of



Monument commemorating unknown dead of old Post Cemetery, Presidio of San Francisco.

Monument to unknown American dead in Mexico City National Cemetery.



the national cemeterial system has imposed a higher sense of obligation on the part of military authorities regarding care of the dead than otherwise might have applied. Also, increasing public awareness of the purpose which this system serves tends to create the most powerful sanction that a democratic people can enforce on its government.

It is not to be supposed that the American system of national cemeteries sprang full-born from an act of Congress. Authorization to acquire lands for cemeterial purposes had the effect of facilitating the adaptation of a long-established burial system to new conditions and circumstances introduced by the War of Secession.

From the founding of the Federal Union until the War of Secession, the regular military establishment

was primarily concerned with performing the functions of a frontier constabulary rather than those of a national army. Small detachments were distributed among numerous stations in Indian borderlands—Forts Crawford, Snelling, and Winnebago among others in the old northwest, Smith and Gibson in the trans-Mississippi southwest, and Fort Leavenworth on the lower reaches of the Missouri River.

Far removed by distance and hazards of travel from population centers in the East, garrison commanders were compelled to bury their dead in cemetery plots marked off within the post reservations. Order books kept at these remote stations indicate that mortuary standards corresponded favorably with those maintained by civil communities of the expanding frontier. While it is difficult to derive precise conclusions in any particular situation, three general practices emerge as the frontier moved westward with its military posts and burial grounds.

First, Quartermaster officers, acting in accordance with their responsibility for construction, repair, and maintenance at army installations, took over the management of post burial grounds. Second, the customary method of marking graves in frontier communities—a headstone fashioned of hard wood and bearing a suitable inscription—came into general usage. Third, surviving copies of old post cemetery registers, many of which are now preserved in the National Archives at Washington, indicate the existence of a fairly uniform system of recording burials, including, in some instances, the notation of assigned grave numbers in plots and name lists corresponding to those inscribed on headboards.

The ceremonial aspects of military burial were not neglected. The Fort Winnebago Order Book of 1835 contains directions for the ceremonies attending interment of Major Nathan Clark. Announcing that "he will be buried . . . with the honors of war where all present . . . will appear under arms in full uniform," the order further specified that the escort would be composed of four companies and that "all officers of the command will wear black crepe attached to the hilts of their swords, and as a testimony of respect for the deceased, this badge will be worn for the period of thirty days." A more intimate and poignant touch is given in the memoirs of Major Clark's daughter, Charlotte Ouisconsin Clark Van Cleve:

Memory brings back to me that mournful afternoon, and I see the bearers with their burden; the long procession of soldiers with trailed arms; the commissioned officers each in his appropriate place; all keeping time and step to the muffled drum as it rolls out its requiem in the wintry air in the strains of Pleyel's heart-melting hymn; the weeping wife and children in the large sleigh—all passing out the great gate to the lone grave-yard.

While adequate to the needs of frontier posts, this system afforded little practical experience that might be useful in the recovery, identification, and burial of bodies under conditions of large-scale warfare. Its

limitations were fully disclosed during the clash of arms with Mexico, which then ranked among world powers in the extent of its territory.

Aside from a partisan force which seized California, three sizable expeditionary forces carried the offensive against Mexico. One, with ^{John} Kearny in command, marched overland from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe. Another, under Zachary Taylor, crossed the Rio Grande and pushed down the Gulf Coast to Tampico. The principal force, commanded by Winfield Scott, landed at Vera Cruz and fought its way along the path of advance taken by Cortez to Mexico City.

Achievements of these columns in field service graves registration left much to be desired. A Quartermaster officer reports that General Kearny's route of march to Santa Fe was strewn with \$5,000,000's worth of government property. "The bones of cattle," he relates, "and in many places the drivers lie side by side—a melancholy result brought on alone by inexperience."

The record of General Taylor's column was scarcely more creditable. Taylor states that the dead of Buena Vista, his most celebrated action, were collected and buried on the battlefield. He neglected, however, to mark the spot on the map accompanying his report of operations. When occasion arose half a century later, in connection with proposals of the Mexican Government to erect a monument in memory of the soldiers of both nations who gave their lives on this field, the War Department confessed that it had no record of the burial site.

General Scott's command offered some improvement in graves registration methods. Remains of those who fell in the advance to the Mexican capital were interred in battlefield graves, and some attempt appears to have been made to record the sites. When, however, an effort was made to concentrate these remains in the American cemetery established at Mexico City, only 750 could be found. Those recovered were reinterred at the foot of the monument that now commemorates their fame. All are unknown.

The war of 1846-47 nevertheless marks an important advance in American burial policy. Action of the Congress in 1850 for establishment of the Mexico City cemetery as a final resting place for those who "fell in battle or died in and around the said city" furnished a precedent for the creation of permanent military cemeteries beyond the seas over a decade before legislative provision was made for a national cemeterial system in the homeland.

Following hostilities with Mexico the Army resumed its function of policing the frontier, now advanced to the Pacific Ocean. New posts with their cemetery plots were established at sites which, in some cases, had been occupied by the Spaniards since before the founding of the Republic. Such are the Presidio of San Francisco, the Presidio of Monterey, and old Fort Tejon, guarding the mountain pass which enters upon the plain of Southern California.

At the outbreak of hostilities on the North American continent in 1861 neither the North nor the South had large military establishments based on universal conscription and large stores of readily available equipment. The governments of both sections nevertheless set themselves to the task of organizing their potentials of manpower and raw materials on a scale of unprecedented magnitude. Both created great national armies. Although the Southern Confederacy perished in its attempt to achieve the status of a sovereign state, the renown of its arms was celebrated in Europe and came to be regarded by all Americans as an imperishable part of the national tradition.

The gigantic task assumed by the Federal Union in gearing the energies of the North to a struggle in which there could be no compromise of principle or limitation of military objectives was appreciated by President Lincoln and his General in Chief, Winfield Scott. While yet untutored in the fundamentals of military strategy, the President possessed an instinctive grasp of those aspects of armed conflict that are now assigned to the specialized field of psychological warfare. He recognized from the start that control over the state of mind both of troops with the colors and of the masses of the civil population behind the line—that is, the question of national morale—was a prime consideration of wartime statesmanship.

There is no positive evidence that either the President or the General in Chief were directly responsible for issuance of orders which revolutionized Army burial practices. Whatever the explanation, the revolution came with the birth of the national Army. Just as the Athenian democracy had appreciated the benefits of paying signal honors to its citizen soldiers who fell in battle, so now the United States felt compelled to afford a decent burial to those who gave their lives in defense of the Republic. This purpose found official expression within two months after the first major action at Bull Run.

On 11-September 1861 the War Department directed, in General Orders No. 75, that commanding officers of military corps and departments were responsible for the burial of any officer or soldier who died within their jurisdiction, and that in the performance of this duty they would cause the regulations and forms provided by The Quartermaster General to be properly executed. The same directive specified that:

For the purpose of preserving accurate and permanent records of deceased soldiers and their place of burial, it is hereby ordered that the Quartermaster-General of the U. S. Army shall cause to be printed, and to be placed in every general and post hospital of the Army, blank books and forms corresponding with the accompanying duplicate forms for preserving said records. The Quartermaster will also provide proper means for a registered headboard, to be secured at the head of each soldier's grave, as directed in the following special order to commanding officers in reference to the interment of deceased soldiers.

This is the first of a series of six articles on national cemeteries which will appear in successive issues of the REVIEW. After tracing the origins of the system, the series will discuss the development of different types within the system and its adaptation following the War between the States to the burial requirements of a world power.

It is also ordered that any adjutant or acting adjutant (or commander) of a military post or company, immediately upon the reception of a copy of any mortuary record from a military company, shall transmit the same to the Adjutant-General at Washington.

In short, burial of the dead became a command responsibility of tactical officers, while The Quartermaster General assumed a staff function in connection with the operation. Delegation of this function to The Quartermaster General came, no doubt, in consequence of a long association of his Department with the operation of post cemeteries. It also seems reasonable to assume that the specified forms and blank books mentioned in the order were a product of the experience in record-keeping at the larger post cemeteries, while use of a headboard as a grave marker was borrowed directly from the old system.

It soon became obvious that the founders of the new burial policy had ignored an all-important aspect of their problem. The oversight was but one of many blunders made in the turmoil of an unplanned national mobilization. No provision was made for the acquisition of burial lands. Some measure of justification may be found for this oversight in the fact that a wasteful use of land was the only extravagance that the old Army of frontier days might indulge.

Whatever the explanation, a shocking state of affairs at large troop concentration centers called attention to the problem and demanded a solution. Partial expedients were sought by acquiring soldiers' plots in cemeteries near large general hospitals, where a far greater number of men were destined to die than fell on the battlefield. Many cemeterial associations, it should be noted, performed a patriotic service by donating plots for Army burials. Wherever Army posts, such as Fort Leavenworth, were used as concentration points, the existing cemetery met immediate needs. The problem in Washington, D. C., which became the base and training area of the Army of the Potomac, was temporarily solved by opening a cemetery on the grounds of Soldiers' Home.

A permanent solution was given some ten months later by the Congress. On 17 July 1862 legislative action authorized the acquisition, by executive action, of lands for cemeterial purposes.

Meantime, conditions in the expanding battle zone, which extended its front of deployment from the estuary of the Potomac to the upper valley of the Rio

Grande, revealed other deficiencies in the burial regulations of 11 September 1861. As already noted, they were framed without regard to the fact that an orderly development required a cemeterial system. While acquisition of burial lands in the battle zone presented no particular difficulty, field commanders inclined toward an opinion that the new regulations were intended to apply in that part of the total area of military operations which are now regarded as communications zones and the zone of the interior.

The distinction was not so obvious during the War of Secession. The various military departments into which the national territory was divided corresponded to theater commands of the present day. Generally speaking, these commands enjoyed the same degree of autonomy now assigned the operational theaters. They included, however, rear area installations which were grouped during World War II in independent service commands. Commanding generals of military departments whose territorial jurisdiction extended to the battle front usually assumed personal direction of tactical operations, while continuing to administer the affairs of departmental installations through subordinate staff officers. Only one field force, the Army of the Potomac, was completely divorced from the departmental command and administrative system.

Equally vague was the distinction between arms and services. Quartermaster service units were non-existent. Just as the implementation of General Orders No. 75, 1861, was contingent upon the establishment of national cemeteries, so an effective extension of these orders to the battle zone depended upon the creation of a service especially designed for the evacuation, identification, and burial of the dead under combat conditions.

On 3 April 1862 the War Department attempted, in Section II of General Orders No. 33, to include the zone of active hostilities in the new burial program. Commanding generals in the field were now assigned responsibilities which could only be performed through the agency of a theater graves registration service:

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, 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.

Use of the qualifying phrases "as far as possible" and "when practicable" deprived this directive of the force of command. Identification of remains could be construed as optional. The directive was scarcely more than an official exhortation to army commanders to do

better by their dead than had Winfield Scott on the road to Mexico City and Zachary Taylor at Buena Vista. Yet despite the failure to provide a specialized organization, considerable progress was made in the practice of battlefield burial. This improvement may be attributed to the fact that the great body of citizen soldiers shared much of the sentiment manifested by civilians at home. Units were recruited on a local basis. They retained the home tie in their regimental designation and by the method of replacement, however faulty in other respects. There are many instances of earnest endeavor on the part of combat troops to realize the ideal of individual identification and burial in a registered grave.

One example deserves mention. During the Mine Run operation of 1863, the Army of the Potomac, deployed before Lee's field works and Meade's V Corps, was designated to open the attack. Aware of the bloody task before them, soldiers of the assault force carefully examined their equipment and then wrote their names on slips of paper and pinned them to their blouses. Happily for those immediately concerned, this early experiment in graves registration technique was interrupted by cancellation of the order of attack.

General Orders Nos. 75, 1861, and 33, 1862, providing for improved burial procedures in rear areas and on the battle line, together with legislative authorization for the purchase of land for cemeterial purposes, constitute the foundation stones on which the national system has been erected. Pursuant to the Act of 17 July 1862, fourteen national cemeteries were created in the latter half of that year.

The selection of sites reflects the conditions they were intended to relieve. One cemetery was established at Alexandria, Virginia, which was included in the vast encampment surrounding the national capital. Having been filled to capacity, the cemetery at Soldiers' Home was made a national cemetery for purposes of administration. Two old post cemeteries, one at Fort Leavenworth, the other at Fort Scott, were incorporated in the new system. Seven national cemeteries were established at troop concentration points, including Philadelphia; New Albany, Indiana; Danville, Kentucky; and Annapolis, Maryland. One was opened at Cypress Hills, New York, for burial of the remains of Confederate prisoners and guards who perished in a train wreck.

A unique feature of the program was the decision to transform the burial sites on battlefields of the war into national cemeteries. One was established near Sharpsburg, Maryland, as a memorial to the dead who fell in the Battle of Antietam. Another was located on the battlefield at Mill Springs, Kentucky. The cemeteries thus created included practically every type of burial place to be embraced in the national system for years to come.

Among the eight cemeteries created in 1863 was the

one established on the battlefield of Gettysburg. The dedication ceremonies were signalized by President Lincoln's address: Lincoln's utterance on this occasion transcends any limited purpose. Like the funeral oration of Pericles his words are immortal because they are timeless. Separated by two millennia, these ringing appeals sound the same note—renewal of strength for the living through solemn dedication to the unfinished work for which the honored dead laid down their lives.

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Mr. Steers served with the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, BEF, France, during World War I. After graduate work in history at the Universities of Texas and California, he spent several years with the Historic Sites Branch, National Park Service, specializing in the American Civil War. He has written a history of "The Graves Registration Service in World War II" for the QMC Historical Studies series.



Battleground National Cemetery, Washington, D. C.

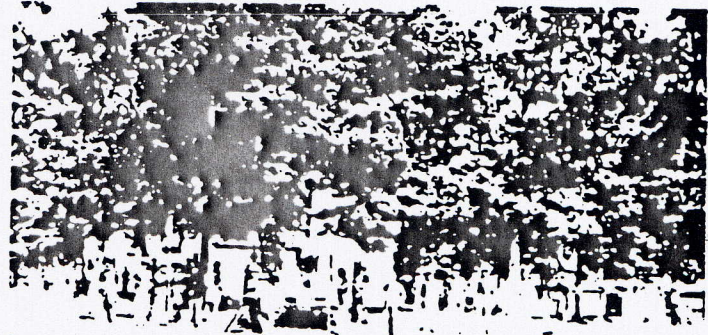
Early Growth of the National Cemetery



System



By EDWARD STEERE



Survey party mapping Arlington estate for layout of cemetery.

CONGRESS provided the legal sanction for creation of a national cemeterial system by authorizing President Lincoln in the Act of July 17, 1862. "to purchase cemetery grounds . . . to be used as a national cemetery for soldiers who shall have died in the service of the country." In accordance with a somewhat loose interpretation of the term employed by Congress, some 27 burial places bore the designation of National Cemetery by the end of 1864. The number reached 73 during 1870, when a reburial program pursued through the post-war years was brought to completion.

Like many legislative grants for the exercise of Presidential authority, this act left the formulation of policies and procedures to the executive until expansion of the activity required additional legislation. But joint action by the executive and legislative branches on cemeterial matters was influenced by practical considerations which governed burial operations during the period of hostilities. Then other complications arose during the post-war years of 1865-70, when officers of the Quartermaster Department were assigned responsibility for concentrating from isolated graves and untended battlefield burials the remains of Union soldiers in national cemeteries established from time to time for this purpose. Any understanding of the system involves some study of the diverse methods by which the 73 national cemeteries came into existence during the two periods.

Wartime national cemeteries fall into two general categories. The first includes burial grounds opened at troop concentration points, where mortalities in general hospitals first posed the problem of military burial. The second category embraces a number of cemeteries established in the combat zone as memorials to those who gave their lives in battle. It is difficult, however, to select any cemetery in either category that fully typifies the group and at the same time conforms to requirements of the Act of July 17, 1862.

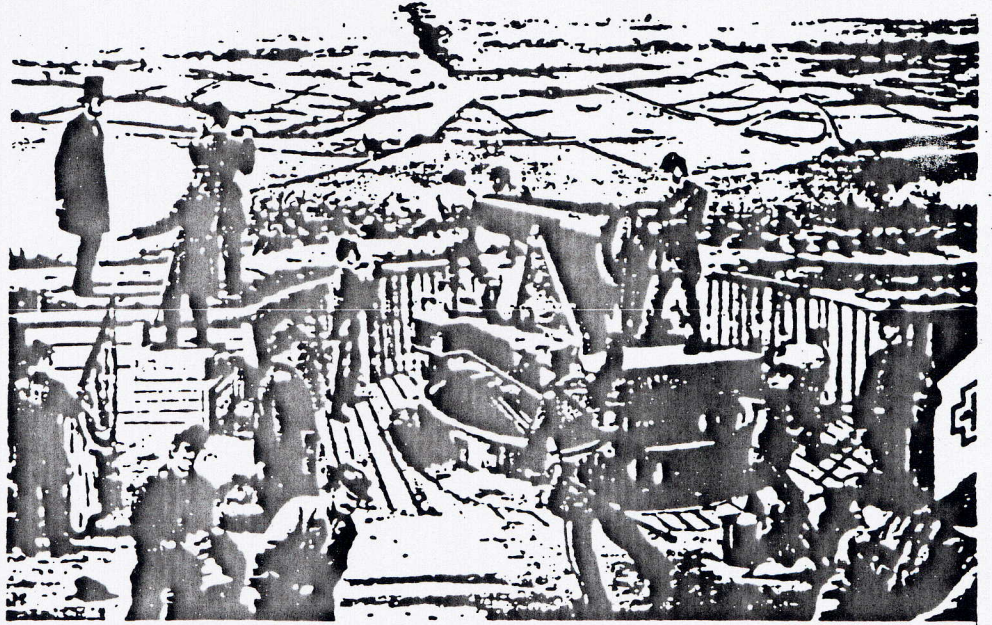
The Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, D. C., illus-

trates this want of uniformity. In 1861 the Board of Governors agreed to permit usage for cemeterial purposes of a portion of the land originally assigned to its jurisdiction in 1851. A cemetery was opened on August 1, 1861, nearly a year before enactment of the legislation authorizing President Lincoln to purchase burial grounds. Since no compensation has ever been made to the governing board of this institution for the use of its land, the cemetery site first occupied in 1861 still belongs to the Soldiers' Home.

Another variation is presented by the Alexandria National Cemetery, Virginia. Established in 1862 to serve the same purpose as the one at Soldiers' Home, the original plot of 5.5 acres was used under terms of a lease. A clear title was acquired in 1865 and 1875 by purchase from individual owners and the city of Alexandria. Additional parcels of land were bought in 1870 and 1882.

Arlington National Cemetery appears at first glance to occupy an extraordinary position in the cemeterial system. It seems doubtful, however, if consideration of the facts attending its establishment and development supports any assumption that this burial place may be regarded as the Valhalla of American military heroes. While harboring the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the graves of many distinguished officers of the armed forces, the remains of Ulysses S. Grant, General in Chief of the armies during the climactic years of the Civil War, repose on the Hudson. Those of Sherman, Meade, Thomas and other army commanders of the conflict between the States rest elsewhere. Like the cemeteries at the Soldiers' Home and in Alexandria, Arlington was originally established to accommodate the dead of hospitals around Washington.

Realization of the need for additional burial space in the capital area prompted Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster General of the Army, to examine that portion of the Custis estate on Arlington



Artillery officers at Fort Stevens urging President Lincoln to seek shelter.
Photo Courtesy National Park Service

Heights in the immediate vicinity of the mansion. Here Robert E. Lee resided with his wife, Mary Randolph Custis, during his last years of service in the United States Army.

Impressed by its suitability as a burial ground, General Meigs nominated Mr. Edward Clark, who accompanied him during the reconnaissance, as "engineer and architect" of the proposed cemetery. On June 15, 1864, Meigs recommended by direct communication to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton that "the Arlington Mansion, now understood to be the property of the United States, be appropriated as a national military cemetery, to be properly inclosed, laid out and carefully preserved for that purpose."

Secretary Stanton gave instant approval, instructing Meigs on the same day that "the Arlington Mansion and the grounds immediately surrounding it are appropriated for a military cemetery." It was further stated that the Quartermaster General "is charged with the execution of this order" and that "he will cause the grounds, not exceeding two hundred acres, to be immediately surveyed, laid out, and inclosed for this purpose, not interfering with the Freedmens Camp."

Stanton's order of June 15 was transmitted by Meigs to Bvt. Brig. Gen. D. H. Rucker, commanding the Washington Depot, together with a rough sketch of the tract to be surveyed. The Quartermaster General expressed his concern for success of the project in the following terms:

Being charged specially by the Secretary of War with establishment of this cemetery, I have to request that you submit the plans to me for approval before commencing the enclosure or opening the main road through the grounds.

I have requested Professor Bache to detail a skillful surveyor from the Coast Survey to make a topographical survey and maps of the grounds.

If the Coast Survey can spare an officer for this purpose he will be directed to report to you.

This work will be under your general direction and in

immediate-charge of such officer as you may assign to this duty.

Responding to Meigs' request for technical assistance, the Coast Survey put Mr. R. M. McMath at his disposal "in regard to the detailed survey of Arlington grounds, for a Military Cemetery." Captain (later Bvt. Lt. Col.) James C. Moore, Assistant Quartermaster, attached to the Washington Depot, was selected by General Rucker as his deputy in development of the project. Reporting his activities in this connection, Captain Moore stated:

In May last the grounds of the cemetery in the rear of the Old Soldiers Home having become exhausted, the Secretary of War directed that a new site be selected on Lee's farm, at Arlington, Virginia. The locality is well adapted for a cemetery, and is being appropriately improved for that object. Intelligent and reliable sextons are placed in charge, who keep a register of all interments made, with the particulars concerning each, for the information of visitors. . . .

The improvement of the national cemeteries has been a source of great gratification to all who visit them, and entirely dissipated the prevailing opinion of those living remote from Washington that soldiers were irreverently or carelessly buried.

By June 30, 1865, approximately a year after establishment of the cemetery, Quartermaster General Meigs reported: "The National Soldiers' Cemetery at Arlington, continues to be used for the interment of the victims of the rebellion who die in Washington or its vicinity. It contains the remains of 5,291 persons."

If, according to the Act of July 17, 1862, acquisition of land through purchase by the President is to be accepted as a basic requirement in establishing a national cemetery, two of the three burial places under discussion can scarcely be regarded as meeting this qualification until years after the dates of their establishment—Alexandria in 1865 and Arlington in 1883. The Soldiers' Home National Cemetery has never met

the qualification. Therefore, while practically all national cemeteries of the war period are considered to have been established under the Act of July 17, 1862, a great many were actually created in disregard of that statute. As will be presently seen the land on which military cemeteries were developed in the battle zone was frequently acquired by outright confiscation. Arlington really belongs to this class, although the process of confiscation was veiled in rather obscure legal technicalities.

As summarized in "A Compendium of Legal Authorities for the Establishment of National Cemeteries under Jurisdiction of the Department of Defense," a tax was assessed against the Custis property under certain direct tax acts of June 7, 1862, and February 6, 1863. In default of payment, the usual sale was made. On January 11, 1864, the United States, pursuant to authority of law, bid in the property at the sale "for Government use for war, military, charitable, and educational purposes," and under this title continued in possession until 1883. Redress sought by G. W. P. Lee in challenging the title thus acquired by the United States became involved in an action of ejectment in the Circuit Court of Alexandria, Va. The case was thence removed to the United States Circuit Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, where it was heard and decided in favor of the plaintiff. From this decision the case was taken to the Supreme Court on a writ of error. On December 4, 1882, this high tribunal affirmed the judgment of the lower court, embodying in their decision an argument which questioned the use of implied powers of the President in seizure of private property (U. S. vs Lee; Kaufman vs Lee, 16 Otto, 196). In order to secure a complete title to the property, the United States under an act approved March 3, 1883 (22 Stat. 584) accepted Lee's offer to convey the property. On March 31, 1883, seventeen years after the date of confiscation, Arlington was conveyed to the United States by deed in fee simple.

Turning to battlefield cemeteries, we encounter so wide a variety of types, or rather an absence of uniformity, as to suggest want of a consistent policy. Four burial grounds, two in the eastern theater of hostilities and two in the western, illustrate this diversity. It should be recognized, however, before examining this phase in development of the system that the national battlefield cemeteries which came into existence during the war years were products of exceptional circumstances and owe their existence either to the decision of local military commanders, as exemplified by the national cemeteries at Chattanooga and Knoxville, or to a combination of civil authorities of the States and private associations who took the initiative in founding national cemeteries on the battlefields of Antietam and Gettysburg. In this respect they may be regarded as forerunners of the large numbers of national cemeteries subsequently established by the War Department under provisions of a firmer policy and more uniform procedures than were evinced during the years of war.

It nevertheless seems a curious fact that army commanders at such remote points as Chattanooga and Knoxville should have been solicitous in the matter of military burial, while War Department officials in Washington ignored the physical development of cemetery sites within a few hours' rail travel from the national capital. Closer examination of the problem, however, will indicate that those strategic and tactical considerations which dictated movements of the armies also controlled expenditures of time and energy for care of the dead. Since graves registration units were non-existent and burial was of necessity performed by fatigue parties from the line, it is apparent that little or no provision could be made for any systematic interment of remains during a campaign of rapid movement. Nor could army commanders be expected to jeopardize the chance of victory in the midst of intense and prolonged combat by diminishing their striking power.

These factors applied in varying degree to tactical operations in both the eastern and western theaters. Generally speaking, the Army of the Potomac served as a strategic pivot for the western armies, which executed a grand left wheel from the Ohio River to the Appalachian barrier. The outer wing under Grant swept down through western Tennessee and Mississippi to Vicksburg, then converged on the inner flank at Chattanooga and swept the Confederates from Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. After a five-month pause, during which Sherman took command of the western forces, his army group pushed through the mountain gateway of northern Georgia to Atlanta and the sea, cutting a wide path of devastation through the heartland of the Confederacy, while Grant, now in supreme command of the field forces, hammered Lee on the anvil of Richmond.

Conditions produced by rapidity of movement in the western theater were appreciated by Bvt. Brig. Gen. J. J. Dana, Chief of the Sixth Division and the Cemeterial Branch in the Quartermaster General's Office. He observed that:

The graves of this Military Division are very widely scattered, in most cases very imperfectly protected; and throughout the long and various marches of Grant's, Buell's, Sherman's and Thomas' armies, and in the countless skirmishes which took place there, the dead appear to have been buried generally where they fell, with very little attempt to record or mark the place.

It becomes increasingly evident that circumstances permitting the establishment of national battlefield cemeteries in the west were exceptional, and that favorable tactical situations went hand in hand with a disposition on the part of some—perhaps only a few—army commanders to exploit such opportunities. This reasoning seems to account for the efforts of Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas who, after a distinguished record as a corps commander, assumed command of the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga. Perhaps it should be noted in passing that the burial ground he laid out in 1862 on the battlefield of Mill Springs.

Ky., was created a national cemetery during the same year, being among the first to acquire this status under the Act of July 17, 1862. At any rate General Thomas took advantage of the pause at Chattanooga to put his impress on one of the most beautiful cemeteries in the national system.

This cemetery was established "in commemoration of the Battles of Chattanooga, November 23-27, 1863." According to Chaplain T. B. Van Horn, who acted as superintendent during the formative period of development, General Thomas selected the site during the brilliant assault of his troops, which carried Missionary Ridge and brought the campaign to a victorious end. The 75-acre reservation consists of a round hill, rising with a uniform slope to a height of 100 feet. It stands within a natural amphitheater of magnificent proportions, inclosed on one side by Missionary Ridge and on the other by the looming eminence of Lookout Mountain. General Grant established his headquarters on the summit of the hill during an early phase of the four-day operation.

The plan of laying out the grounds was suggested by the undulating terrain. "Where nature suggested avenues," Chaplain Van Horn reported in May 1865, "they have been made, and their curves define the sections. This rule has determined the form and size of the sections. It has given marked individuality to each, and has allowed a well-sustained unity of expression to the whole, as nature has nowhere been opposed." He adds an interesting observation:

During the march of our armies to Atlanta, there were buried, of those killed in battle or died from wounds, from twenty (20) to forty (40) per day; as those who were buried in the wide track of that march were companions in arms of many already interred here, it seems eminently fitting that their companionship should be extended to their repose in death.

From this statement it seems clear that such battlefield cemeteries as were actually operated in the combat zones did not serve the purpose commonly achieved by present-day military cemeteries in receiving bodies evacuated by an advancing field force. Neither special purpose units nor transportation were available for such a mission at that time. By May 1866 the reinterment of many remains gathered from scattered burials on the road to Atlanta, together with others gathered at Chickamauga, Athens, and Charleston in Tennessee, and at Bridgeport in Alabama, brought the total number of interments in the Chattanooga cemetery to 8,512. Of these 6,096 were identified and 2,416 unknown.

Lacking the colorful drama that attended the making of Chattanooga national cemetery, the one established by General Ambrose E. Burnside at Knoxville, in the upper Tennessee valley, illustrates the capabilities of Civil War military cemeteries without exposing their most serious limitations. This one was a product of siege warfare, and a somewhat desultory siege at that. Once characterized as a general with "a genius for slowness," Burnside was admirably cast for the role; he lacked both strength and energy to break the lines of investment, while Longstreet, his adversary,

was destitute of the resources that would have permitted a relentless pursuit of his objective. This impasse was somewhat modified by the Union victory at Chattanooga. Longstreet's Corps was eventually recalled to the Army of Northern Virginia.

The cemetery was laid out in 1863 at Burnside's direction by Capt. E. B. Chamberlain, Assistant Quartermaster. It was described in August 1866 by Bvt. Maj. E. B. Whitman, in charge of mortuary records, as "the only burial ground of Union soldiers in this department originally laid out and conducted to the present time in a manner and on a system that render it suitable to be converted into a National Cemetery without material alteration or change, or removal of a single body."

Quite a different story is unfolded by cemeterial developments in the eastern theater. Aside from vigorous action in providing burial space at the larger troop concentration points, notably Washington, D. C., little attention was given to the problem of establishing permanent burial grounds on the battlefields in this area. The opportunity, to be sure, was somewhat restricted. Excepting the two great encounters at Antietam and Gettysburg, the Confederates enjoyed a series of tactical triumphs until Grant was invested with supreme command in the field and launched the hammer blows that destroyed the Confederate armies. Continuous combat and maneuver during this climactic phase precluded a satisfactory performance with the means available in care of the dead.

With opportunity for creative work virtually restricted to Antietam and Gettysburg, the War Department seemed content to let others take the initiative. Before the end of 1862 proposals were considered for creation of a national cemetery at Antietam by joint action of the states represented by units on the field of battle. Due, however, to limited financial support, development of the project lagged, while Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania enjoyed greater success in applying the idea to a similar development at Gettysburg. Meantime, financial difficulties continued to thwart the Antietam National Cemetery Association, a private group incorporated by the State of Maryland on March 23, 1864. Title was acquired by the state to a suitable tract of 11 acres, situated on the south side of the Sharpsburg-Boonsboro road and in the center of the battlefield. Construction costs for fencing and a caretakers' lodge caused the Board of Trustees to defer reburial of the dead. This activity was undertaken in 1866 by the Quartermaster Department and personally directed by Bvt. Lt. Col. James M. Moore, the officer who supervised the early development of Arlington. The Washington Depot supplied 6,000 coffins for completion of the Antietam burial program.

In 1877, the state of Maryland transferred to the United States title to the reservation in fee simple under terms of an agreement whereby Congress appropriated \$15,000 to discharge the indebtedness incurred by the Board of Trustees. The Antietam National Cemetery was announced in General Orders, AGO, No. 68, 1877, as a national cemetery of the first class.

Provision was made by the General Assembly of Pennsylvania for transfer of the Gettysburg cemetery in an Act approved April 14, 1868, authorizing "the commissioners having charge of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg . . . to transfer all the right, title, interest and care of the said National Cemetery, upon completion of the same to the Government of the United States." The process was completed by a resolution of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, approved July 14, 1870, authorizing the Secretary of War to take charge of the Gettysburg and Antietam National Cemeteries.

Despite apparent indifference on the part of War Department officials regarding the creation of so-called national cemeteries by other agencies on the battlefields of Antietam and Gettysburg, it would be both inaccurate and uncharitable to cite these examples as proof of apathy. As already emphasized in relating cemeterial developments at Chattanooga and Knoxville, conspicuous performances in care of the dead were possible only under exceptional circumstances.

One such situation was presented in the eastern theater, including favorable tactical conditions, as well as the presence of a general officer of sufficient rank and authority to exploit the opportunity. Functioning much as a graves registration platoon in support of combat, a provisional unit organized by Captain James M. Moore, performed the unprecedented feat of completing the evacuation of dead from the battlefield, identifying each body and interring the remains in a cemetery established at a site selected by the Quartermaster General.

The situation that made this feat possible was indeed extraordinary. On July 11, 1864, Early's Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia stood in battle order facing the northern defenses of Washington. Rumor swept through the city, hysterically proclaiming that Lee, with large reinforcements from the corps of Longstreet and A. P. Hill, was hastening to the scene and would direct a grand assault on Fortress Washington. Then the military command was obsessed by fears that Grant's decision to cross the James River and strike at Richmond from the south had violated a strategic principle that had heretofore regarded the security of Washington, rather than defeat of Lee's army in the field, as the primary mission of the Army of the Potomac. Whatever the validity of this strategic concept, Grant had taken a "calculated risk" in placing Lee's army between his own field force and the national capital. Moreover, replacement of losses in the bloody march from the Rapidan to the James had all but denuded Washington of its garrison troops.

The risk, nevertheless, had been closely calculated—closer, perhaps, than the one which uncovered the Ardennes sector and invited von Rundstedt's offensive stroke. Countering Lee's maneuver against Washington, Grant embarked H. G. Wright's VI Corps at City Point. As Early's dusty columns converged on Washington, the transports bearing Wright's veteran divisions steamed placidly through the interior communications of Chesapeake Bay.

Meanwhile strenuous measures were taken in the capital to enroll and equip every man capable of bearing arms. Civilian clerks of the Quartermaster General's Office furnished a battalion, some 250 strong. Bvt. Brig. Gen. Rucker, commanding the Washington Depot, organized a brigade of 1,500 Quartermaster employees. Accepted for service at the front, Rucker's Brigade was assigned to a provisional division which included two other brigades—one made up of veteran reserve corps units, another composed of convalescents from the hospitals. General Meigs took command of the Provisional Division and, late on July 11, took over a sector of the trenches on the right of Fort Stevens. After putting two brigades in the line, with the convalescents in close reserve, he established his command post in an orchard. He reports: "I slept . . . wrapped in a poncho, with my horse tethered to an apple tree."

The crisis had passed sometime before Meigs rolled in his poncho. During that afternoon a dispatch relayed by telegraph to Fort Stevens for information of the President announced that the advance element of Wheaton's Division, VI Corps, would disembark at 4 p.m. at the Seventh Street Dock. President Lincoln hastened from the Fort to greet the reinforcements. Recognition of his tall figure, with familiar top hat and bristling chin whiskers, evoked thunderous cheers from the veteran regiments as they filed out in column through the city streets. Sight of their gleaming weapons and tattered battle flags had a magic effect in restoring the confidence of the populace. They marched with swinging stride out Fourteenth Street and massed in reserve.

The brisk action in front of Fort Stevens on July 12 came as an anticlimax to the tense anxieties inspired by Early's march on Washington. Wheaton attacked in order to drive Confederate skirmishers from sheltered positions within effective rifle range of the fort. Had Early been determined to attack in force, the sortie would have touched off a violent battle. In such circumstances it would have been impossible for Moore's provisional unit to function.

Of no great importance as a tactical encounter, the affair has considerable significance in American graves registration history. Lightly engaged on his own front, General Meigs selected the site for a battlefield cemetery and instructed Captain Moore to evacuate and bury the dead of Wheaton's Division. Unfortunately, Meigs does not mention these arrangements in his report on operations of the Provisional Division. However, he noted in his annual report as Quartermaster General that:

The bodies of the loyal officers and men who fell at the sortie [were] buried in a piece of ground selected for the purpose in the midst of the battlefield and in sight of Fort Stevens. It is hoped that Congress may see fit to cause a monument to be erected to the memory of these patriots who fell in defense of the Capital itself.

General Meigs's wish was partially fulfilled that same year in the establishment of this burial place as the Battleground National Cemetery, which is now

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The accompanying article is the third of a series on the development of the national cemetery system. The fourth, which will appear in the July-August issue, will trace those transformations in the system that accompanied the nation's emergence as a world power.

Moreover, as already noted in the second paper of this series, these burial grounds fell short of the purpose now served by temporary military cemeteries in the active zone of operations, namely the identification and interment of remains evacuated from the battle front through a collecting point system. As such a service was lacking, burials were necessarily restricted to remains found in the immediate vicinity.

A similar limitation applied, with certain notable exceptions, in those rear areas which are now known as the zone of communications, and which then, as in more recent wars, included large military centers serving as troop concentration points and depots of supply for the field forces. The Department of Washington, a command embracing the District of Columbia and certain adjoining territory, furnished the most conspicuous exception.

Here under direction of The Quartermaster General officers of the Washington Depot supervised every phase in the selection, physical development, and maintenance of four national cemeteries established during hostilities—Soldiers' Home, Alexandria, Arlington, and Battleground. Then the burial grounds at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, as well as those at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and Fort Scott, Arkansas, were designated national cemeteries when those old posts acquired new importance as centers of operations in the trans-Mississippi region. At the same time, no steps were taken at Louisville and Nashville, the two great bases of the western armies, to provide burial facilities comparable in scale to the developments directed by officers of the Washington Depot. Not until peace came were national cemeteries established at Louisville and Nashville for the concentration of remains originally buried in scattered plots.

The larger number of wartime cemeteries fall into a category which should be differentiated from those identified with battlefield sites and military centers in the rear. Elements of this category appear in that part of the over-all area of military operations now

regarded as the zone of interior. Acquired by the national government in immediate compliance with the Act of July 17, 1862, they were located as a general rule within the properties owned by cemeterial associations. Some were situated near the larger metropolitan areas of the North, notably New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore; others meeting the emergencies of an unplanned national mobilization, were established in private cemeteries near cities such as Annapolis, Md., Rock Island, Ill., and Keokuk, Iowa.

Growing piecemeal to meet local emergencies, this miscellany of burial places could scarcely be regarded in 1865 as an integrated system. It would be more accurate perhaps to say that the nucleus of a future system included only a few elements of a whole, that is, the cemeteries in the Washington military area and those on the sites of great battles. In consideration of their geographical distribution and availability of additional burial space, the group as a whole offered few advantages in effecting the final disposition of remains.

The so-called zone of interior cemeteries were beyond the range of economical transportation. Elsewhere the established cemeteries were inadequate in number and remote from the scene of decisive operations during the culminating phase of the war. Due to such limiting factors it became necessary to extend the system to areas determined by distribution of the war dead.

View of Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, D. C. 1864. National Archives



The problem of multiplying national cemeteries went hand in hand with other difficulties. The compilation of interment reports in 1865 for the Quartermaster General indicated that approximately two-thirds of the war dead must be recovered before final interment in national cemeteries could be accomplished. In present-day graves registration parlance, this requirement involved a search and recovery program surpassing in many respects the one attending final disposition of World War II remains. Two aspects of the Civil War situation, however, confined battlefield search areas to narrower limits than applied in the European theater. The front of deployment of an average Civil War army corps occupied about the same space now taken up by a regimental combat team. Then, while far-ranging cavalry columns of the 1860's left for future search teams the same difficulties contributed by armored columns of World War II, present-day war in the air extends the search of remains over vast areas that were not encompassed by operations of the American Civil War.

The reburial program was initiated within two months of Lee's capitulation at Appomattox. In accordance with orders issued on 7 June 1865 by Headquarters, Department of Washington, Captain James M. Moore, the founder of Arlington and Battleground national cemeteries, proceeded to the battlefields of the Wilderness and Spottsylvania Court House 'for the purpose of superintending the interment of remains of Union soldiers yet unburied, and marking their burial places for future identification.' Similar measures were taken in the West; on 23 June General George H. Thomas, commanding the Department of the Cumberland, instructed Chaplain William Earnshaw, Superintendent of the Stones River National Cemetery, "to take charge of the work of disinterring and reintering remains in the national cemetery at Stones River." Due, however, to excessive heat of the summer season, field operations were suspended until October of that year.

The operations conducted by Captain Moore and Chaplain Earnshaw illustrate both the similarities and differences of graves registration problems in the Virginia and western theaters. Both officers enjoyed the benefits of wide experience in burial matters; both had created cemeteries and understood the complications involved in the reinterment of remains. Proceeding by way of Belle Plain, Captain Moore reached the Wilderness battlefield some 14 months after the two-day encounter between Grant and Lee. He found "hundreds of graves . . . without marking whatsoever." Exposed skeletons scattered in front of the enemy's abatis offered mute testimony to the savage assaults delivered by many Union regiments. Other skeletons were found partially buried in and near the trenches. Unburied remains, it is reported, were interred in two temporary cemeteries, "where the scenes of carnage appeared to be the greatest."

Intending originally to remove all partially buried remains to a suitable site, Captain Moore encountered

the same difficulty that delayed Chaplain Earnshaw's reinterment program in the Stones River area—summer heat.

Completing his reconnaissance of the Wilderness battlefield, Captain Moore went on to Spottsylvania Court House, where he identified and marked with newly-inscribed wooden tablets the graves of 700 Union soldiers. The unidentified dead were marked by tablets bearing the inscription "Unknown, U. S. Soldier." In all, he made 1,500 identifications on both battlefields—800 in the Wilderness and 700 at Spottsylvania Court House. This total, however, was only twenty-six per cent of the 5,350 fatalities suffered on these fields.

Fortunately for Moore and his party, the problem of unburied dead at Spottsylvania Court House had been solved late in the spring of 1865. During the march of Sherman's army from the Roanoke to Washington, the General arranged with Mr. Sanford, a local resident, for the interment of all exposed remains. Thus a Western army commander gave impetus to the first postwar recovery operation in the East.

Captain Moore's work in Virginia was interrupted at this juncture by an assignment which included all phases of the reburial program in a single operation. Spurred by Secretary Stanton's insistence that a national cemetery must be established immediately as a memorial to the Union soldiers who perished in the prison pens of Andersonville, Georgia, the Quartermaster General organized an expedition with Captain Moore in command. General Meigs reported in some detail to Secretary Stanton the achievement of his subordinate.

Captain J. M. Moore, Assistant Quartermaster, was, by your order, immediately upon the opening of communications, dispatched in a steamer, loaded with materials, with workmen and clerks, to identify and mark in a suitable manner the graves of those who died at Andersonville. With the aid of a detail, furnished by Major General Wilson, this duty was performed.

The ground on which 12,912 of our comrades had been buried in trenches was inclosed; the bodies, where the earth had been washed from them by the rains, were again covered. Headboards, painted white, were placed over each, bearing the name, rank, regiment, and state, with the date of death, as ascertained from the captured hospital records.

Twelve thousand four hundred sixty-one were identified, and upon 451 graves Captain Moore was compelled to place the inscription "Unknown U. S. Soldier."

Meanwhile in Tennessee, Chaplain Earnshaw took up the task of concentrating remains at the Stones River National Cemetery. Like Chattanooga, this historic burial ground was a creation of General George H. Thomas. Unfortunately, Thomas had no authority to establish the cemetery near Murfreesboro, where the bloody battle of Stones River occurred late in December, 1862, until he superseded Rosecrans at Chattanooga as commanding general of the Army and De-

partment of the Cumberland. Although the furious fighting that raged for three days in and around Murfreesboro preceded by nearly a year the storming of Missionary Ridge, establishment of the national cemetery on Stones River was delayed until 1864.

Beginning with removal of remains from three known burial places on the battlefield, Chaplain Earnshaw extended his search eastward through Murfreesboro to Union University. Examination of graves in that locality led to discovery of a large burial ground which was identified as "the first burying place used by our brave defenders."

After recovery of the battlefield dead, attention was directed to the burial sites of general and unit hospitals which had been erected during the eight months' pause of Rosecrans' army before resuming the advance on Chattanooga. Altogether some 3,000 remains were recovered and reinterred.

The next step involved an examination of the three mountain defiles—Hoover's Gap, Liberty Gap, and Guy's Gap—forced by Rosecrans in the first stage of his push southward. The Chaplain reported that the number of dead recovered in these passes corresponded exactly with the figure given by General Rosecrans in his official report of fatalities. Search operations then followed the path of advance to the Tennessee River, while a party went northwest along the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad collecting bodies between Murfreesboro and Florence, and then turned back to search the rail line to Tullahoma. The total distance of search north and south through Murfreesboro was about 85 miles and yielded some 600 remains.

An intensive area search followed exploration of the rail line and the path of advance of the main army. According to Chaplain Earnshaw's report parties went out "searching the entire country and tracing obscure byways, feeling it our solemn duty to find every solitary Union soldier's grave that marked the victorious path of our men in pursuit of the enemy." The thoroughness with which these activities were conducted and the sense of devotion to the task are reflected in the following statement:

We also visited all points where camps or garrisons were stationed. . . . In fact, we have visited every place within 80 or 90 miles northeast, east and southeast from Murfreesboro, which is the extent of the country assigned for the removal to this cemetery.

I am free to say, that within these limits not more than 50 Union soldiers still sleep outside our beautiful cemetery.

The reinterment activities initiated by Chaplain Earnshaw in October 1865 extended over into the following year. Similar operations were conducted by Chaplain Thomas B. Van Horne in the area assigned to Chattanooga. Captain W. A. Wainwright, Assistant Quartermaster, completed the concentration of remains from the upper Tennessee Valley, Cumberland Gap, and eastern Kentucky into Knoxville. Supervision of these operations was exercised by Bvt.

Maj. Gen. Donaldson, Chief Quartermaster, who formerly commanded the Nashville Depot. In this new capacity he acted under authority of General Thomas, now commanding the Military Division of the Tennessee, a new jurisdiction embracing the States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia.

A somewhat different situation existed in the East. Excepting the special cases presented by Antietam and Gettysburg, which were then controlled by private associations under state law, Arlington was the only established cemetery which could accommodate any considerable number of reinterments. This possibility however was limited to a radius of some thirty-five miles, including some burial places in nearby Maryland and extending into Virginia to the Bull Run battlefields. For the rest, new national cemeteries must mark the somewhat erratic paths of advance and retreat of Union forces between the Potomac and the entrenched lines finally enclosing Richmond and Petersburg from the east and south.

Turning again to the west, the three areas which gave remains to established cemeteries at Stones River, Chattanooga, and Knoxville were no greater in relation to the vast expanse over which the western armies left their dead than was the one assigned for concentration purposes to Arlington when compared to the whole Virginia theater. Indeed, this relationship determined the pattern of cemeterial distribution in both regions. A cartographical representation would exhibit a thick cluster of black points in north-eastern Virginia, while in the west two paths would be marked by widely separated dots, one extending southward from Cairo through Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Corinth to Vicksburg, the other traversing central Kentucky and Tennessee through Nashville and Murfreesboro to Chattanooga. Here a concentration of offensive power from the west determined a projection of the spotted pathway through Atlanta to the sea and thence northward across the Carolinas toward Virginia. The picture thus presented would indicate the distribution of national cemeteries covering the principal theaters of operations and harboring over three-fourths of the war dead. In representing the secondary theaters, there would be the littoral zone extending from the estuary of the James to the mouth of the Rio Grande, and marked by a few cemeteries that recall various amphibious attacks from the sea—New Berne, Wilmington, Mobile, and Chalmette. Finally, the Shenandoah Valley, the uplands of West Virginia and the trans-Mississippi region would claim several scattered points.

Supervision of operations in the Department of Washington and a strip of territory running along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad to Orange Court House was assigned by General Meigs to Colonel M. I. Ludington, Chief Quartermaster.

Colonel Moore, commanding the Washington Depot, directed field operations in Virginia south of the

strip assigned to Colonel Ludington. A central file of burial records, including casualty reports prepared by tactical officers during hostilities, was established in the Quartermaster General's office. Functioning under Colonel C. W. Folsom, this records office furnished valuable information in planning search programs and determining the sites of new cemeteries.

By the end of 1866 substantial progress had been made toward the completion of concentrations in existing burial grounds and the development of new cemeteries. In Virginia, Moore created ten national cemeteries, including one at Fredericksburg, which received 2,442 remains during that year and eventually contained some 15,000 burials—the recoverable remains from Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, Spottsylvania Court House, as well as those found on the battlefield of Fredericksburg. The program was pushed with equal vigor by General Donaldson in the Military Division of the Tennessee, where attention was first given to the establishment of national cemeteries at the two western depots, Louisville and Nashville, and then along the broad pathways of advance from Cairo to Vicksburg and Chattanooga to Savannah. Excluding Andersonville which was established under direct orders of the Secretary of War, nine national cemeteries were receiving disinterred remains. Three were completed—Knoxville, Millen, and Savannah. Progress was reported at six, with Chattanooga and Stones River nearing completion. The sites of seven additional cemeteries had been selected, including Nashville and six other sites identified with the advance on Vicksburg.

A brief analysis of achievement since the termination of hostilities would indicate that the program was rapidly approaching the point of peak performance. In all areas of the continental theater 87,664 remains had been reinterred in 41 national cemeteries. The total number of interments by 30 June 1866 was 104,528: Taken together, burials in the Washington and Virginia cemeteries (41,353) and in the Military Division of the Tennessee (39,485) comprised over 75 per cent of the total. Then, according to computation of interments based on data acquired by Colonel Folsom's records office, the graves of 237,142 Union soldiers were in 431 burial places classified as "other than national cemeteries." It was estimated that not more than 135,881 of these remains would, for one reason or another, be removed to national cemeteries. Assuming the correctness of this estimate, the national cemetery system would offer its protection to 249,395 war dead upon completion of the reburial program. In other words, over 90,000 would continue to lie in family and village burial grounds, soldiers' plots, and post cemeteries, or in isolated graves that eluded the most exacting search. As will be seen, these predictions were overly pessimistic.

Reliable cost analysis also appeared at this juncture. The Quartermaster General reported that total expenditures to 30 June 1866 amounted to \$1,144,791. Allowing \$1,609,294 for all future contingencies, he

estimated \$2,609,294 as the "total cost of national cemeteries, and collection, transfer and reinterment of remains of loyal soldiers." The average cost of transfer and reinterment per body was \$9.75. The largest single item in this phase of the program was the wooden coffin, costing \$4.00 at the Washington Depot and \$3.00 in Tennessee.

The program continued with diminishing returns each year in reinterments, but showing a substantial increase in the total number of recoveries foreseen in 1866. In 1870, when, according to General Meigs, the project was virtually completed there were 73 national cemeteries in which the remains of 299,696 Union soldiers had been laid to rest. This marked an increase of 50,299 over the figure (249,397) estimated in 1866. The number of remains interred in national cemeteries, private plots, and post cemeteries, together with those marked for reinterment, aggregated 315,555. This final figure falls short by only 26,175 of the total number of Union fatalities as estimated in 1866. Of the total interred by 1870 there were 173,109 positive identifications and 143,446 unknown remains, i.e., 58 per cent of the recovered dead were identified.

An activity involving the acquisition and development of extensive lands for cemeterial purposes on the scale foreseen in 1866 required some amplification of the authority originally granted to President Lincoln by the Act of July 17, 1862. Furthermore, administrative expediency dictated that such authority be vested in the Secretary of War. This was accomplished by An Act to Establish and to Protect National Cemeteries, approved February 22, 1867, and directing the Secretary of War to have every national cemetery enclosed "with a good and substantial stone or iron fence"; to cause each grave to be marked with a small headstone or block; to direct the appointment of reliable veterans as cemetery superintendents and the erection of adequate quarters; to provide for annual inspections of the conditions and required improvements at all cemeteries by a field-grade officer and to submit the reports of inspection to congress at the commencement of each session "with an estimate of the appropriation for that purpose." It was further enacted that the Secretary should acquire title in fee simple to all cemeterial lands, either by mutual agreement with owners, or by processes of court action specified in the act. These procedures were helpful in securing a clear title to tracts confiscated during the war, notably the reservations at Chattanooga and Knoxville.

The act of February 22, 1867, not only provided a legal basis for the system in process of development, but committed Congress to a constructive fiscal policy. But while the act provided for a year-by-year improvement in landscaping and such facilities as became necessary for security and administration, the extraordinary cost of erecting permanent grave markers could only be met by a special appropriation of Congress.

During hostilities the cost of maintaining wooden

headboards had suggested the long-range economy of providing a more durable type of marker. In his annual report of 1866 the Quartermaster General proposed an economical solution. "A design," he stated, "has been adopted for a small cast-iron monument, to be protected from rust by a coating of zinc, to have in raised letters cast in the solid, the name, rank, regiment and company of each soldier or officer. One of these will be placed at the foot of every grave and will remain when the wooden headboards decay and perish.

Prompted no doubt by hopes of including a permanent marker program within regular appropriations, General Meigs stoutly resisted every proposal for marble or granite slabs in place of his unsightly design. He made a special point of rejecting in his 1868 report a recommendation in favor of the stone slab. He insisted:

I am still of the opinion that the best monument for this purpose yet contrived is the small rectangular block of cast iron, galvanized to protect it from rust and filled with earth or cement.

This planted at the grave will last for many years. It is not costly, it is easily transported, is not an object of plunder.

With wages of stone cutters at \$5 a day, the cost of 320,000 headstones properly lettered would be a very great charge upon the treasury.

In a day when tolerance of deficit financing was as repugnant as professions of heresy or free love, the Quartermaster General's argument was hard to meet. Although required by law, no progress was made until Congress took action on March 3, 1873 by appropriating \$1,000,000 "for the erection of a headstone at each grave in the national military cemeteries, to be made of durable stone and of such design and weight as shall keep them in place when set." Subsequent interpretation of the act held that stones should be erected only at the graves of soldiers, omitting those occupied by "contrabands" and civilians.

Under authority of the act, the Secretary of War specified that the markers should be of white marble or granite, 4 inches thick, 10 inches wide, with 12 inches above ground and 24 underground in areas south of the latitude of Washington and 30 inches in those to the north. The granite or marble block for

unknown soldiers should be 6 inches square by 2 feet 6 inches, with 2 feet set in the ground. The project was completed in 1877 at a total cost of \$786,360.

Headstones for the marking of new national cemeteries, including Antietam, that had been acquired since 1873 were erected at a cost of \$20,000. It was then recommended to Congress that the balance of \$192,000 be expended for marking those graves in national cemeteries not included by the Act of March 3, 1873, and for the erection of permanent markers at all known soldiers' graves outside the national system. An act, approved February 3, 1879, authorized these expenditures and the second gravestone program was undertaken.

In 1881, Quartermaster General Meigs reviewed the great accomplishment of 16 years in creating the national cemetery system and raised the first troubled question about its future:

There were 219 interments made during the year making the total number of interments in the national cemeteries on June 30, 1881, 318,850. All soldiers' graves have been marked with marble or granite headstones as provided by law, and neat marble slabs will be erected at the graves of other than soldiers yet remaining to be permanently marked as fast as means will permit. . . .

I repeat a recommendation heretofore made, that the Arlington Cemetery, containing 208 acres of land, now laid out and improved at the cost of the United States, be declared and constituted by law the official national cemetery of the government, and that its space, not needed for the interment of soldiers, be used for the burial of officers of the United States, legislative, judicial, civil, and military, who may die at the seat of government or whose friends may desire their interment in a public national cemetery. It is safe from encroachment of the rapidly extending cities of the District of Columbia. It is a safe distance from the population of the cities, while the existing Congressional Cemetery is rapidly filling up, and the extension of the inhabited and populous part of Washington threatens before many years to make it necessary to abandon the practice of interment within its limits. Almost all great cities have forbidden the use of cemeteries within their corporate bounds.

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Expansion of the National Cemetery System, 1880-1900

WITHIN 15 years following the termination of the Civil War in America, the War Department had created a national cemeterial system, with administrative control vested in the Quartermaster General. After having completed by 1870 the final interment of war remains in 73 national cemeteries, and adding several more in the West to receive remains from the burial grounds of abandoned frontier posts, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs undertook the task of replacing some 300,000 wooden headboards with markers of durable stone.

The magnitude of this undertaking may be appreciated by noting that the exact amount of marble used for these headstones, if cut in larger slabs with a uniform thickness of three inches, could have restored the glistening white sheath that originally covered the Great Pyramid of Cheops. But it is the use of the marble rather than the amount that is most arresting. Cheops, divine ruler of a state that presents history's classic example of theocratic socialism, spent 30 years building a tomb to perpetuate his fame. The Government of the United States sought rather to cherish the memory of those individuals who gave their lives in its service.

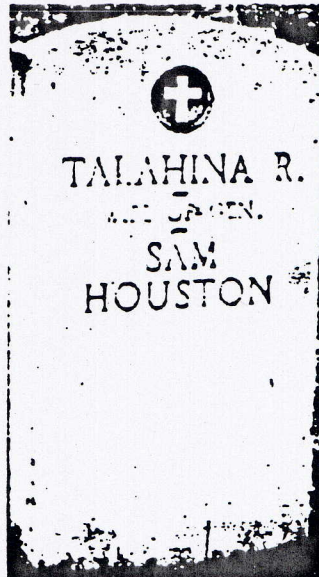
Neither the full significance nor the actual magnitude of the program initiated in 1862 was fully appreciated at the time by the Government or the people of the United States. The original act, as pointed out in the first paper of this series, was intended to afford a decent resting place for those who died in the service of the country. Due, however, to organizational deficiencies of the national forces, the final interment of these dead necessarily awaited more favorable conditions brought by peace. Then the vast area of military operations, together with dependence on animal-drawn transportation for most of the work, created a situation in which the distribution of temporary wartime burials determined the location of cemeteries designed for this purpose. Thus, aside from considerations of sentiment, the sites of great battles became the logical points for the location of many national cemeteries.

The very coincidence of place of final burial and scene of dramatic events in the military history of the nation invested the whole cemeterial system with a memorial aspect that was neither foreseen nor, perhaps, intended in the Act of 1862. At any rate, General Meigs' persistent advocacy of an economical policy which would have restricted the right of burial to soldiers who gave their lives during the war for preservation of the Union seems by 1881 to have given way to trends he could no longer control. As related in the preceding paper, he then proposed that Arlington be declared the official national cemetery of the government and "that its space, not needed for the interment of soldiers, be used for officers of the United States, legislative, judicial, civil and military, who may die at the seat of government."

General Meigs' proposal offers a striking illustration of an inability, not infrequently displayed by

administrative officers, to control developments within the institution confided to their management. Furthermore, it illustrates one of those paradoxical culminations which responsible officials may have stoutly resisted in principle, but to which they themselves inadvertently contribute.

Grave of General Sam Houston's Indian wife at Fort Gibson.

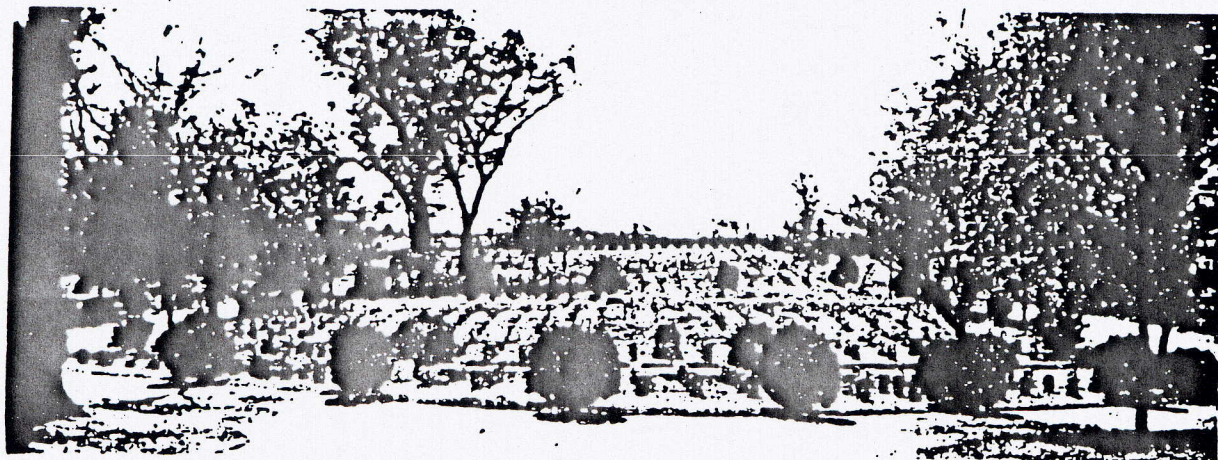


By making certain decisions that are justified on grounds of expediency, they eventually discover that the cumulative effect of such decisions presents a challenge to major tenets of the policy they sought to uphold.

Despite several piecemeal departures from avowed policy, General Meigs vigorously resisted the first obvious attempt to divert the national cemeteries from the purpose originally stated in 1862 and reaffirmed by the joint resolution of April 13, 1866. The wording of the latter instrument, indeed, susceptible of an interpretation that narrowed the original purpose, it being stated that the Secretary of War, among other assigned responsibilities, was required to protect 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.

Two years later these implied restrictions were put to the test. It appears that Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas, Commanding General of the Department of the Cumberland and founder of the Chattanooga National Cemetery, had reserved by a departmental order a large section of this cemetery for the burial of deceased war veterans and their families. A considerable number of burials had been made under the provisions of this order before the Quartermaster General became aware of the situation. In December 1868, however, he instructed Bvt. Maj. Gen. Shields, the Department Quartermaster, to prohibit the practice. Accordingly, the remains of Sergeant S. J. Wight, late of the 29th Maine Volunteers and twice wounded in battle, were refused a burial place in the cemetery.

A large body of Union veterans resident in Chattanooga immediately addressed a petition to General Thomas, pleading reconsideration of the prohibition and pointing out that the large amount of unappropriated grounds inside the limits of the cemetery was ample to furnish burial space for United States Army veterans and their families for many years to come. Their final argument was loaded with the sentiment that has more than once unseated reason in the consideration of problems relating to veterans generally



A recent view of Fort Smith National Cemetery where remains of old frontier post burial ground were reinterred after the Civil War.

and to national cemeteries in particular.

Many of us, in pursuance of the order mentioned above [Thomas'], have buried there those who are near and dear to us in this spot, hallowed by the bravery of those whose remains there repose, and are anxious to know whether the same privilege may be expected in the future, or whether those already buried there will be allowed to remain.

General Thomas "respectfully" forwarded the petition for consideration of General-in-Chief and the Secretary of War. Reference of the matter, in turn, to the Quartermaster General, the General-in-Chief and the Judge Advocate General evoked conflicting views.

A sound administrator, Meigs adhered to the letter of the law in justification of his action, citing Statutes at Large on which were based the general orders defining the scope and limitations of his authority. He quoted that part of the resolution of 1866 which seemed most pertinent to his argument, and underscored in his quotation the words *during the war of the rebellion*. This opinion was amplified in the annual report of Cemeterial Branch, QMGO, stating that "it was deemed impracticable to provide suitable burial places throughout the country for the many hundreds of thousands of veterans that might avail themselves of such right were it found to exist."

General-in-Chief Sherman expressed unalterable opposition to the views of the Quartermaster General in a terse but devastating statement: "Surely, when practicable these cemeteries should be devoted to the burial of soldiers for all time to come."

While sustaining the action which denied burial to the remains of Sergeant Wight, Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt delivered an opinion that fairly well reconciles the views of both Meigs and Sherman. In other words, the many loopholes in the law suggested that Congress should clarify the situation by additional legislation. Arguing in support of General Sherman's indorsement, he observed that the Act of 1862 provided that national cemeteries shall be used "for

the soldiers who die *in the service of the country*." This description, he noted, "clearly includes soldiers dying in the army at any or all times, and nothing is to be found in the Act of 1867 which is regarded as necessarily restricting this designation."

Although the controversy ended in a partial victory for the Quartermaster General, denying burial for the time to deceased veterans of the Civil War, Judge Advocate General Holt's opinion provided a legal basis for Sherman's contention that national cemeteries should be devoted to the burial of soldiers for all time to come.

As a matter of fact, it was the Secretary of War, acting under authority of the law approved February 22, 1867, who made the first departure from the policy he upheld. In 1867 he incorporated the post cemetery at Fort Smith, Arkansas, in the national system. Many Civil War dead, it is true, had been concentrated in this cemetery during the reinterment program. At the same time, it included the remains of officers and soldiers and their families who had been interred in the old post cemetery between 1819 and 1824, when the original stockade was abandoned. Re-established at a new site in 1838, Fort Smith continued for 23 years before the outbreak of hostilities in 1861 to bury its dead in the post cemetery. Expediency, of course, dictated that these dead be included with those of the Civil War.

The Fort Gibson National Cemetery, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), presents another case in point. Founded in 1824, and garrisoned for several years by the 7th United States Infantry, Fort Gibson served as a frontier post in the heart of the Cherokee country. The national cemetery was established in 1868, largely

The accompanying article is the fourth of a series on the development of the national cemetery system. The fifth, which will appear in the November-December issue, will trace those transformations that were incidental to the nation's participation in two world wars.

with a view to reinterring the scattered remains of Civil War dead and partly for the purpose of receiving the remains of abandoned frontier posts.

By 1872 there were 2,123 burials at Fort Gibson, mostly the remains of soldiers who had died prior to the Civil War. These included the remains exhumed from the old post cemetery and reinterred in graves which form a circle around the flag staff of the National Cemetery. Headstones in this honored Circle mark the graves of three lieutenants of the 7th Infantry who died in 1831. John W. Murray, Frederick Thomas and Thomas C. Rockway. Several women and children occupy graves in the Circle: Flora Coady Rucker, a Cherokee princess and wife of Lt. Daniel H. Rucker, later to become Quartermaster General of the Army, died January 26, 1845; Talahina, the Indian maiden who was wedded to General Sam Houston during his sojourn among the Cherokees; Alice Rockwell, died 1842; George Graham, son of Lieutenant Colonel Graham, died August 1, 1842; Hiram R., son of Commissary Sergeant F. R. Read, died 1846. Remains of Indian Scouts were included among reinterments in the national cemetery. Their fame is perpetuated by inscriptions on the headstones that mark their final resting place. Among these are Kah-Yer-Skow-He, Billy Bowlegs, Good Dollar Young Bird and Woodpecker Joe.

During the next year Secretary of War William W. Belknap informed General Meigs that he had made arrangements for removal of the remains of his father, General Belknap, from the post cemetery at Fort Washita to the cemetery in Keokuk, Iowa. In the same communication he stated that he had reason to believe that the remains of officers and soldiers and their families are buried at the abandoned posts of Forts Arbuckle and Washita, and that "I would be pleased to have you make arrangements for the re-

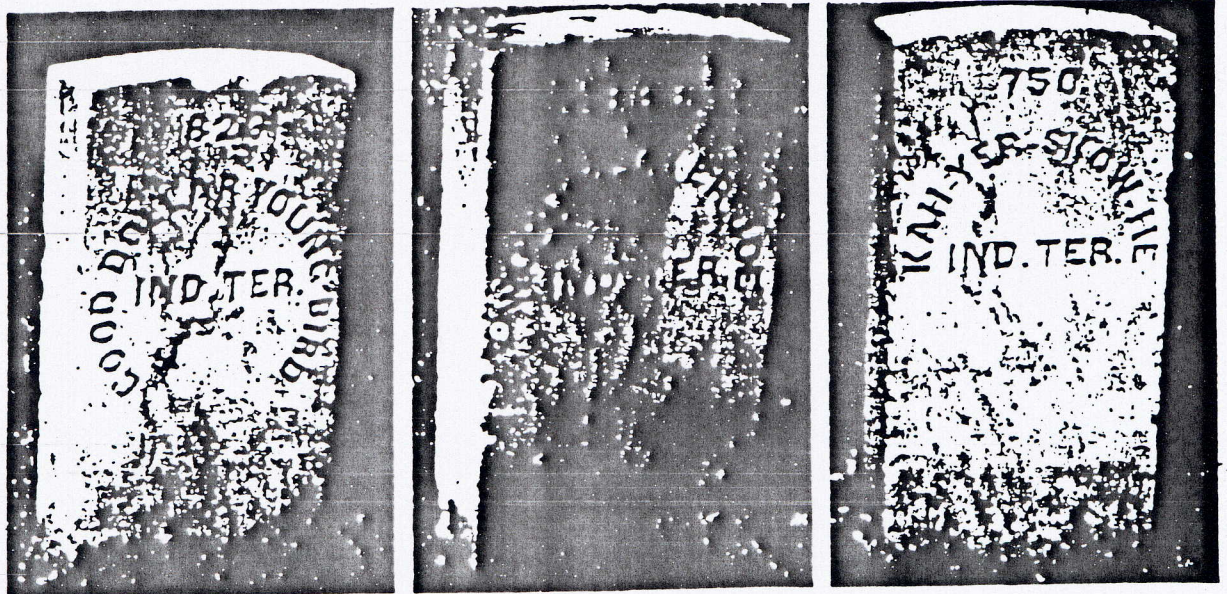
moval, at about the same time, of the remains of such soldiers and their families as may be buried at these two posts to the national cemetery at Fort Gibson, I. T."

Precedents established at the Fort Smith and Fort Gibson National Cemeteries really amounted to an admission that traditional practices determining burial at post cemeteries had exerted considerable influence in modifying the policy that sought to restrict interment in national cemeteries to Civil War dead. That is, the new cemeterial system could not ignore the force of tradition invested in the old one. As stated at a later date in conceding the right of burial to wives and minor children of officers and enlisted men, this tradition was inherent in the fact that the Army had always recognized the family relationship, as manifested in the construction of quarters at military posts and the provision of burial space for officers, and enlisted men and their families.

A new turn was given in 1873 to the accumulation of precedents by establishing the national cemetery at Fort McPherson and admitting the Mexico City Cemetery into the national system. Both, of course, looked to the past, one to the Mexican War, the other to armed encounters with Indian tribes in an area far removed from operational theaters of the Civil War. In this latter connection, the Quartermaster General remarked: "A new national cemetery is being established at Fort McPherson, Nebr., to which bodies of those who have fallen in the Indian fights of that frontier and been buried at neighboring posts, abandoned with the progress of settlement, are to be removed."

Any distinction that may have been drawn in identifying the national cemeterial system with wars prior or subsequent to the struggle for preservation of the Union seems to have had little significance in the sphere of policy making. Six years later a turn to

Indian scouts of old southwestern frontier were accorded honor of burial in the officers row at Fort Gibson National Cemetery.



ward the future was made as a matter of course when Headquarters of the Army published in orders (GO No. 78, 1879) that "the ground known as the Custer Battlefield, on the Little Big Horn River, Montana Territory, is announced as a national cemetery of the fourth class."

Meanwhile Congress had taken steps to remove burial restrictions applying to Civil War veterans, as well as to classifications that would now be described in Army terminology as the "current dead." The Army appropriations Act of 1870 included in the general and incidental expenses of the Quartermaster's Department an allowance "for expenses of the interment of officers killed in action or who may die when in the field, or at posts on the frontier, or at posts and other places when ordered by the Secretary of War, and of non-commissioned officers and soldiers."

The following year Congress made a feeble effort toward satisfying demands of the Grand Army of the Republic in the matter of extending burial privileges in national cemeteries to Civil War veterans. An Act approved June 1, 1872, provided that "all soldiers and sailors of the United States, who may die in destitute circumstances shall be allowed burial in the national cemeteries of the United States."

Like most timid gestures of appeasement, this Act only incited the powerful veterans organization of that day to a furor that demanded nothing less than unconditional surrender. Bowing before a storm of criticism that denounced an attempt to transform the national cemeteries into potter's fields, Congress hastened to approve the Act of March 3, 1873, providing:

That honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, or marines, who have served during the late war either in the regular or volunteer forces, dying subsequent to the passage of this Act, may be buried in any national cemetery of the United States free of cost, and their graves shall receive the same care and attention as the graves of those already buried. The production of the honorable discharge of the deceased shall be authority for the superintendent of the cemetery to permit the interment.

The memorial aspect conferred on national cemeteries largely by reason of their location came to be regarded in the minds of thousands of visitors who attended Memorial Day rites as a primary justification for existence of the system. This may explain the fact that announcement of the establishment of the Custer Battlefield as a national cemetery was accepted as a development of no extraordinary importance. Yet this decision reflected an attitude that subsequently admitted without question or debate both the dead and deceased veterans of the Spanish-American War to the national cemeterial system.

Three distinct phases of cemeterial development during the period should be examined. One was the westward projection of national cemeteries which carried units of the system into the upper Rio Grande Valley and to the Pacific Coast. In 1875 national cemeteries were established at Santa Fe, New Mexico,

and Vancouver Barracks, Washington Territory, for the purpose of receiving the remains from abandoned posts in those territories. In the case of Santa Fe, it should be noted that remains were concentrated from burial grounds containing dead of the Mexican and Civil Wars as well as those from later conflicts with the Indians. Vancouver, in contrast, occupied the status of a national cemetery only so long as the reinterment of remains from abandoned stations of that territory was in progress. Thereafter it reverted to the rank of a post cemetery.

With the same purpose in mind, the San Francisco National Cemetery was established in 1884 within the reservation of the Presidio of San Francisco. Due, however, to its metropolitan location and adjacency to the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, this cemetery was destined to a phenomenal growth, attaining on the eve of World War II a position second only to Arlington in the number of its interments (20,306).

Perhaps the most interesting and significant development in the whole process of adapting the national cemeterial system to conditions of the Indian frontier is illustrated by a movement of remains in 1886 from Fort Craig, New Mexico, to the Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery, Kansas. Completion of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad between Kansas City and the Rio Grande in 1882 had deprived the cemetery at Santa Fe of much of its usefulness as a concentration place for New Mexico and Arizona. Although this cemetery was not far distant from the main line, it was deemed expedient in 1886 to ship the Fort Craig remains over a much greater distance by direct rail communications.

The second phase of development during the period under review relates to the impact of liberalized burial regulations, notably the Act of 1873. Ten years later, representations were made by the War Department to Congress, calling attention to this situation and proposing a special appropriation for enlargement of the Cypress Hill National Cemetery, near New York City. In presenting its argument the War Department made a remarkably accurate estimate of the proportional number of living veterans who would elect to be buried in a national cemetery—one that has persisted without serious deviation to the present day.

Objections by Congress to the price asked by the Cypress Hill Cemetery Company for the desired tract led to the purchase of 14 acres outside the company limits. This addition, with the subsequent acquisition of four more acres, met burial needs of the New York Metropolitan Area until 1941, when the Cypress Hill National Cemetery attained 17,852 burials, giving it third place in the system, following San Francisco which enjoyed all the advantages of Cypress Hill without the competition offered by Arlington and other national cemeteries in the East.

Similar provisions were made for additional burial space at the Loudon Park National Cemetery, near Baltimore, Maryland. Attention thus focused on metropolitan areas corrected an unsatisfactory situa-

tion at Philadelphia. Here, since 1862, the so-called national cemetery has consisted of nine leased lots in seven privately owned cemeteries within the city. In 1885 the War Department acquired a 13-acre tract on the Limekiln Pike and concentrated all remains from their original burial places into the newly established Philadelphia National Cemetery.

Remarkable progress toward completing a long-range program of physical improvement characterized the third phase of development during the eighteen eighties and nineties. Briefly, burial grounds that first presented an unsightly appearance of bare mounded graves, wooden headboards, picket fences and frame buildings had been transformed by structures of iron, stone and marble. With landscaping projects adapted to each locality, the national cemeteries gradually assumed an aspect of stately parks, adorned with shrubs, trees, gravelled paths and drive-ways and vistas of shaded greensward carpeting the mounded graves.

The attraction exerted by these improvements prompted the construction of access roads to many cemeteries from nearby cities. On the whole, Congress was liberal in its appropriations for such projects. As illustrated in the case of Vicksburg and Chattanooga, supplementary funds were provided to cover unforeseen construction problems and to correct faulty estimates. Arlington, however, suffered the disability of having no elected representatives to champion its cause. In 1881, while surveys for the access road to Chattanooga were in progress, General Meigs stressed in his annual report the desirability of improving the road to Arlington Cemetery, on account of its proximity to the Capital and the consequent large number of visitors. The Office of National Cemeteries was more explicit in its supporting report.

The roads to these places, namely Vicksburg, Fort Scott and Chattanooga, when completed, will afford easy access to the cemeteries which are much visited. The number of visitors, however, is much less than at the national cemetery at Arlington, near this city, which can be reached only by a very bad, and, in winter, a dangerous road. Light vehicles have not infrequently been mired immediately in front of the cemetery, and, although this journey to a place that cannot fail to be of so much interest to the visitors to the National Capital is made only under serious discomfort.

Although Congress, in 1887 and 1888, authorized the construction of access roads from Alexandria, Louisiana; Danville, Virginia; New Berne, South Carolina; and Natchez, Mississippi, to nearby cemeteries, Arlington was listed by the Quartermaster General in 1889 "among the national cemeteries to which permanent means of approach has yet to be provided by Congress." Then, in 1893, Quartermaster General Batchelder made an eloquent plea in behalf of a projected bridge over the Potomac, connecting the Virginia shore with a point near the terminus of New York Avenue. "Few cities," he urged, "have so fine

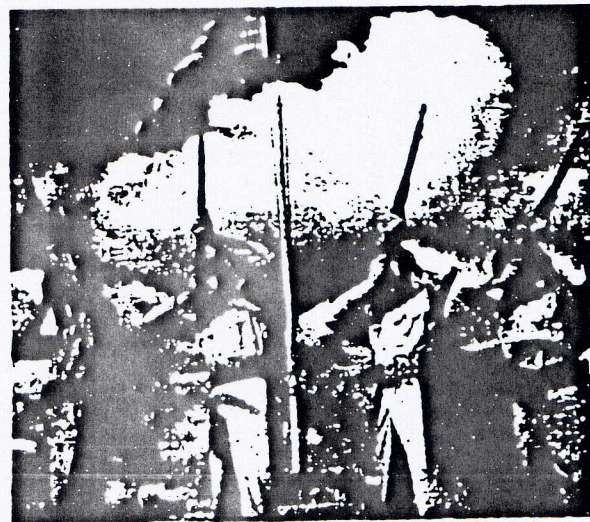
a park contiguous to their borders. Arlington Cemetery, where so many heroes lie buried, has in a large measure become like Great Britain's Westminster Abbey, the nation's 'Valhalla'."

General Batchelder's proposal was written three years later into a bill sponsored by Senator Fry, of Maine, and describing a memorial bridge which would give a direct route from Washington to Arlington Cemetery and Fort Myer. Passed by the Senate, this farsighted measure died in the House of Representatives. Not until 1932, when the Memorial Bridge linked Arlington with the Mall and Tidal Basin, embracing in a scheme of magnificent architectural unity Lee Mansion, Lincoln, and Jefferson Memorials, the Washington Monument, Grant's equestrian statue and the Capitol building, did General Batchelder's dream come to fruition.

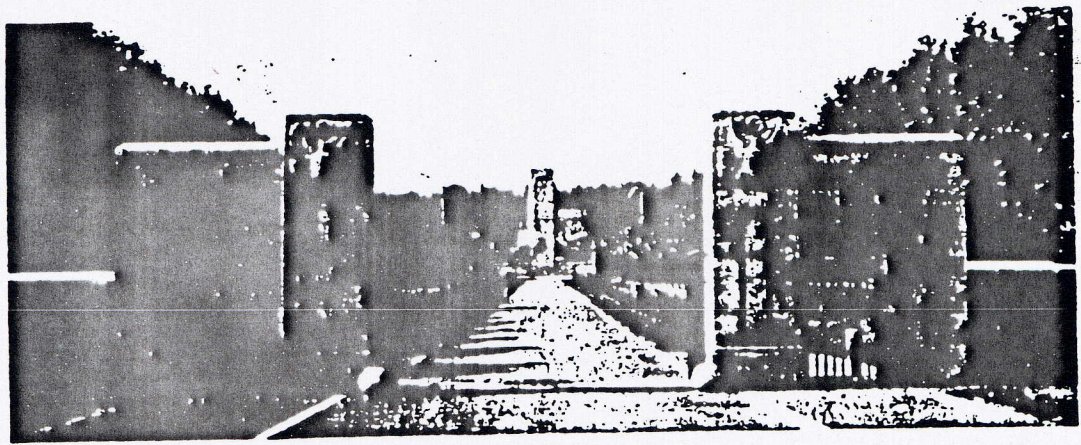
Meanwhile, in 1898, the United States went to war with Spain and sent three expeditionary forces beyond the seas, one to Cuba, another to Puerto Rico and a third, with reinforcing contingents, to the Philippine Islands. In 1900 an elite force of regulars sailed from Manila to join the Allied column that marched to the relief of the beleaguered legations in Peiping.

The decision to bring back to their homeland the dead of these far-flung battlefronts, marks a new era in the history of American burial policy. The transition was fully appreciated by Quartermaster General Marshall I. Ludington in his comment on the return of 1,122 remains from the West Indies during 1899.

It seems proper to remark here that this is probably the first attempt in history where a country at war with a foreign power has undertaken to disinter the remains of its soldiers who . . . had given up their lives on a distant foreign shore, and bring them by a long sea voyage to their native land for return to their relatives and friends, or their reinterment in the beautiful cemeteries which have been provided by our government for its brave defenders



A firing squad salutes fallen comrades.



The main driveway to the Memorial Chapel at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery near Belleau, France.



tion during September. Rhodes then organized the Quartermaster Burial Corps, a unit composed of civilian morticians and assistants, and directed the disinterment and shipment of remains to the United States. On April 27, 1899, the Army transport *Crook* docked at New York with 747 bodies from Cuba and Puerto Rico. In all, 1,222 casketed remains were returned to the United States by June 30, 1899. Of this total 13.63 percent were unidentified—a notable improvement over the percentage (42.5) of Civil War unknowns.

After completion of its mission in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the Burial Corps, with D. H. Rhodes in charge, embarked for the Philippine Islands to exhume the military dead in that archipelago and prepare the remains for shipment to Manila. Meanwhile Maj. Gen. E. S. Otis, commanding the Department of the Philippines, had instructed Chaplain Charles C. Pierce to establish and direct the United States Army Morgue and Office of Identification at Manila.

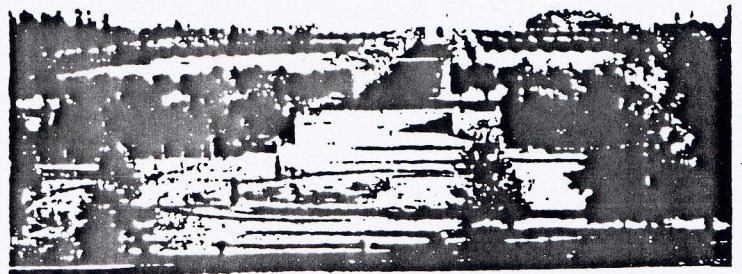
Staffed by military personnel of the department and subject to orders of the departmental or theater commander, the two units directed by Chaplain Pierce had the basic organizational characteristics of a present-day theater graves-registration service. At the same time, the Quartermaster Burial Corps, which was composed entirely of civilians and reported to the Quartermaster General, performed all graves registration duties within the department excepting those expressly assigned to Chaplain Pierce. While scarcely in accord with United States military doctrine which now forbids any expedient that tends to produce division of authority in an active theater establishment, this anomalous relationship had a double justification: care of the dead and return of remains

to the United States were conducted simultaneously.

There can be no doubt that both D. H. Rhodes and Chaplain Pierce were responsible for a further reduction in the percentage of unknowns. During 1901 only 9 of the 1,384 remains shipped from Manila to the United States were unidentified. Where Rhodes again demonstrated in his field work that a high score in identification was dependent on reducing to a minimum the period between burial and registration of the grave, Pierce demonstrated in his achievements at the Office of Identification an equally valid principle. In proposing the adoption of an aluminum identity disc as an item of the field kit, and in vigorously insisting that the collection and processing of all mortuary reports and related service records should become the responsibility of the central office, he envisioned the administrative apparatus for conducting identification on a scientific basis.

The number of remains returned during the years 1899-1902 from overseas theaters involved in the Spanish American War, the Philippine Insurrection

The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery near Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, France.
American Battle Monuments Commission



The accompanying article is the fifth on the development of the national cemetery system. The sixth, which will appear in January-February 1954 issue, will conclude the series with a discussion of present-day problems.

and the North China Expedition reached an approximate total of 5,931. Of this total 1,336 were interred at Arlington, while the San Francisco National Cemetery received 1,922. The residue were sent to relatives for burial in private plots or nearby national cemeteries. During the same period (1899-1902) there were 8,897 interments in all national cemeteries, including Civil War veterans, overseas dead and a small proportion of those who died in camps during the brief mobilization of 1898.

It is obvious that battle casualties incident to America's first thrust as a world power beyond her continental shores did not impose a serious tax on available grave space in the national system. Indeed, the record of interments year by year would indicate that future expansion of the system must be directed primarily toward the accommodation of living veterans who had been accorded the right of burial, and only incidentally for interment of the war dead. The Spanish American War and Philippine Insurrection, for instance, brought an increase of some 400,000 "eligible veterans." Even if it is assumed that no more than ten percent of these veterans might claim the privilege, the eventual total of interment would be four times the number of fatalities (10,680) from all causes suffered at home and abroad during those wars.

Notable improvements in provision for care and final disposition of remains, were furthered by two revolutionary innovations in American military organization. Establishment of the War Department General Staff and the Army War College in 1903, together with provision for the development of a General Staff Corps, furnished the elements of a modern command system. At the same time, steps were taken toward solving the increasingly complicated function of logistical support by assigning responsibility to the G-4 Section of the General Staff for planning and supervision of matters relating to procurement, supply and evacuation. Then, in 1912 the Quartermaster Department was reconstituted as a Corps and put on a military basis, with special service companies taking over many activities heretofore performed by civilian employees or details from the line. In keeping with the logic of this organizational scheme, the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service Company, as authorized by War Department General Orders No. 104, August 7, 1917, became the functional successor to D. H. Rhodes' Civilian Burial Corps.

Employment of the new command system in war not only eliminated many such divisions of authority as had characterized care and disposition of remains during the Philippine Insurrection, but provided a

more efficient field service organization for execution of the command responsibility in these respects. Briefly, theater commanders virtually abolished the lag of time between original burial and registration of the grave by having at their disposal a specialized service which effected the evacuation of remains from an active battle front to temporary military cemeteries in the rear, where registration of the grave accompanied original burial. Under direction of Charles C. Pierce, who was recalled from retirement and commissioned Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) in the Quartermaster Corps, the Graves Registration Service of World War I reduced the percentage of unknowns to less than three bodies (2.2 percent) for every hundred recovered. In World War II conditions of combat interposed new difficulties to processes of evacuation and identification, giving a comparable figure of 3.7 for that struggle.

In examining the impact of two world wars on the national cemetery system, one is confronted by three basic considerations. In the first place, continuous improvement in the organization and operating procedures of theater graves-registration services reduced the number of temporary burial places and thereby facilitated the final disposition of remains. Again, refinements in processes of body identification by supplementing such standard devices as the finger print and tooth chart with highly complex laboratory techniques tended, at least, to offset the destructive power of new weapons that otherwise would have created another category of "unidentifiables." Finally, steam and motor transportation by land, sea and air abolished every serious obstacle to the carriage of war remains from theaters in remote quarters of the globe to established cemeteries in the homeland. It therefore followed that the distribution of thousands of remains in temporary burial places no longer determined the location of cemeteries designed to serve as final resting places for the war dead.

If experience of the Spanish American War and Philippine Insurrection furnished any sort of clue, it seemed inevitable that these circumstances should, at the end of World War I, have imposed the burden of a sudden and unprecedented number of burials on the national cemeteries. But an unforeseen attitude of mind worked against any such expectation. Contrary to the belief that a vast majority of next of kin would desire the return of their dead, a large minority — forty percent of the whole — were swayed by the same motive that impelled the Athenians to depart from their traditional burial policy and, according to Thucydides, make an exception of those slain at Marathon, "who for their singular and extraordinary valor were interred on the spot where they fell." Theodore Roosevelt echoed these sentiments when he said that no higher tribute could be paid to the memory of his son Quentin and to thousands of his comrades in arms than the honor of burial in the soil where they fought and died.

A poll of the next of kin decreed that 31,591 dead

would remain in Europe, while 46,520 were to be returned to the United States. But of the latter not more than 12.5 percent, or approximately 5,800, sought burial in national cemeteries. In other words, interments in the cemeteries established abroad were about seven times the number laid to rest in the national cemeteries at home.

These decisions imposed on the War Department a three-fold responsibility. The first demanded immediate action in returning three-fifths of the war dead to the United States. The second required that prompt steps should be taken to plan and prepare suitable burial places for those remaining in Europe. Involving matters of no immediate concern, the third suggested study of a long-range program whereby expansion of the national cemeterial system would be geared to future requirements of some five million living veterans and such of their dependents as were eligible by law for burial.

The first responsibility and a considerable part of the second was discharged by the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), a special organization established within the Quartermaster Corps. A large field force designated as the AGRS. Q.M.C., in Europe, Col. H. F. Rethers commanding, prepared the remains for shipment to the United States. The return program reached an awesome culmination in the ceremonious entombment of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington in 1922. At the same time, Colonel Rethers carried forward the concentration of bodies destined for burial abroad in five locations tentatively selected as sites for United States military cemeteries.

Where the Civil War cemeteries were planned without conscious regard to the memorial aspect, being intended originally as simple burial places, the World War I military cemeteries in Europe were, with surrounding park areas, conceived as both memorials and burial places and developed in accordance with clearly defined principles looking to classical simplicity of design. These principles were embodied in a set of master plans which prescribed memorial and utilitarian features, landscaping, space utilization and access roads. Then, supplementing the specifications common to the system as a whole, the detailed plan for a particular cemetery was drawn in reference to the given number of remains assigned for burial in that cemetery.

Acting largely on suggestions of the National Commission of Fine Arts, a board composed of Assistant Secretary of War J. M. Wainwright, General of the Armies John J. Pershing and Quartermaster General H. L. Rogers affirmed the locations recommended by Colonel Rethers and designated two additional sites for United States military cemeteries. Another, making eight in all, was subsequently added. One, adjoining the civilian cemetery at Brookwood in Surrey County, England, would harbor the remains of servicemen who died in the United Kingdom and, contrary to policy applying to military cemeteries on the Continent, would continue to inter remains of members of the United States armed forces who might at

any future time die in the British Isles.

The final list included five cemeteries — Suresnes, Aisne-Marne, Somme, Oise Aisne and Flanders Field — identified with areas in which untried American divisions assigned to British and French commands stood shoulder to shoulder with their veteran Allies in stemming the last violent onslaught of the Hohenzollern armies and then joined in the victorious counter-attack. Two—St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne — recall triumphs in sectors confided by the Allied Generalissimo to the American Commander-in-Chief.

Secretary of War John W. Weeks prepared the draft of a bill describing the composition and duties of a commission which would be empowered by Congress to perform the following functions:

To prepare plans and estimates for the erection of suitable memorials to mark and commemorate the services of American forces in France, Belgium and Italy, and to erect these memorials at such places . . . as the commission shall determine, provided: That before any design or materials for such purposes is accepted by the commission, the said design or material shall be approved by the National Commission of Fine Arts.

This proposal was written into an act approved March 4, 1923, creating the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). However, Congress removed the commission from War Department control by requiring that all commissioners should be appointed by the President. Accordingly, General of the Armies Pershing became Chairman and served in this capacity until his death in 1948. For the rest, the commission was composed of six civilian members, with Major Xenophon H. Price, Corps of Engineers, now Colonel, USA Ret., serving as Executive Secretary.

Major Price established the commission's field office at Paris and, in close collaboration with the Chief, AGRS, QMC, in Europe, directed all engineering aspects of the memorial program. The policy governing this enterprise was based on a division of functions between two separate authorities. ABMC was to erect permanent headstones, construct utility buildings, chapels and other memorial features in the cemeteries and park areas and develop markers and other visual aids to supplement an elaborate guide book for the benefit of tourists visiting the battlefields. The War Department, acting through the AGRS in Europe, or a successor organization, would assume responsibility for maintenance of the memorials upon completion and transfer to the War Department.

In October 1933, after the chapels and monuments were so near completion that maintenance was taken over by AGRS, it was recommended that a new organization to be known as the "American War Memorials in Europe" should supersede the American Graves Registration Service and, on January 1, 1934, assume responsibility under the Secretary of War for administration of permanent military cemeteries and monuments in Europe.

While approved and briefly given effect, this ar-

rangement was terminated in consequence of Executive Order No. 5614, issued February 26, 1934, which required that all functions of administration pertaining to national cemeteries and memorials located in Europe be transferred from the War Department to the American Battle Monuments Commission. Accordingly, the Chief, American War Memorials in Europe, was instructed to complete the transfer by April 27, 1934.

With completion of this act, the permanent overseas cemeteries passed from jurisdiction of the War Department and operational control of the Quartermaster General. While serving the purpose originally sought in establishing national cemeteries for burial of the Civil War dead, the military cemeteries beyond the seas became a separate and self-contained system. Administered by an authority enjoying the great prestige of the General of the Armies and reporting directly to the President, the new system succeeded in giving permanence to its separation from the old one.

During the interval of peace between the two world wars, Congress gave some attention to the problem of expanding the national cemeterial system. Discussion of measures supported largely by the American Legion revealed that planning for future needs was to be determined, not by the number or distribution of war dead, but rather by the great centers of population in which living veterans, their wives and minor dependents were merged. Ambitious proposals contributed, at least to the addition of seven cemeteries to the national system, including Long Island near greater New York, Golden Gate close to San Francisco, Fort Snelling within the metropolitan area of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the Baltimore National Cemetery at Baltimore, Maryland. While meeting current demands, these additions may be characterized as a cautious step rather than a bold stride toward the future. Since consideration of the matter was resumed with a greater sense of urgency during World War II, only to be dropped after the conclusion of hostilities, it is proposed to reserve the final paper of this series for an examination of the problem in its many aspects.

World War II burst with even greater fury than the first titanic conflict between the Great Powers. America called approximately 15,000,000 men to the colors and, expressed in round figures, suffered 359,000 fatalities, of which 281,000 were recovered and given burial in temporary theater cemeteries. Congress empowered the Secretary of War to make, within certain limits, such disposition of these dead as the next of kin might direct. This task was delegated to The Quartermaster General, who established self-contained AGRS commands within those areas that had been assigned during hostilities to overseas theater establishments and caused a poll of the next of kin to be taken. Reaction in this instance was similar to the one following World War I; approximately three-fifths of the war dead were to be returned to the United States and two-fifths left abroad.

In all, some 171,000 casketed remains were delivered to next of kin in the United States. Of this total, 134,000 were interred in private plots, while 37,000, or about 20 percent of the whole, went to national cemeteries. At the same time, approximately 97,000 dead were, according to wishes of next of kin, buried abroad. This latter figure, it should be explained, includes about 14,000 remains which were interred in three national cemeteries — Honolulu, Puerto Rico and Sitka — outside the continental limits of the United States. Numbering 10,009, the unknown dead found their final resting place in military cemeteries beyond the seas.

The vicissitudes of war and peace had altered old relationships between the AGRS and ABMC when consideration was first given to the problem of providing burial places for those of the World War II dead that might be interred in the overseas theaters. After dissolution in 1934, the AGRS had been revived by war. Meanwhile, the German occupation of western Europe prevented ABMC from exercising control over all its cemeteries excepting Brookwood in England. Then, early in 1945, before the recession of German conquest restored these cemeteries to ABMC, the War Department, sensing the wishes of next of kin and influential members of Congress, formulated its basic plan for final disposition of the war dead at home and abroad.

Acting in this connection as the planning agent of the War Department, the Memorial Division not only recognized the divorcement of military cemeteries abroad from national cemeteries at home, but insisted that those established for the dead of World War II should be separate and apart from the group identified with World War I.

In keeping with this logic, 14 permanent military cemeteries were developed by various AGRS overseas commands and progressively transferred to ABMC upon completion of burials between July 1949 and June 1951. Like those of World War I, each one of the new system is rich in historic association — Cambridge in England, Margraten in Holland, Henri Chapelle and Neuville-en-Condroz in Belgium, Hamm in Luxembourg, five in France, including St. Laurent which overlooks the Normandy beaches where American, British, and Canadian troops stormed ashore to open Eisenhower's invasion route to the Elbe; two in Italy, Florence symbolizing the final triumph of the Fifth Army and Nettuno recalling its heroic stand in the Anzio beachhead; one at Tunis where Hitler's dream of an African empire perished and near the ancient battlefield where Scipio Africanus overthrew Hannibal, the Carthaginian; and lastly, Fort McKinley, in the suburbs of Manila, where MacArthur brought his epic march from Port Moresby to a victorious culmination.

Memorial Division planners took pains in drafting the plan of 1945 to justify the greater costs for construction and perpetual maintenance of military

cemeteries abroad in comparison to those which would be ultimately involved in returning the war dead to the homeland for burial either in private plots or in national cemeteries. They stated: "Final disposition

of our soldiers' remains, in accordance with the wishes of their loved ones, is an inherent obligation of the Government as a final gesture of a grateful country to those who paid the supreme sacrifice."

National Cemeteries and Public Policy



By EDWARD STEERE

GROWTH of the American system of national cemeteries has been conditioned from its beginning in 1862 to the present day by cross currents of executive action and legislative regulation. When the guns of Sumter called a national army into existence, both the War Department and the Congress took steps to insure that all who gave their lives in defense of the Republic should be interred in individual graves with registered headboards.

Congress, sensitive to the influence wielded by the Grand Army of the Republic, extended in the act of March 3, 1873, the right of burial to all honorably discharged veterans of the Civil War. The War Department, confronted after 1865 with burial problems arising from two decades of conflict with Indian tribes in the western territories, established additional national cemeteries and thus destroyed the complete identity of the system with the Civil War. Interment of those who fell beyond the seas in the Spanish American War followed as a matter of course the practice invoked on the Great Plains. Then, on June 11, 1899, the Secretary of War extended in an administrative interpretation of existing law and custom the right of burial to honorably discharged veterans of the conflict with Spain. Congress, 21 years later, gave this pronouncement the full force of law, and extended its provisions to the veterans of all wars, in the act approved April 15, 1920.

In the process of liberalizing requirements for burial it cannot be said that the War Department has acted as a restraining influence on the Congress. While opposing the law of 1873, the Department established a precedent for extension of the right to veterans of all wars. Then it took the initiative in opening up a large area which may be described as "second degree eligibility," that is, eligibility conferred by virtue of the family relation and, as now reckoned, amounting to 80 percent of first degree eligibles. By the end of World War I the practice of interring wives beside or with the remains of their soldier husbands had become general. Special requests for the interment of minor dependents and dependent adult daughters were seldom denied.

These additions to the law governing eligibility had not as yet caused any of the grave consequences predicted by the War Department in its opposition to the act which extended eligibility to Civil War veterans. During the years 1873-1917 national cemeteries offered little attraction as burial places to Civil War veterans. A large majority resided in remote rural communities; many joined in the westward migration. Less than 3.5 percent of all eligible veterans, including those of the Spanish War, used the privilege.

Extension of the burial privilege to the dead and surviving veterans of World War I did not immediately impose an insuperable burden on the national cemeteries. Of the 46,520 remains returned after 1919 to the United States, an estimated 12.5 percent, or approximately 5,300, were interred in national cemeteries. This is considerably less than the total of interments (8,760) during the five peaceful years from 1907 to 1912. But the 5 million veterans who acquired eligibility by the law of April 15, 1920, posed a problem that could not be long ignored.

The problem, indeed, was harnessed to forces that were rapidly completing the transformation of America from a rural to an urban society. Between 1860 and 1890 the ratio of urban to rural dwellers rose from one-sixth to one-third. In 1930 the two elements reached an even balance. Thereafter, the rate of increase of urban over rural communities proceeded at a greatly accelerated pace. By 1950 there were 151 urban centers, each having a population in excess of 100,000. The 14 leading metropolitan areas contained over 42 million, a figure considerably greater than the combined population of the North and South in 1870, when reinterment of the Civil War dead was brought to completion.

The War Department was not remiss in appreciating the attractive influence of location at a growing metropolitan area. It was estimated as early as 1883 that 10 percent of the veteran population in and near New York City would probably seek burial in the Cypress Hills National Cemetery. A similar situation applied during the next decade in the San Francisco area. Provision from time to time for enlargement of

Cypress Hills and the San Francisco National Cemetery reveals a disposition on the part of the War Department to make provision within the system for the accommodation of veterans. Yet the trend toward urbanization, together with the addition of 4,757,240 World War I veterans, imposed complications that remained unsolved until World War II compounded the problem by contributing some 15 million additional veterans.

A survey of available grave space in 1929, just as a balance was struck between urban and rural dwellers, disclosed that 84 cemeteries in the national system afforded 190,922 grave sites. At the current rate of 2,779 burials a year, this space would last until 1993. While reassuring at first glance, the survey also revealed that a majority of burials took place in nine national cemeteries which were located in metropolitan areas, and which offered approximately 80,000 grave sites, or less than one-half of the available total. Moreover, 58,000 of these sites were situated in Arlington and Soldiers' Home, leaving 22,000 to accommodate the veteran population in other metropolitan areas.

The survey of 1929 and a series of related studies induced the War Department to recommend appropriations during the next decade for seven additional national cemeteries. The seven were established as follows: Fort Sam Houston (San Antonio, Texas), 1931; Fort Rosecrans (San Diego, Calif.), 1934; Long Island (Farmingdale, L. I., N. Y.), 1936; Fort Bliss (El Paso, Texas), 1936; Baltimore (Baltimore, Md.), 1936; Golden Gate (San Bruno, Calif.), 1938; Fort Snelling (Minneapolis, Minn.), 1939.

It will be noted that Long Island, Golden Gate, Baltimore, and Fort Sam Houston were intended to supplement or expand existing cemeteries, while Fort Rosecrans, which was established at San Diego upon request of the Navy Department, and Fort Bliss at El Paso were designed to meet current burial needs of the Armed Forces. Only in the case of Fort Snelling was location dictated entirely by an intent to accommodate the veteran population of a large metropolitan area. Fort Snelling, therefore, marks a point of departure in cemeterial policy which, carried to completion, would divorce the system from its original purpose by transforming the burial privilege accorded veterans to a recognized right of demanding equal convenience in enjoyment of the privilege.

This project was sponsored by the Veterans Council of Minnesota, a body including members of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Spanish American War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. Proceeding on an assumption that the Secretary of War would exercise his authority under existing law to establish the desired cemetery, its sponsors were disconcerted by an opinion of the Acting Secretary, Mr. Harry H. Woodring, to the effect that an application of this authority presupposed the availability of funds and that, since the Department was obliged to proceed along the usual channels

to secure an appropriation, it appeared that the matter under discussion was a question of public policy which should be decided by Congress.

Senator Henrik Shipstead and Representative Melvin J. Maas, of Minnesota, thereupon introduced companion bills directing that the Secretary of War establish five national-area cemeteries.

In a hearing held May 20, 1936, before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, Quartermaster General Henry Gibbins presented the position of the War Department. After reiterating the Secretary's nonconcurrence in the bill "for reasons that he now has under the statutes general authority for the establishment of national cemeteries and for further reasons of economy," the General admitted under cross-examination that the Department was not unsympathetic toward the idea of making burial facilities accessible to veterans throughout the country. He added: "But the attitude heretofore has been that the War Department preferred to expand existing national cemeteries rather than to multiply the number of these cemeteries."

War Department opposition to the national-area cemeteries project prevailed. Yet the victory was not complete; an act approved June 23, 1936, and amended May 13, 1937, authorized the establishment of a national cemetery on the military reservation of Fort Snelling to serve the veteran population of the St. Paul-Minneapolis area.

Mounting pressure for additional national cemeteries near metropolitan areas during the decade which witnessed inclusion of a majority of the population in urban centers compelled the War Department to restate its policy in regard to expansion of the system. While still questioning the practicability of furnishing equal convenience to all veterans, The Quartermaster General proposed that the War Department should remain neutral, "limiting its activities to research and supply the Congress the results thereof, giving them all the needed information to enable them to decide."

The Senate Committee on Military Affairs referred S 948, 75th Congress, to the War Department for comment. The bill authorized the Secretary of War to accept donations of land from those states in

Monument to crew of USS Bennington, Fort Rosecrans, San Diego.



which no national cemetery existed and, upon acquisition of such land, authorized and directed him "to establish thereon a national cemetery and to provide for the care and maintenance of such national cemetery."

The total estimated cost of development ran to \$2,500,000, with an annual maintenance charge of \$500,000. Influenced largely by an adverse report of the Bureau of the Budget, the Secretary of War advised that since "these cemeteries, if established, would be mainly for the benefit of those no longer in the service, it is the opinion of the Department that the question of their establishment is one of general public policy which Congress should decide."

Although an act approved June 29, 1938, authorized the 20 cemeteries proposed in S 948, an incomplete response of the states in donating lands held the program in abeyance. Three years later, Oregon donated a 201-acre tract near Portland. In deference, however, to President Roosevelt's opinion that no lands should be developed for cemeterial purposes during hostilities, the Secretary of War deferred action under the authorization until 1950, when establishment of the Willamette National Cemetery was announced in General Orders No. 1 of that year.

Congress took no positive interest in cemeterial matters until mobilization of the forces during World War II approached the 15 million mark. In October 1943 members of the House Committee on Military Affairs, 78th Congress, prepared H. R. 3582, a bill providing for "one National Cemetery in every State and such other national cemeteries in the states, territories and possessions as may be needed for the burial of veterans." Then, desirous of detailed information, the Committee requested that the War Department prepare a report which would include estimates on the total number of veterans eligible for burial in each state, the space required to meet all demands, total costs and "recommendations for execution of plans based upon the proposed legislation." In short, Congress invited the War Department to offer advice as well as information.

The Department responded in a manner that completely disavowed the stand it had taken 8 years before in opposing the establishment of 5 national-area cemeteries. On February 7, 1944, The Quartermaster General submitted a study in which he acknowledged the obligation "to provide adequate and suitable places of burial for all honorably discharged veterans" and recommended that 69 new national cemeteries represented "the minimum number to meet all requirements of H. R. 3582 and the potential veteran requirements."

The honeymoon of cemeterial planning continued over to the 79th Congress. A revised bill, H. R. 516, provided for one national cemetery in every state and territory and such other national cemeteries, or enlargements of existing ones, as may be needed in the states, territories and possessions.

An exhaustive report entitled "National Cemeteries. A Study in the OQMG Upon Request of the Com-

mittee of Military Affairs, Reference H. R. 516" (Feb. 15, 1945) embraced the doctrine that the privilege of burial conferred a right to demand equal convenience in pursuit of the privilege. In justifying its condemnation of the policy that had permitted place of death in service, rather than future convenience of eligible veterans and dependents, to determine the location of national cemeteries, the report revealed that one-fourth of all burials during the past 5 years had occurred in 61 national cemeteries remote from populous centers, while three-fourths took place in 9 cemeteries enjoying the advantage of location near metropolitan areas.

The OQMG proposed that the required number of new national cemeteries should be determined by that number of population areas in which the distance to a centrally located cemetery would not ordinarily exceed 250 miles. But, since H. R. 516 required the allotment of cemeteries by states, territories and possessions, the actual calculation of potential eligibles was based on political divisions. Population areas, however, disregarded state boundaries; southwestern Nevada, for instance, fell within the Los Angeles area, while most of eastern New Mexico went to the area in which El Paso, Texas, was the central point.

In view of the fact that a 250-mile radius determined the number of population areas to be served by a single cemetery, requirements as to burial space were related to the veteran population in these areas. An estimate for World War II veterans was derived from the number of "Registrants," less an assumed number of war fatalities. The accepted figure stood at 12,394,552, to which 134,415 Spanish American War and 3,897,483 World War I veterans were added, giving a total of 16,426,450. Residence of World War II veterans was determined by place of registration. World War II "Registrants" in any state, together with the known number of Spanish American War and World War I veterans, gave the number of potential veteran eligibles within that state. This total was then broken down by population areas. The calculation of "Probable Burials" was based on an assumption that 16.66 percent of eligible veterans would use the facilities thus provided. This reckoning gave a total of 2,736,646. The addition of 80 percent of this latter figure for wives and widows gave a grand total of 4,925,963 "Probable Burials." Allowance of an average safety factor of approximately 10 percent called for 5,407,989 grave spaces in all. On this basis the single cemetery assigned to Nevada had a grave capacity of 7,500. Los Angeles, one of the four allotted to California, had 100,000 grave sites; the other three, San Diego, Fresno and Sacramento, had 50,000 each.

An accompanying survey of the existing system indicated that only 14 cemeteries, such as Long Island and Golden Gate, offered the advantages of both location and grave space that would justify inclusion in the new scheme. Then there were 8 which could be used until the limited amount of space was ex-

hausted. The remaining 54, all of which had been established under the reburial program of 1865-70, were to be closed and maintained as a memorial to the Civil War dead. After making these selections from the old system, the report recommended that 79 new national cemeteries should be authorized. The total estimated cost was \$120,000,000—a figure, it was pointed out, approximating the cost of one capital ship and, it might be added, a mere bagatelle when compared to the billions expended in making America the arsenal of democracy.

By the time S. 524, the companion bill to H. R. 516, which had been approved by the Senate, was reported and introduced for debate in the House, Congress had lost much of its tolerance toward lavish spending. Cemetery associations regarded the bill as a threat to private enterprise. One such group in the Middle West rose to defense of the country graveyard as the spiritual anchor of the American family. An editorial utterance of a Denver periodical angrily denounced the project as a scheme of socialized burial dreamed up by the long-haired bureaucrats of Washington. However extravagant and unjust, such jibes, along with the spade work of representatives looking to the interests of private cemetery owners, had their effect. The bill was returned on June 20, 1946, to committee, from which it never emerged.

While rejection of the plea for 79 new cemeteries suggested the advisability of either curtailing or freezing the burial privilege, Congress, acting on request of the Department of the Army, embodied all precedents, customs and statutes affecting eligibility in Public Law 526, approved May 14, 1948 (62 Stat. 234; 24 U.S.C. Supp. IV, 281). This instrument now confers the privilege on four general classifications of persons: (1) those who die while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, namely male and female members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Service; (2) those who die subsequent to service in the Armed Forces; (3) American citizens who serve during war in the armed forces of an allied nation; (4) specified dependents of all first degree eligibles. The vast majority of potential eligibles, it should be noted, fall into the second and fourth classifications.

An executive interpretation of this law includes other categories of persons, such as certain personnel of the Coast and Geodetic Survey and Public Health Service, who may become identified with the Armed Forces in war. These provisions are significant, not because of the numbers involved, but rather as an indication—perhaps a warning—of the trends of total war toward enlisting the services of professional groups that have only a remote connection with the military establishment in time of peace.

From the viewpoint of physical expansion, the period so far appears to be one of virtual stagnation. Despite a flood of bills each session, 13 during the 82nd Congress, only four national cemeteries—Alton, a half-acre lot containing Civil War burials; Black

Hills; Willamette and Fort Logan—with a total of 469 acres, have been established in the continental United States since 1946.

In the sphere of policy relating to national cemeteries both the Congress and the Department of the Army, under present conditions, encounter manifold difficulties that impede a proper coordination of legislative and executive action. Each, in turn, has taken the initiative in efforts to create national-area cemeteries, only to be opposed by the other. The Congress, aware that either a piecemeal approach or a blanket solution, after the manner of H. R. 516, would, on the one hand, arouse sectional jealousies, and, on the other, provoke the combined opposition of cemetery associations, seems reluctant to embark on any constructive program. The Army, having once been left in the lurch for want of legislative support, feels constrained to occupy its old position and let Congress bear the burden of responsibility in matters pertaining to public policy.

Whatever the validity of such conflicting presentations, the Congress and the Department of the Army are confronted with four major problems than can only be solved by courageous statesmanship and administrative ability of a high order. These problems may be stated in the following terms:

1. The numerical buildup of potential eligibles during 35 years since World War I from about one to 42 million has extended the privilege of burial in national cemeteries to approximately one-fourth of the national population. During the same period the population has increased from 105,000,000 to 162,000,000.

2. The percentage of war dead and surviving veterans who have sought burial over the years indicates a substantial increase in both categories; that of the first has risen from 12.5 of World War I fatalities to approximately 20 percent of the dead of World War II and the Korean campaign returned to the homeland, while in the second category 10 percent are now using the privilege as compared to less than 3.5 of eligible Civil War veterans between 1873 and World War I.

3. The enormous accumulation of potential eligibles, accompanied by a larger proportion of veterans now seeking burial, is reflected in the fact that total interments in national cemeteries, excluding World War II and Korean dead, shows an increase of 137 percent during the decade ending with the fiscal year 1953.

4. A study conducted in 1948, midway in the decade 1943-53, reveals that 82.3 percent of all remains interred during that year in national cemeteries, excepting Arlington, came from areas within a 50-mile radius from the place of interment.

An analysis of the social forces giving rise to these trends presents no serious difficulty. They have already been indicated: one is the urbanization of American society; the other is the growth of armaments based on universal military service and the consequent enrollment of great numbers who represent a true cross-section of the nation's population. These circumstances tend not only to publicize the national cemeterial system, but add to the sentimental motive an economic reason for taking advantage of the system. Rising land values and mounting burial costs

in metropolitan areas where a large majority of veterans reside accentuates the economic consideration, while veterans' organizations best preserve in large urban centers the sentimental bond forged by comradeship of arms during war.

Any positive prediction as to just how the future operation of these forces will influence a solution of the problem presupposes a gift of prophesy. At the same time, intelligent men are aware that solemn commitments made in the past exert a compelling influence in the determination of policies intended to govern future action. Payment of homage due to those who dedicate their lives to the defense of the Republic has always struck a responsive chord in the hearts of the American people.

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THE NATIONAL CEMETERY SYSTEM

AND

THE CIVIL WAR

- Virtually all national cemeteries established prior to 1900 have some connection to the Civil War. Approximately 73 cemeteries were established by 1870 directly as a result of the Civil War. They contained the graves of approximately 300,000 Union dead. Tragically, more than 140,000 of them were "unknown."
- Later national cemeteries included post cemeteries that contained the remains of Civil War veterans who remained on active duty and died after the war and cemeteries associated with soldiers' homes, which contained the remains of disabled veterans who died after the cessation of hostilities.
- The series of articles by Edward Steere, titled "Shrines of the Honored Dead," is the best scholarly analysis of the development of the National Cemetery System and the influence of the war on the system and, indeed, the entire practice of military graves registration and care of the dead.