Foreign Military and Civilian Burials in VA National Cemeteries

World War II Allied Forces and Enemies

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors

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Headstones of Privates Boisclair and Desjardins in the Allied Section (Plot Z) at Fort Richardson National Cemetery. This was the third and final resting place for these Canadian soldiers. (NCA)

Cover: Graves of four Canadian soldiers on Kiska Island. These graves were meant to be the first in a Canadian cemetery established on the island. By December 1943, the graves would be moved to a joint cemetery for Canadians and Americans within the perimeter of Kiska Village. After the war, all the graves in the joint cemetery were moved to the post cemetery at Fort Richardson near Anchorage, AK. (National Archives and Records Administration)

National Cemetery Administration
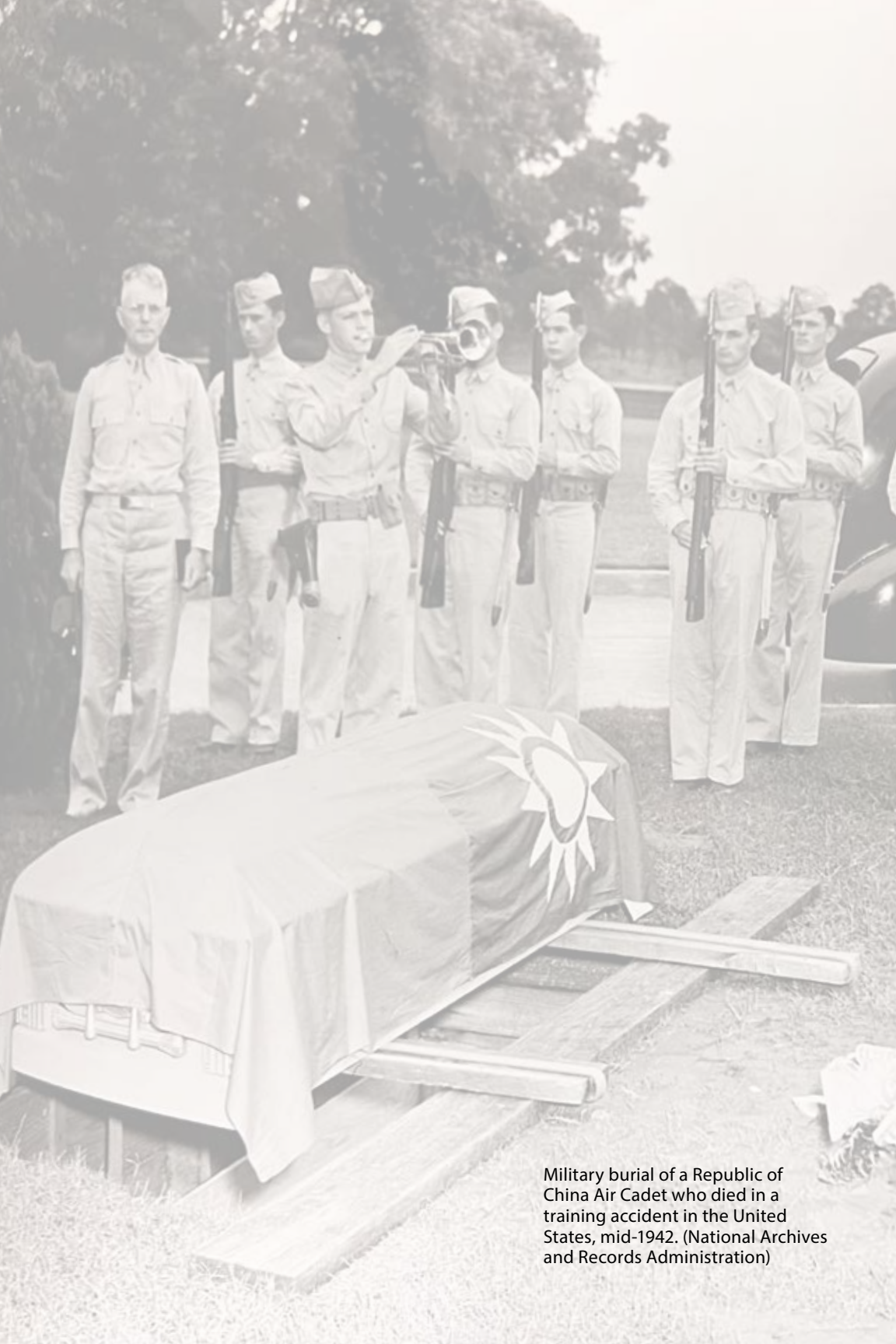
World War II Commemorative Series

Foreign Military and Civilian Burials in VA National Cemeteries: World War II Allied Forces and Enemies

History Program
Office of Engagement and Memorial Innovation
National Cemetery Administration
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

www.cem.va.gov

2023

Military burial of a Republic of China Air Cadet who died in a training accident in the United States, mid-1942. (National Archives and Records Administration)

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Acknowledgments and Credits

Special thanks to Denis McDonough, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Matt Quinn, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, for their support of this publication, which was developed by the National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) History Program, Office of Engagement and Memorial Innovation (OEMI).

Photographs used in this publication come from several sources, which are acknowledged in the captions. Those in the public domain belong to NCA, the associated military service, Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration. Additional photos were provided by the Chemung County Historical Society; Library and Archives Canada; Mollie Pressler, Lordsburg Hidalgo County Museum; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries; and The University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections. The map was created by Jerry L. McGee, Landscape Architect, NCA Design and Construction Service.

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Entrance to Annapolis National Cemetery, MD, ca. 1900.
(Maryland State Archives)

Part I
From Practice to Policy: Allied and Enemy Burials in U.S. National Cemeteries

Burial Practices during the Civil War

From the beginning of the National Cemetery system during the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), foreign nationals have been buried in U.S. military cemeteries and plots. Prior to the twentieth century, the circumstances surrounding each interment varied. One of the earliest burials of a foreign national was a Russian sailor at Annapolis National Cemetery, Maryland, in 1864.

While European powers such as England and France were technically neutral during the Civil War, both countries stood to gain more from a Confederate victory than a Union one. The only world power sympathetic to the Northern cause was Russia, whose military officers

Russian sailors aboard the *Osliaba* at Alexandria, VA, Dec. 1863. (Library of Congress)

volunteered for and fought with Union forces. In fall 1862, there was discussion among the three European powers to propose a six-month armistice to include the suspension of the blockade on Southern ports opening them for trade—though nothing came of this. The following year, Russian Tzar Alexander II dispatched his Atlantic and Pacific Naval Squadrons to the U.S. ports of New York and San Francisco due to rising tensions with France and England over Poland, which had been annexed by and divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and whether it should exist as an independent state.

While squadron commanders were not instructed to assist the Union, their presence provided moral support. The Russians arrived in New York in September 1863, thirty months after the start of the war many had thought would be short lived and days after the Union defeat at Chickamauga. They were given a warm welcome that included shipboard ceremonies, a procession down Broadway, and later a banquet and dance at the Astor House, a luxury hotel in lower Manhattan. In December 1863, the fleet of six vessels sailed up the Potomac River and anchored at Alexandria, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., where they were again heartily welcomed.

The Atlantic Squadron would not be summoned home until April 1864 and left some crew on American soil. Nicholas Demidoff served on board the Russian corvette *Almaz*, which had docked in Annapolis, Maryland, in February 1864. Demidoff and another sailor had gone ashore looking for libations and were displeased

[Correspondence of the Baltimore Sun.]
ANNAPOLIS, Feb. 6, 1864.
The Killing of a Russian Soldier—Robberies, &c.

A seaman named Dimedoff, belonging to the Russian steamship Almaz, Captain P. Zelenoy, now in our harbor, was shot dead on Thursday evening, by Wm. T. League, keeper of a restaurant, near the east gate of the Naval Academy. League was immediately arrested and taken to the military guard house, on Duke of Glocester street, but subsequently turned over to the civil authority, and committed to jail by Justice Owen M. Taylor. The body of the deceased was removed to the dead house in the General Hospital, Division No. 1, (Naval Academy,) where an inquest was commenced yesterday morning under the auspices of Coroner Thompson, and a post-mortem examination held. The jury then adjourned to the City Hall, on Main street, where the investigation was resumed, and is still progressing. League is a native of Baltimore, but has been in business here for two years.

The remains of the deceased were followed to the grave this morning, and buried according to the ceremonies of the Greek Church. A large concourse of Russian officers, marines and sailors, members of the Legislature and a military escort of United States officers and soldiers were present at the burial. The ceremony was not only novel, but imposing.

Newspaper article on the killing of a Russian seaman in Annapolis, MD. (*Baltimore Sun*; Baltimore, MD; Mon., Feb. 8, 1864)

with the cider offered them. A fight broke out and the owner of a nearby establishment shot Demidoff. The Russian sailor was taken to the Naval Academy hospital but died of his wounds. After a traditional Russian Orthodox ceremony, he was interred in Annapolis National Cemetery, which had been established in 1862 after Congress authorized President Abraham Lincoln to create cemeteries "for the [Union] soldiers who shall die in the service of the country."

The Civil War brought about not only the first burial of a member of a foreign military in the new national cemeteries, but it also initiated the burial of prisoners of war (POWs) in these same cemeteries. Over the four years of war, thousands of Confederate POWs were detained in prisons across Northern states, and many would be buried there.

Prison camps in Woodlawn, New York, and on islands in New York Harbor and in the Delaware River contributed to the large numbers of Confederate POWs buried at Woodlawn, Cypress Hills (New York), and Finn's Point (New Jersey) national cemeteries, respectively. Where there was no nearby national cemetery to move the POW remains, the prison cemeteries—such as Camp Chase and Confederate Stockade in Ohio—were often abandoned after the war with minimal, if any care until the early decades of the twentieth century.

Ca. 1934 headstone of a Russian sailor at Annapolis National Cemetery, MD. The grave was originally marked by a Russian Orthodox Cross and included the name of his vessel. (NCA)

Seven years after the Civil War ended there were 305,492 burials in seventy-four national cemeteries and several soldiers' lots; approximately 45 percent were unknowns. While the vast majority were Union soldiers who fell in battle or who died while on active duty during the conflict, they were joined by thousands of civilians: nurses, laundresses, cooks, Quartermaster Corps employees, and the so-called contraband of war—formerly-enslaved men, women, and children. Confederate POWs accounted for more than 20,000 burials.

Wood headboards on Confederate graves at Woodlawn National Cemetery, NY, Decoration Day 1875. These prisoners of war graves would not receive permanent headstones until 1907. (Chemung County Historical Society)

Post-War Evolution of the National Cemeteries

After the Civil War, national cemeteries continued to be used not just for the burial of U.S. military personnel but for all those who died while in the care or service of the federal government. Allied military personnel were often buried in national cemeteries as a courtesy. National cemeteries near the port cities of New York; Philadelphia; Hampton,

"Pershing's Chinese"

Twelve men identified as both Chinese refugees and civilian employees of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps are interred in San Antonio National Cemetery, Texas. They were among the 427 Mexican Chinese who departed Mexico along with General John J. Pershing's forces after his unsuccessful pursuit of Francisco "Pancho" Villa in February 1917. Due to the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), Pershing had to request permission from the War Department to bring them across the border.

"Pershing's Chinese"—a term that the American press began to use when referring to the refugees— were first settled in Columbus, New Mexico, before being sent to Fort Sam Houston a few months later. In Texas, they worked as laborers, carpenters, and cooks at Camp Wilson (Camp Travis), Fort Sam Houston, and Kelly Field in the lead up to U.S. entry in World War I. On July 12, 1917, the refugees hosted "The Chinese Oriental Night" at the Menger Hotel in San Antonio to raise funds for the American Red Cross. They prepared all the food and served at the dinner.

Following his success in World War I, Pershing, with the assistance of William Tracy Page—a former Immigration Bureau officer in the Philippines who had been assigned as a civilian adviser to the Chinese refugees—began a campaign to secure permanent status for them. Congress passed Public Resolution 29 in 1921 and in January 1922, the Immigration Service began registering Chinese refugees in San Antonio as permanent residents of the United States. Many stayed in the area, continuing to work on the military installations. The Chinese buried in the national cemetery died between December 1917 and December 1921.

Headstone of one of "Pershing's Chinese" at San Antonio National Cemetery. All are interred in Section H, formerly a post section of the cemetery. (NCA)

General John J. Pershing greeting some of the Mexican Chinese at Ellington Field, Houston, TX, February 1920. (Library of Congress via UTSA Digital Collections)
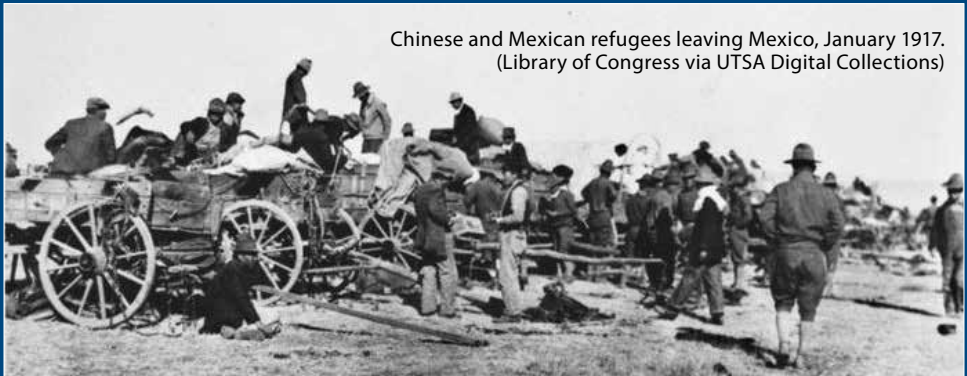
Chinese and Mexican refugees leaving Mexico, January 1917. (Library of Congress via UTSA Digital Collections)

Virginia; and Charleston, South Carolina, became the final resting places of numerous foreign sailors and marines.

Most interments of foreigners took place in official and unofficial "post sections" of national cemeteries. Designated post sections had different rules and regulations from the larger national cemetery. They were used by local military installations—forts, posts, garrisons—located near the national cemetery for the burial of family members of officers and soldiers, certain classes of government employees, and general prisoners who died while under the jurisdiction of the War Department. Unofficial post sections were often established in underused portions of national cemeteries for similar burials, or in the case of some of the Civil War-era national cemeteries, as designated civilian sections.

In one post section at Beaufort National Cemetery, South Carolina, under a large private headstone, are the remains of Don Saturnino de Echevarria, a Spanish captain of the steamer *Pedro*. He died at the state-run quarantine station (where ill passengers and crew of incoming vessels were held so as not to introduce disease to the U.S. population) in Charleston harbor in October 1886. Initially buried at the station, a newspaper article described an earthquake that struck during the funeral as the priest said, "and the earth shall open and give up its dead," greatly surprising those in attendance. When the federal government took over the quarantine station in the early 1900s, it moved twelve sets of remains—"officers, enlisted men and civilians"—and their headstones to the national cemetery at Beaufort.

Private marker of Spanish sea captain at Beaufort National Cemetery, SC. (NCA)

The British Are Coming —
To Cypress Hills National Cemetery

Established in 1862, Cypress Hills National Cemetery was originally confined to the small Union Grounds lot within the private Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York. Some 3,400 Union soldiers and 356 Confederate prisoners of war who died in New York City hospitals were buried there. In 1884, with the Union Grounds nearly full, the War Department purchased a tract of more than 15 acres, a mile to the south on Jamaica Avenue.

In 1908, the new section of Cypress Hills National Cemetery became the final resting place of fourteen British naval personnel from an earlier war—the American Revolution. Their remains were discovered in a brick vault by laborers working at Fort Hancock, in Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Though initially thought to be the remains of soldiers, a newspaper article about the discovery led a clergyman at Trinity Church in Manhattan to write the Army about a memorial plaque in the church.

On it was a dedication to British Naval officer Hamilton Douglas Hallyburton and "Twelve more young gentlemen and one common Seaman." All supposedly froze to death at Sandy Hook in late December 1783 after they had left their ship to go after deserters. At one time a monument had marked their common grave, but it was reported to have been destroyed by French seamen, and the grave lost. As a result, Hallyburton's "unhappy Mother" had a plaque erected at Trinity to commemorate their deaths.

The Army contacted the British Embassy regarding disposition of the remains, but failing to receive a response, had them reinterred at Cypress Hills; first each in a separate grave, then once it was clear names could not be matched to a specific set of remains, in one common grave. A granite marker was erected in 1909. Thirty years later, when another monument was erected on the site of the burial vault, newspaper coverage incorrectly stated that the remains had been sent back to England. Almost another thirty years passed before a local historian "rediscovered" the remains at the national cemetery.

Headstone of fourteen British sailors who died at Sandy Hook, NJ, a few months after the end of the American Revolution. (NCA)

World War I and the Formulation of Burial Policy

The United States late entry into World War I on April 6, 1917, limited the number of foreign-national POWs and Allied interments in national cemeteries. However, it was during this time the U.S. Army solidified policy on burials of these groups.

Because hostilities ended six months after the United States assumed sole control of its forces in combat (American forces first entered the trenches in France in May 1917 but were under that country's command), only a relatively small number of German POWs reached the United States. Most prisoners were German sailors whose vessels were in U.S. or U.S.-controlled ports when war was declared. The first were 353 men aboard the German merchant raider SMS *Cormoran* anchored in Apra Harbor, Guam, on the day that war was declared. In April 1918, the German submarine crew of the captured *U-58* were transported to the United States for internment at Fort McPherson, Georgia; they were the first POWs to arrive from overseas.

Numbers of German POWs held in the U.S. prison camps never exceeded 1,500; and just over one hundred died in the United States and were buried in military cemeteries. Most were eventually moved to Chattanooga National Cemetery, Tennessee, but the twenty-one buried at Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, Utah, were left alone. Three German Imperial Navy POWs being treated for tuberculosis at the hospital at Fort Lyon, Colorado, were buried in that cemetery.

During World War I, the only foreign national Allied burials in the United States were several French sailors interred at Cypress Hills National Cemetery. Three French warships *Marseillaise, Gloire* and *Montcalm*, had arrived at the port of New York in October 1918, and later that month, its sailors marched in the fourth Liberty Loan Parade—a patriotic event to promote the sale of war bonds. Many contracted influenza and were treated at the U.S. Naval Hospital on the Brooklyn Naval Yard.

Twenty-five French patients died between October 1918 and January 1919 and were buried in an unused section of the national cemetery.

Their graves were first marked by black wood crosses with bronze name plates. Ceremonies were held at the graves on Bastille Day and Armistice Day in 1919 and 1920. At the 1920 Armistice Day event, a 12-foot-tall granite cross monument—executed by the well-known New York City memorial designers and builders Farrington, Gould & Hoagland—was dedicated. In 1928, the remains of four sailors were returned to France for burial, leaving twenty-one in the cemetery's "French Section."

"Opening of the Allied Cemetery at Cypress Hills, Brooklyn, N.Y." The photograph, taken November 4, 1918, shows eighteen marked graves. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Initially, burial of "friendly" foreign nationals was done as a military courtesy. As a result of U.S. experience in World War I, in August 1941, Army regulations (AR 210-500, May 16, 1933) were updated to formalize burials of "friendly" foreign nationals in national cemeteries:

> *In time of national emergency, the remains of officers and enlisted men of the armed forces of other countries who die within the continental limits of the United States while serving as instructors or students with the armed forces of the United States may be buried in any post cemetery or post section of any national cemetery without expense to the United States other than for opening, closing, and marking of the grave.*

Monument to French sailors who died of the flu during World War I and the smaller individual markers on each grave. (NCA)

A few months later, this language would be updated to include armed forces of other countries who die while engaged in promoting national defense in the United States.

The post-World War I years would also see another group of Allied forces buried in the national cemeteries. Prior to the U.S. declaration of war on April 6, 1917, an estimated 40,000 Americans volunteered for the Canadian Expeditionary Forces (CEF). Hundreds more enlisted and served in the Royal Army and Navy, particularly the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF) serving in France and Belgium. By swearing an oath of allegiance to the British monarchy, Americans risked losing U.S. citizenship. A smaller, but perhaps better known, group of some 70 to 200 Americans joined the French Foreign Legion. Established in the early nineteenth century, the legion was open to foreign recruits who wished to serve in the French Army.

Additionally, hundreds of Americans served as pilots in British and French flying squadrons—by one estimate 455 served in the Royal Flying Corps, Royal Naval Air Service, and Royal Air Force. In 1916, the French government endorsed the idea for an all-American squadron to promote the French cause in the United States. During the war, more than 250 Americans served in French squadrons, including thirty-eight in the famous *Escadrille Américaine* or Lafayette Escadrille.

Following the conclusion of the World War I, Congress passed legislation to extend burial benefits to American citizens who served with the military forces "of any government at war with Germany or Austria."

With the start of World War II in Europe in 1939, the United States sought to remain neutral while finding ways to support its Allies there. Neutrality ended with the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The United States would soon find itself fighting enemies across both the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. More than sixteen million Americans served in the conflict, and more than 405,300 died—the majority of these being combat deaths. And as with World War I, the federal government would not only take responsibility for the American dead, but the remains of Allies and enemies alike who died while undergoing military training, in combat operations, or as prisoners of war.

The first booklet in the series *America's World War II Burial Program* tells the story of how service men and women who perished abroad found permanent burial overseas or were repatriated between 1947-1951, with about 20 percent resting in the U.S. national cemeteries. On the following pages, the burials of Allies and enemies in these same cemeteries will be explored.
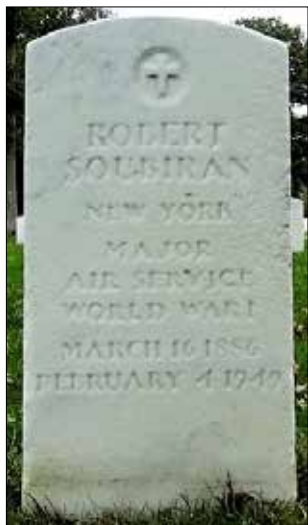
Robert Soubiran was the eighteenth American to fly with the famed Lafayette Escadrille in World War I. Buried at Long Island National Cemetery, NY, his headstone only reflects his U.S. military service.

Herman Chatkoff, buried at Baltimore National Cemetery, MD, served in the French Air Force but was not a part of the Lafayette Escadrille, despite what his headstone states. (NCA)

German Monuments to WWI POW Dead: Ceremony and Controversy

The placement of monuments to German World War I POW dead in the 1930s provides insight into the changing American attitudes toward Germany and the growing specter of Nazism.

On Memorial Day 1933, at the Fort Douglas Post Cemetery near Salt Lake City, Utah, a 15-foot-tall granite monument was dedicated over the graves of twenty-one German prisoners who had died while confined in the United States from 1917 to 1918. The Art Moderne structure was the work of the German American sculptor Arno Alfred Steinicke. A figure kneels atop a stele inscribed with the German *Bundesadler* or Federal Eagle; a bronze plaque lists the names of the deceased - all civilian except one.

Funds for the monument were donated by German Americans of the United States and the American Legion of Utah. The American Legion was formed in March 1919 by members of the American Expeditionary Forces and chartered by Congress later that year as a patriotic Veterans organization. As part of the dedication ceremony, the German government—then led by Adolph Hitler—bestowed a medal to an American physician who attended the ailing POWs; German choral music was sung; and flowers were dropped on the monument from a U.S. Army plane that flew low over the cemetery.

World War I German monument at Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, UT. (NCA)

Two years after the dedication, Germany requested permission to erect a monument on three graves at Chattanooga National Cemetery that contained the remains of twenty-two German POWs. The POWs had died and been buried at Hot Springs, North Carolina, but were moved by the army in February 1933 to Chattanooga. At that time, the national cemetery already contained the remains of fifty-four German POWs in individual graves each with a government-furnished headstone containing name, rank, and date of death. While the identities of those who died at Hot Springs were known, names could not be attributed to a specific set of remains and thus remained unmarked.

The monument design and inscription proposed by Germany were approved by the U.S. Army Quartermaster General in March 1935. However, the cemetery was then under the control of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and there was some disagreement with the War Department as to whether the monument should be allowed. Eventually the issue was resolved, and the monument was unveiled in May of that year. A larger dedication event was planned by the German consul in St. Louis but was canceled after the local American Legion post refused to participate in a ceremony organized by the Nazi government.

World War I German POW monument, Chattanooga National Cemetery, TN. (NCA)

LEGION REFUSES TO TAKE PART MEMORIAL DEDICATION; CANCEL

CHATTANOOGA, May 9 (AP)—The dedication ceremony for a memorial to German soldiers and sailors who died while interned in the United States during the World war has been cancelled following refusal of the local American Legion post to participate if the tribute were connected with the Hitler government.

The German consul in St. Louis asked the David King Summers Legion post here to take part in dedicating the beautiful nine-foot granite memorial.

Through the post commander, F. T. Herron, the Legionnaires said they were willing to take part on condition that no tribute be paid to the present Hitler government.

The German consul cancelled the ceremonies when he received the post's answer.

Herron said "the American Legion is willing to conduct the program provided it is confined to tribute to the German sailors and soldiers who lost their lives in the World war. However, the Legion does not feel that the tribute should be connected with the present Hitler government."

The Legion post was commended for its stand by the Chickamauga and John Ross chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The Germans, most of whom died at prison barracks at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., were given a plot in the National Cemetery here.

Associated Press article that appeared in numerous U.S. newspapers regarding the cancellation of dedication ceremonies in May 1935. (*Kingsport Times*; Kingsport, TN; Thu., May 9, 1935; page 1)

Allied Forces Burials in NCA Cemeteries

Cemetery Name & State	No. of Burials	Service & Grave location
Barrancas, FL	10	Royal Air Force and Volunteer Reserve, and Royal Navy and Volunteer Reserve (United Kingdom) Sec. 23, Sites 1923, 1931, 1955, 1956, 1972, 1994, and 1996-1999
Beaufort, SC	1	Royal Navy (United Kingdom) Sec. PA61, Site 55
Dayton, OH	1	Royal Canadian Air Force* Sec. 6, Row 2, Site 43
Fort Bliss, TX	53	52 Chinese Air Force and 1 Royal Air Force (United Kingdom) Sec. PD, Sites 4D-20D, 1E-21E, 4F-20F and Sec. PD, Site 21F
Fort Richardson, AK	28	Royal Canadian Air Force; Royal Canadian Infantry Corps (Rocky Mountain Rangers, Le Regiment de Hull, Winnipeg Grenadiers); and Royal Army (United Kingdom) and Soviet military Allied Sec., Sites 201-213 and 226-239 and Sec. A, Site 6
Fort Rosecrans, CA	1	Naval Auxiliary Personnel/Merchant Navy (United Kingdom) Sec. PS-10, Site 788
Fort Sam Houston, TX	4	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (United Kingdom) Sec. PF, Sites 328-330 and Sec. PH, Site 14*
Fort Scott, KS	2	Royal Canadian Air Force—group burial with U.S. Air Corps Sec. 2, Site 1735 and 1786
Fort Sheridan, IL	1	Royal Army Ordnance Corps Sec. 16, Site 34
Fort Snelling, MN	1	Royal Canadian Air Force* Sec. A-8, Site 1295
Golden Gate, CA	7	Royal Canadian Air Force*, Royal Australian Air Force, Royal Air Force Transport Command (United Kingdom), and Royal Netherlands Sec. L, Site 7776; Sec. E, Sites 153, 674, 148-149 and 187-188
Hampton, VA	1	Royal Navy (United Kingdom) Sec. E-P, Site 926
Jefferson Barracks, MO	49	United Kingdom & Canada (20), Australia (9), India (10), and Netherlands (10)—group burials with U.S. military personnel Sec. 82, Sites 1B-1D, 1M, 34, 55D and 93A; Sec. 84, Sites 402 and 403-405; and Sec. OPS1, Site 2233C
Keokuk, IA	1	Royal Canadian Air Force—group burial with U.S. Air Corps Sec. D, Site 330
Long Island, NY	36	Mostly Royal Navy, Naval Volunteer Reserve and Marines (United Kingdom); also, Royal Army and Artillery; and Royal Canadian Air Force* Sec. M, Sites 25465-25481, 25495-25499, 25500-25510 and 27188 (group burial with U.S. Air Corps); and Sec. Q, Site 794
Los Angeles, CA	2	Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Canadian Artillery Sec. 138, Row E, Site 12 and Sec. 101, Row C, Site 18*
Loudon Park, MD	1	Royal Canadian Engineers* Sec. E, Site 974B
Nashville, TN	1	French Air Force* Sec. LL, Site 1565
National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, HI	1	Royal Corps of Signals (United Kingdom) Sec. Q, Site 1335
New Albany, IN	3	3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles (India), Royal Corps of Signals and Burma Rifles (United Kingdom)—group burial with U.S. Air Corps Sec. F, Site 103
New Bern, NC	1	Royal Netherlands Marines Sec. 15, Site 4027
Saint Augustine, FL	5	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and Royal Corps of Signals (United Kingdom) Sec. C, Sites 1-5
San Francisco, CA	2	Royal Navy and Naval Auxiliary Personnel/Merchant Navy (United Kingdom) Sec. PPNAW, Sites 469 and 470
Vancouver Barracks, WA	2	Soviet Army soldier and clerk; some documentation lists them as German POWs, but death certificates indicate they were at Barnes General Hospital being treated for tuberculosis. Sec. 3E, Site 878 and 1087
Wilmington, NC	1	Royal Artillery (United Kingdom) Sec. 7, Site 2340
Zachary Taylor, KY	3	Lancashire Fusiliers and Royal Engineers (United Kingdom)— group burial with U.S. Air Corps Sec. E, Site 249/250

* U.S. citizen serving in foreign forces.

Part II
World War II
Allied Forces Burials

More than 200 Allied military personnel from the World War II period are buried in U.S. national cemeteries. Most are nationals of the country they served. However, as occurred during World War I, Americans enlisted in Allied forces prior to the entry of the United States into the war and Congress extended burial benefits to these U.S. citizens.

Foreign nationals buried in the cemeteries generally fall into two groups: 1) those who died in the United States while taking part in military training or combat activities during the war, and 2) foreign nationals who died in group events with U.S. military personnel whose remains were repatriated after the war. In the case of foreign trainees, the Army Quartermaster General authorized their burial in the closest post cemetery in 1941. The second group of foreign nationals were caught up in the U.S. repatriation program after the war came to an end.

Allied Forces Deaths in the United States

The U.S. military cooperated with other countries in training programs even before World War II, but it was during this war that those initiatives greatly expanded—first to Latin America in 1938 under the so-called "Goodwill Act" and worldwide in 1941 with the passage of the Lend-Lease Act. The motivation for these programs was twofold: the foreign nation profited by learning about U.S. training processes, aircraft and other defense equipment, and the United States positioned itself as "the arsenal of democracy" even before its fight with the Axis powers began.

The War Department conducted training programs for Allied military personnel and provided space and equipment for the Royal Air Force (RAF) to conduct their own training in the United States. The constant aerial bombardment of England by Germany made training new RAF pilots difficult. Between 1941 and 1945, more than 20,000 foreign

Royal Air Force cadets wearing their parachutes are shown walking towards their respective training ships prior to flight in the Arizona desert. (U.S. Signal Corps via National Archives and Records Administration).

nationals—more than half of which were British—from thirty-one countries graduated from flying and technical training schools in the United States. Of these, 14,600 were pilots.

Training exercises took place both overseas and in the continental United States. Many of the training facilities were in the American Southwest: Arizona, California, Colorado, and Texas. Other facilities were in Southeast and Midwest states. From June 1941 to February 1943, 7,860 RAF personnel came to flight schools for training. Over 4,000 graduated and returned to Britain to fight the Axis powers. Additionally, from June 1943 to November 1945, more than 4,000 Free Frenchmen participated in U.S. flight training.

The use of aircraft in war took on new importance during World War II. In the decades between the world wars, improvements in technology produced fast, agile planes that could attack enemy aircraft; large bombers that could be sent on long-range bombing runs; and cargo planes to carry men and equipment. Accidents were common during training—some a result of user error and others caused by the equipment. Between December 1941 and August 1945, there were 52,651 military aircraft accidents in the continental United States,

resulting in nearly 15,000 fatalities and 14,000 wrecked aircraft. British and French military members who died while training at Maxwell Field (later Maxwell Air Force Base) in Montgomery, Alabama, were interred at nearby Oakwood Cemetery, a private burial ground. Post-war, many of the French military remains at Oakwood and in military cemeteries were repatriated. However, the RAF decedents remained in the Allied lot at Oakwood and in several national cemeteries such as Barrancas, Florida; Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and Golden Gate, California.

The largest group of Allied dead in a single national cemetery are fifty-two Chinese Air Force trainees buried in Texas at Fort Bliss, which was an Army post cemetery during the war. The U.S. government approved China's request for training assistance and in obtaining supplies in 1941 after Brig. Gen. H.B. Claggett visited the country to assess their needs. The program for Chinese airmen was initially capped at 500 single-engine pilots, twenty-five armament mechanics, twenty-five radio mechanics, and twenty heavy-bomber pilots and crews; the program was expanded in 1944. Jurisdiction for this training was the California-based Western Flying Training Command (previously West Coast Training Center) and classes consisted of fifty men each. By the end of 1945, a total of 2,238 Chinese airmen had graduated, second only to the numbers of British and French nationals. In May 1944 a local newspaper reported on Memorial Day events at the Fort Bliss cemetery, which included laying flowers on the graves of eighteen Chinese cadets. The following year, records indicate that there were fifty-two interred in the cemetery.

Graves of Republic of China Air Force cadets at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, January 2019, after a visit by representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Houston and the El Paso Taiwan Chamber of Commerce. As with many foreign national military members buried in the U.S., these men are still remembered today with ceremonies and flag placements. (NCA)

Repatriation of Allied Dead: France and Brazil

Nearly one hundred French military personnel died while training in the United States during World War II. Most were interred at Oakwood Cemetery in Montgomery, Alabama (72); others were buried at military cemeteries including the national cemeteries at Arlington, Virginia (6); Long Island (5); Memphis, Tennessee (1); St. Augustine, Florida (2); and Fort Devens Post Cemetery, Massachusetts (1). Still others were buried in private cemeteries near the place of death.

Several years after the end of hostilities, the French government sought to repatriate its war dead. All but twenty remains were returned to France, and these were consolidated at Oakwood Cemetery (fourteen airmen, five marines, and one soldier), each grave marked with a headstone erected by the French government. In 1952, France dedicated a monument at this cemetery to honor all its service members who died in the United States. Buried in a plot adjacent to the French graves are the remains of seventy-eight members of the Royal Air Force who died in training accidents at nearby Maxwell Air Force base.

Twelve Brazilian nationals were buried in the United States during World War II—five at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery and seven at New Bern National Cemetery, North Carolina. The latter group died when their seaplane crashed in a storm about 80 miles away from New Bern. Also killed in the crash was Dominic Mazzaccaro, an aviation machinist's mate in the U.S. Navy. The remains were released to the Brazilian government in November 1946 and November 1947 for repatriation to Brazil.

SEVEN BRAZILIAN ARMY MEN DIE IN PLANE CRASH

CHARLESTON, S. C., July 4.—(U.P.) —Eight persons, seven of them Brazilian military personnel, were killed near Burgaw, N. C., yesterday when a Brazilian PBY-5 crashed during an electrical storm, the sixth naval district announced tonight.

Among the dead was an aviation machinist's mate of the U. S. navy, who had been picked up at Miami when the plane stopped there briefly Tuesday. He was listed as Dominic Mazzaccaro who had been last stationed at Dinner Key, Fla.

United Press article that appeared in several U.S. newspapers after the crash. (*Tampa Morning Tribune*, Thursday, July 5, 1945, p. 14) and upright headstone on the grave of Brazilian Air Force personnel at Wilmington National Cemetery. This headstone was removed upon the repatriation of the remains to Brazil in 1946-47.

Graves of French military personnel at Oakwood Cemetery, Montgomery, AL. (NCA)

At Fort Richardson National Cemetery in Alaska a dedicated "Allied Section" contains the remains of Canadian and Soviet military. During the Aleutian Island campaign (1942-1943), the Royal Canadian Air Force operated three squadrons out of Anchorage and other bases to support the Americans and more than 5,000 Canadians who recaptured Attu and Kiska from the Japanese. Twelve Canadians—eight airmen and four soldiers—were buried at the Fort Richardson cemetery; eleven are in the Allied section, one in Section A. (See cover for photos of the Canadian soldiers' gravesites.)

Fourteen Soviet airmen, sailors, and civilians are also interred there. As part of the Lend-Lease program, several hundred Soviet pilots and seventeen interpreters were stationed at Ladd Field in Fairbanks. American pilots, many of them women, flew American-built B-25s, A-20s, C-47s, P-38s, and other aircraft from American factories in the continental United States to Fairbanks. From Fairbanks, Soviet aviators piloted the planes to Nome to refuel, and then into Siberia and finally Moscow.

The route was safer for the Allies than flying across the stormy, enemy submarine-infested Atlantic. However, several Soviet air crews died during these missions.

"Allied Section" at Fort Richardson National Cemetery, ca. 1960. (NCA History Collection)

Post-War Group Burials

During World War II a new type of interment, a "group burial" of more than three comingled decedents, became a necessity. In these situations, identification and separation of individual remains—which often included personnel from several Allied countries was impossible, although the individuals' names were known.

One of the largest sources of group burials were aircraft accidents. Plane crashes took an exceedingly heavy toll on Allied forces during World War II, killing more than 40,000 in combat and almost 15,000 in training. The damage caused by high-speed impact, fire, or explosion, often impeded individual identification of the dead. As the United States was the only country to repatriate (Return of the Dead Program) its dead from overseas war zones, military personnel from Allied countries who died with Americans were buried in the United States.

Record of Interment for group burial at New Albany National Cemetery, IN, and Missing Crew report for decedents. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Early in the Return of the Dead Program, the Department of the Army established a policy to guide the interment of group burials; they would be buried at the national cemetery most centrally located from the residences of all next of kin. Because of its location in the middle of the continental United States, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in Missouri received 769 group burials containing more than 5,000 deceased. One of the largest group burials contains the remains of one hundred persons who died in captivity at the Japanese Fukuoka Prisoner-of-War Camp No. 1. Among the dead are military personnel from Australia, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Initially, to mark a group burial, the Memorial Branch of the Army Quartermaster Corps used an upright slab like the World War I-style "General" individual headstone, except that the size was increased to accommodate the list of decedent names. However, as the number of dead interred in a common grave could be very large, such uprights were considered ungainly and out of harmony with other national cemetery headstones. The Memorial Branch therefore sought authorization to use a flat marble marker, set flush with the ground, for the graves of group burials. This new grave marker was approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Army on May 9, 1950.

Group burial marker at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, MO, Sec. 82, Grave 1B-1D, with the names and ranks of those who died at a Japanese prison camp. (NCA)

Group burials from World War II were among the last to be repatriated in 1949-1950, though aircraft that crashed in remote locations were discovered through the 1950s. In 1958, four American airmen and two British soldiers who died in a C-47 crash in the jungles of Burma in April 1945 were buried together at Long Island National Cemetery, New York. Following World War II, attempts to find the crash site were unsuccessful until 1957 when native Burmese found the plane near Rangoon. The U.S. Army recovered the remains later that year and interred them at the national cemetery nearest to the American airmen's next of kin, who all hailed from the Northeast United States.

Committal service of four U.S. and two U.K. service members at Long Island National Cemetery, February 5, 1958. Pictured center left is Major George Burnett, British Embassy, Washington, D.C., and his wife. (U.S. Air Force, NCA History Collection)

Group burial marker for the Feb. 1958 World War II interment at Long Island National Cemetery, one of the last such group interments from the war. (U.S. Air Force, NCA History Collection)

Instructor and student with North American Harvard II aircraft of No.2 Service Flying Training School (S.F.T.S.) (Royal Canadian Airforce Schools and Training Units), R.C.A.F., Uplands, Ontario, Canada, July 1941. (Library and Archives Canada/ Department of National Defence)

Flying for Canada

With the start of World War II, many young American men headed for Canada with the dream of flying. Glen Dean Faris, John Nicholson Forst, and Russell John Wicklem all left home to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Each would die in separate crashes while learning to fly; the men were interred near their respective homes, in Golden Gate National Cemetery, California; Long Island National Cemetery, New York; and Fort Snelling National Cemetery, Minnesota.

Faris enlisted in July 1941, five months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He was 20, and his personnel file includes a letter of consent from his parents. A progress report from a trainer noted that Faris was "a keen young airman anzious [sic] to serve overseas." He was nearing completion of flight school when he was killed with another American and a Canadian.
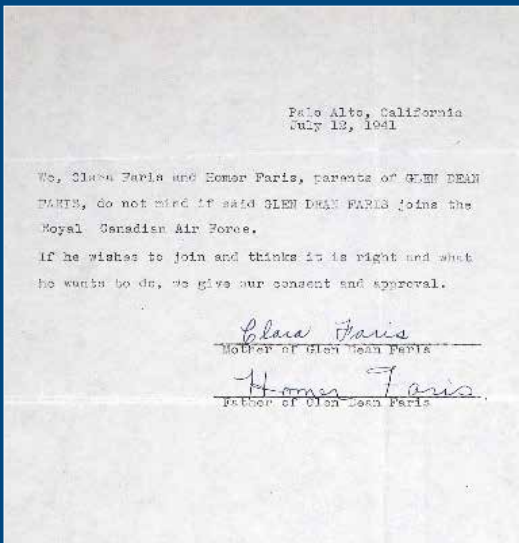
Parental letter of consent and Glen Faris' headstone at Golden Gate National Cemetery, CA. (Service Files of the Second World War - War Dead, 1939–1947. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada; and NCA)

Nineteen-year-old Forst also enlisted in July 1941, having left Hofstra University where he was studying engineering, math, and science. Both his high school principal and church minister provided recommendation letters noting his "high moral" and "excellent" character. Forst died after his plane was "caught in a sudden unreported snow storm of unusual violence" in March 1942.

Wicklem died a month short of his twenty-third birthday and three days before his one-year anniversary of his enlistment. His wings were awarded posthumously. A Canadian Air Force funeral was held at an Alberta, Calgary, funeral home before the remains were sent under escort to his next of kin in Minnesota. Burial took place with full military honors on September 16, 1942, in Minneapolis. Wicklem's gravesite was covered with flower arrangements including a floral airplane.

Photo of John Forst from his Canadian personnel file and headstone at Long Island National Cemetery, NY. (Service Files of the Second World War - War Dead, 1939–1947. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada; and NCA)

Russell Wicklem gravesite at Fort Snelling National Cemetery, MN, in 1942 and today. (Service Files of the Second World War - War Dead, 1939–1947. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada; and NCA)

U.S. Citizens in Allied Forces

The same scenario played out at the start of World War II in Europe in 1939 as occurred during the first World War—U.S. citizens enlisted in Allied forces. The same burial benefit provided to the World War I Allied forces Veterans would be extended to this new group in 1948. It is difficult to determine the exact number of decedents buried in national cemeteries who served in Allied forces in World War II; many had previously served in U.S. forces during World War I, or between the wars, and their burial eligibility was based on that service. Additionally, Americans who joined Allied forces prior to the United States' entry in World War II may have been called back into the U.S. military, and their headstones only reflect that service.

Two U.S. Veterans of World War I who joined Allied forces at the start of World War II were William Jennings Hill, Jr., and William Quayle Setliffe. Hill was a U.S. Navy aviator who went north to enlist in the Royal Canadian Army in June 1941. He worked in the Service Corps and went overseas in September 1942. Hill was evacuated from England in June 1947 after being diagnosed with ALS (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease), a nervous system disease that weakens muscles and impacts physical function. Initially treated at Queen Mary Veterans Hospital in Quebec, he was sent to the Veterans Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, where he died within days. He was later interred in Dayton National Cemetery, Ohio.

Chattanooga-native Setliffe served in the U.S. Army during World War I. Afterward, he remained active in the Illinois National Guard and served as the Illinois Adjutant of the American Legion. Setliffe joined the Royal Canadian Army in June 1940 as a private; he was discharged as a captain four years later for medical issues. By fall 1946, Setliffe was being treated at the Veterans Hospital in Los Angeles, California, where he died on Christmas Day. He was buried at what is now Los Angeles National Cemetery.

William Hill's headstone at Dayton National Cemetery, OH. Hill's service in both the U.S. Navy and the Canadian Army is included. (NCA)
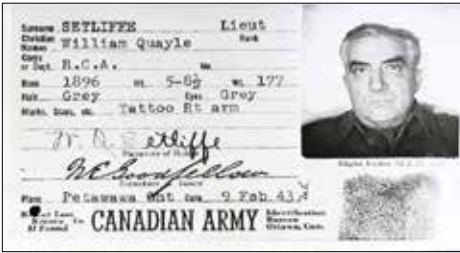
William Setliffe's World War II Canadian Army ID card and marker at Los Angles National Cemetery. His headstone only includes his U.S. service in World War I. (Service Files of the Second World War War Dead, 1939–1947, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada; and NCA)

Clifford Holger de Roode, born in 1886 in Chicago, Illinois, served in the French military during both World Wars. After initially driving ambulances for the American Field Service in World War I, he joined the French Service *Aéronautique* as an interpreter and drillmaster at the Avord Aviation School—home of the famed Lafayette Escadrille. Several accounts indicate he earned his pilot wings and flew during the war. James Norman Hall, one of the American pilots, compiled a history of the corps in which he wrote:

One thing we owe to de Roode: he taught us (by example) to salute with all the grace of a Saumur cavalryman and the precision of the Prussian Guard. To watch him was a lesson in military etiquette. We stood in line, de Roode in front. The Captain approached. De Roode snapped about-face—a stiff bow from the waist, and up went the right arm, elbow high, and hand bent back gracefully from the wrist. Then, "Bonjour, mon capitaine." These displays of military ardor found favor in high places, favor which expressed itself in providing de Roode with a gold-braided hat and the galons [i.e., braiding on the sleeves] of a Sous-Lieutenant.

Photo of de Roode (from *The Lafayette Flying Corps: The American Volunteers in the French Air Service in World War One*, by Dennis Gordon. Schiffer Military History; Atglen, PA: 2000)

De Roode lived in France and the United States after the war, eventually marrying and having two sons. According to newspapers, he was the first American to enlist in the French Army at the start of World War II in September 1939 at age 52. Reputedly, by September 1942 Germany had posted a reward for his capture, and he fled to Portugal to board a ship headed to the United States.

There he was reunited with his wife and children who had departed France earlier in the war. He died in 1973 and was buried at Nashville National Cemetery, Tennessee.

Headstone of Clifford de Roode at Nashville National Cemetery, TN. His sister Cornelia Louise de Roode, who served in the Army Nurse Corps during World War I, is buried at Baton Rouge National Cemetery, LA. (NCA)

Newspaper article on de Roode's return to the United States after World War I. (*The Herald-Press*; Saint Joseph, Michigan; Fri, Dec 28, 1917, page 1)

Hans F.A. Lindenberg, from Enemy to Ally

Hans Friedrich August Lindenberg was born in Lübeck, Germany, on February 1, 1914. From 1930 to 1940, he researched fuel injectors for diesel engines at the Technical Institute of Dresden. In 1940, he joined the team of famed aerospace engineer Wernher von Braun at Peenemünde on the Baltic Sea. There, the group developed the V-2 rocket, the first long-range supersonic guided ballistic missile, for the German war effort. By September 1944, these weapons were deployed on a massive scale against large cities, most notably London. Lindenberg was the chief propulsion engineer on the V-2 when he surrendered, with von Braun, to the U.S. Army in Ruette, Bavaria, on May 2, 1945, to avoid being taken by Soviet forces.

From June to October 1945 the British military oversaw Operation Backfire, a program that had German V-2 specialists launch the missiles for observation and intelligence purposes. Lindenberg served as the technical director for the program. He was returned to American custody after three successful launches. He and other scientists were taken to Camp Overcast outside of Munich in October 1945. After extensive background investigations, many of the top scientists were offered five-year contracts to travel to the United States and work for the U.S. Army to further develop guided weapons in a project codenamed Operation Paperclip.

Von Braun and five others were the first group flown to America on a C-54 while Operation Backfire was ongoing. The second group, which included Lindenberg, sailed from Le Havre, France, on the USS *Lejeune* on November 28, 1945, and arrived in New York on December 6. The scientists were reunited at Fort Bliss, Texas, as Department of the Army special employees. Lindenberg had severe diabetes that he attempted to keep secret. In poor health when he departed for the United States, he died in a diabetic coma at age 42 shortly after arriving in Texas. He did not live to see the first successful launches of reassembled captured V-2 rockets in the United States or to have central role in developing rockets for NASA as did some of his peers. Although not a prisoner of war, Lindenberg was buried among German and Italian POWs at Fort Bliss National Cemetery.

Headstone of Hans Lindenberg at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX, Sec. PG, Row 11, Site 10K. (NCA)

Surrender of German scientists to Allied Forces in 1945. Left to right: Herbert Axter, Wernher von Braun, Hans Lindenberg, and Bernhard Tessman. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Enemy Burials in NCA Cemeteries

Cemetery Name & State	No. of Burials	Remarks
Alexandria, LA	5	All German
Beaufort, SC	1	German
Benecia Arsenal, CA	9	8 German and 1 Italian
Camp Butler, IL	35	30 German, 4 Italian, 1 Korean in Japanese military
Chattanooga, TN	108	107 German (1 French, 1 Polish) and 1 Italian
Finn's Point, NJ	13	All German
Fort Bliss, TX	42	25 German (3 Austrian); 14 Italian; and 3 Japanese civilians. In 1984 and 1995, the remains of 5 additional Italian POWs buried here were claimed by family and returned to Italy.
Fort Custer, MI	26	All German—16 died when the truck they were riding in was struck by a train October 31, 1945
Fort Devens, MA	22	20 German and 2 Italian
Fort Douglas, UT	33	20 German, 12 Italian and 1 Japanese (civilian)
Fort Lawton Post, WA	2	1 German and 1 Italian
Fort Logan, CO	1	German
Fort McClellan, AL	29	26 German and 3 Italian
Fort Richardson, AK	235	All Japanese combatants killed in the Aleutian Islands
Fort Sam Houston, TX	140	133 Germans (1 Austrian); 4 Italians; and 3 Japanese (2 civilian). A fifth Italian POW was buried here, Guiseppe Errera; it is not clear when his remains were removed.
Fort Sheridan, IL	9	All German
Golden Gate, CA	36	25 German (1 listed as a civilian) and 11 Italian
Hampton, VA	59	55 German (including 29 killed in German U-85) and 4 Italian. In 1990, the remains of a fifth Italian POW buried here were claimed by his son and repatriated.
Jefferson Barracks, MO	7	2 German and 5 Italian
Long Island, NY	90	37 German and 53 Italian, including 36 unknowns in one grave. In 1991, the remains of an additional Italian POW buried here were claimed by his son and repatriated.
Vancouver Barracks, WA	3	2 German and 1 Italian
Woodlawn, NY	4	All German

Nationality	Austrian (German military)	French (German military)	German (German military)	Italian (Italian military)	Japanese (Japanese military)	Japanese American civilians	Korean (Japanese military)	Polish (German military)	Total
Count	4	1	544	116	236	6	1	1	909

Part III
World War II Enemy Burials

From the time the United States entered World War II in December 1941, through the end of the war in 1945, approximately 425,000 enemy prisoners of war (POWs) were interned in the United States and its territories at more than 600 camps. The greatest population, by far, were German followed by Italian and then Japanese. Numbers were relatively low through the first eight months of 1942—only sixty-five POWs in total—and there were no dedicated facilities for housing them. Increased numbers quickly forced change.

Treatment of POWs was laid out in general terms in the Geneva Conventions of 1929, of which the United States was a signatory. However, the War Department (WD) used the first quarter of 1942 to develop comprehensive regulations that were amended and expanded upon over the next few years by several circulars. WD, Prisoner of War Circular No. 1 (24 September 1943) authorized the burial of remains in the nearest available permanent cemetery. Later instructions prohibited the establishment of cemeteries on leased land—where most POW camps were located—and reiterated that interments be made at the nearest permanent post cemetery or post section of a national cemetery.

Provisions of the Geneva Conventions stated that deceased POWs be honorably interred and that their graves be marked and properly maintained. In keeping with this and the WD circular, Army regulations governing post cemeteries and post sections at national cemeteries were revised accordingly to include remains of prisoners of war and interned aliens.

Grave of German POW Willi Waechter, who died July 29, 1943, at Fort McClellan POW Cemetery. Waechter died from head injuries incurred from a truck accident and was the first burial in the cemetery. (The University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections)

International Law on POWs

The U.S. Army's policy on POWs was based on requirements of the Hague regulations of 1899 and 1907, of which the United States was a signatory. During World War I, the Hague regulations proved inadequate and special agreements were made between belligerents in Berne, Switzerland, in 1917 and 1918. Treaties signed at the conclusion of World War I specifically addressed the treatment of POW graves.

At the 1921 International Red Cross (IRC) conference held in Geneva, Switzerland, the IRC sought the adoption of a special convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. An international committee was established to draft a document that was submitted to the Diplomatic Conference at Geneva in 1929. Its official name was the "Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva, July 27, 1929," and it entered into force June 19, 1931, slightly more than nine years before the start of the second World War in Europe.

The 1929 conventions did not replace provisions of the Hague regulations but were intended to complete them. Though the conventions were meant to ensure uniform care of POWs no matter which nation held them, they did not consider differences in standards of living, abundance of resources, and ethical views of countries at war. Thus, POWs held in the United States enjoyed many comforts denied those held in Europe and Japan.

Part V, Article 76, of the Geneva Conventions addressed the death of POWs:

- The wills of prisoners of war shall be received and drawn up under the same conditions as for soldiers of the national armed forces.
- The same rules shall be followed as regards the documents relative to the certification of the death.
- The belligerents shall ensure that prisoners of war who have died in captivity are honourably buried, and that the graves bear the necessary indications and are treated with respect and suitably maintained.

The final requirement is the reason why the U.S. government continues to care for the graves of former enemies.
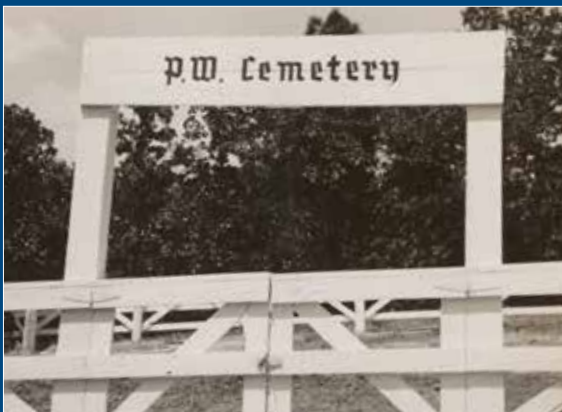
Entrance to the Fort McClellan POW Cemetery. Today there are 29 graves—3 Italian and 26 German. (The University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections)

Internment and Death in the United States

Soon after the United States entered World War II, the British military sought to transfer 150,000 POWs into U.S. custody. However, this never materialized, and the POW population was less than 2,000 through 1942. Over the next three years the numbers increased exponentially.

The first large wave of POWs to enter the United States were German and Italian soldiers who were captured in spring and summer 1943 in North Africa and southern Italy. By the end of the year there were nearly 175,000 POWs in U.S. prison camps. A second wave came in the months after the Allied invasion at Normandy on June 6, 1944 (D-Day); the POW population more than doubled to approximately 360,000 by December 1944. By the defeat of Germany six months later, there were more than 425,000 POWs confined in the United States. After Germany surrendered, the only additional POWs to come to the United States were those already in route across the Atlantic and later in 1945, a group of POWs being held in Europe requested by the U.S. government for labor purposes.

"Overall view of 300 German Prisoners of War on Pier 6 soon after debarking from SS *Andrew Furuseth* [on January 17, 1944]. These prisoners, captured north of Naples in December, included Infantry, Artillery, and other branches of service. They appeared less bellicose than other prisoners who had arrived here, but in their statements, they still insisted that Germany eventually would win the war. Official Photograph U.S. Army Signal Corps, Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation, Newport News Virginia." (U.S. Army Signal Service via National Archives and Records Administration)

While the POWs were supposed to be processed in the theater of operations—collecting name, serial number, fingerprints, identifying characteristics, and items in the prisoner's possession—this often did not happen until arrival in the United States. Most arrived at Camp Shanks, New York, or Norfolk, Virginia, before being sent throughout the country to purpose-built POW camps or camps within already existing military installations. POWs were only separated by nationality prior to 1944, with Italian and German soldiers in different camps. However, as time went on, hostility between inmates—including murders and harassment leading to suicides—compelled the further separation of German POWs based on their political and ideological views. Anti-Nazis and those who were politically neutral were imprisoned away from ardent Nazis and those with strong nationalist leanings.

These captives received the same rations as U.S. soldiers, as well as clothing, housing, and medical care. The humane attitude toward POWs was often questioned in the press and by Congress, given the brutal nature of the war and the sometimes-inhumane treatment of U.S. prisoners, particularly by Japan. But military leaders defended U.S. treatment of POWs by citing the nation's obligations as defined by the Geneva Conventions.

German POWs work at Philadelphia National Cemetery, April 1945. (Special Collections Research Center. Temple University Libraries. Philadelphia, PA.)

Aftermath of truck carrying German POWs to work struck by train near Blissfield, Michigan, October 1945. The sixteen German POWs killed in this accident were the largest single group of deaths among the more than 900 POWs who died while in custody in the U.S. A newspaper article on the accident stated that two services were planned for the POW victims—one Catholic and one Protestant—before burial at the Fort Custer post cemetery. In accordance with the Geneva Conventions, next of kin in Germany were notified of deaths through the Swiss legation in Washington, D.C. (NCA History Collection)

Except for captured officers, POWs provided a much-needed source of labor for the United States as able-bodied American men joined or were drafted into the military services. The greatest numbers worked in the agriculture sector, others in construction, dry cleaning, plumbing, and quarrying. Work took place both within the camps and in the surrounding communities. This was permissible under international conventions, and the POWs earned a small stipend for work they performed.

By June 1946, all POWs held in the United States—except for the sick, injured, incarcerated, and the few that managed to escape—were returned to Europe. Once there, many were held for up to three more years by Allied governments and put to work rebuilding the war-ravaged countries. Left behind on U.S. soil were more than 900 dead, most buried in temporary cemeteries.

Enemy Combatants

POWs were not the only enemy dead buried in U.S. military cemeteries during World War II. The national cemetery at Hampton, Virginia, and post cemetery at Fort Richardson, Alaska, became the final resting places of German and Japanese military combatants.

The German submarine *U-85* began its fourth patrol of World War II on March 21, 1942. On April 10 it sank a Swedish freighter off the New Jersey coast then proceeded to North Carolina's Outer Banks. USS *Roper* (DD-147) detected *U-85* in the shallow waters while on submarine patrol near Bodie Island Lighthouse around midnight on April 13. The submarine attempted a surface escape, firing a torpedo that narrowly missed *Roper*. As the distance between the vessels closed, the *Roper's* crew successfully directed its deck guns on the target, piercing the sub's pressure hull and sinking it. This was the first confirmed U-boat kill by U.S. naval forces on the East Coast during the war.

Numerous German sailors were observed in the water, but no rescue attempt was made. At the time, it was believed that U-boats operated in packs and that others would be nearby. Thus, *Roper* proceeded to drop numerous depth charges to ensure that whatever might still be lurking in the waters was eliminated or driven off. The destroyer returned in the daylight and recovered the bodies of twenty-nine German sailors from a crew of forty-six. Also retrieved from the flotsam were personal items such as photographs, civilian and military clothing, and diaries. All the bodies were identified—one officer and the rest crewmembers—and buried in a night-time military ceremony at Hampton National Cemetery, Virginia, on April 15, 1942.

A few of the graves today in the Phoebus Section, Hampton National Cemetery. (NCA)

At Fort Richardson National Cemetery, located in a corner of the cemetery is a group burial encompassing 235 Japanese soldiers. During World War II, 39 acres of Fort Richardson Military Reservation were set aside for use as a temporary burial site for any deaths that might occur during the conflict. However, other events were unfolding in Alaska that would significantly change the landscape of the cemetery. In June 1942, the Japanese seized the U.S. territories of Attu and Kiska in the Aleutian Islands. To reclaim the islands, in May 1943 the U.S. Army, with assistance

Despite the funeral being witnessed by civilians from outside the cemetery wall, the Navy did not announce the sinking of the *U-85* and burial of its crew until July when the above photograph appeared in newspapers nation-wide. The wreckage of the U-boat still lies in approximately 90 feet of water about 14 miles east of the Oregon Inlet on North Carolina's Outer Banks. (National Archives and Records Administration)

from Canada, launched attacks on Attu and later Kiska, retaking both. Both Allied and enemy cemeteries were established on the remote islands for the dead. At the end of the war, the U.S. Army removed all remains to the cemetery at Fort Richardson. The American dead were reinterred in a fenced 2-acre plot divided into four sections; it already held the remains of those who died at the military post. The Japanese and Allied dead were buried in two separate areas located outside the fenced area.

In summer 1953, the Japanese government requested that their dead be disinterred and cremated in traditional Shinto and Buddhist ceremonies. Shigeru Inada of the Japanese embassy in Washington, D.C., supervised the cremation ritual. On July 13, the U.S. Army interred the ashes of eighteen identified and 217 unidentified Japanese soldiers. Eleven years later, a group of Japanese citizens—including one of the twenty-seven survivors of the Attu Island battle—visited the cemetery. The chairman of the Japanese Buddhist Cultural Association, presided over a special ceremony at the gravesite which included prayers, singing, and meditation. The group placed a tall, four-sided wooden monument on the burial plot. In May 1981, a group of Japanese civilians in Anchorage had a new monument made in Japan and sent to Alaska, to replace the then-dilapidated original. The wooden monument was replaced again in 2002; and in 2019, a permanent granite monument was erected and dedicated.

Gravesite of Japanese soldiers who died in the Battle of the Aleutian Islands at Fort Richardson National Cemetery, AK, ca. 1965, 2009 and 2019. (NCA)

Japanese POWs

Compared to the number of German and Italian POWs held in the United States, the number of Japanese POWs was quite low—less than 5,500. The first Japanese POW captured by U.S. forces was Ensign Kazuo Sakamaki, commander of a Japanese midget submarine who had abandoned the damaged craft and swam ashore during the attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. He was the only Japanese military captive until July 1942 when he was joined by nine others.

One reason for the low numbers of Japanese POWs was the deeply ingrained cultural shame in Japan associated with defeat or capture. Death over capture permeated the Japanese military. The fierce nature of combat in the Pacific, fueled by racial and cultural differences, also impacted POW numbers. Well documented episodes of Japanese mistreatment of U.S. POWs created a reluctancy in American forces to give quarter to the enemy. This, and the Japanese reluctance to surrender, led to some battles resulting in fewer than a hundred captured out of thousands killed.

Because the War in the Pacific took place far from the continental United States, the governments of Australia and New Zealand agreed to be responsible for incarcerating most of the captured Japanese military. Only POWs thought to be a source of valuable intelligence were transported to the United States. Ultimately only twenty-four Japanese POWs died in captivity here, and most of their remains were repatriated to Japan by 1954. Only two Japanese POW graves are overseen by NCA today.

Headstones for the only two Japanese military POWs buried in NCA national cemeteries—Shigeo Soga died and was interred at Camp Livingston, LA, with his remains moved to Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX, before August 1946 and Bok Do Lee died and was interred at Camp McCoy, WI, before his remains were moved to Camp Butler National Cemetery, IL, in June 1947. (NCA)

Japanese "Enemy Aliens"

The U.S. Army's post-war lists of Japanese prisoner dead made little distinction between men who fought for Japan and were captured overseas, and those termed "enemy aliens." Immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Presidential Proclamation 2525, which specified that Japanese living in the United States were "liable to be apprehended, restrained, secured, and removed as alien enemies." (The next day, proclamations 2526 and 2527 directed the same treatment for German and Italian aliens, respectively.) The Justice Department began arresting Japanese *Issei*—men born in Japan who had been living and working in the United States, many for decades, who were prohibited by law from becoming U.S. citizens. Approximately 2,000 *Issei* were sent to temporary detention stations operated by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Many of the men targeted for arrest were language teachers, clergy, and newspaper editors considered leaders in their communities. After immigration and loyalty hearings, most of the *Issei* were sent to U.S. Army detention or internment camps at military bases and facilities. Civilian and military internees were never housed together.

Two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066 empowering the U.S. Army to designate strategic geographic zones from which persons could be excluded: areas of Washington, Oregon, and California on the West Coast, and southern Arizona. Although the order did not specify a target population, the Army applied the provisions only against Japanese Americans. (NOTE: the term "Japanese Americans" used here refers to immigrants from Japan—prohibited by law from becoming U.S. citizens—and descendants of those immigrants, *Nissei*, who were born in the United States and were U.S. citizens.) No person of Japanese ancestry living in the United States was ever convicted of any serious act of espionage or sabotage during World War II, yet the entire West Coast population of people of Japanese descent was forcibly removed from their homes and placed in relocation centers, many for the duration of the war.

Confinement sites in mainland United States for Japanese Americans; there were also sites in Alaska and Hawaii. The six Japanese American men buried in NCA cemeteries were held at one of the facilities identified above by a star. (from *Japanese Americans in World War II A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*, National Historic Landmarks Program, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, August 2012)

More than 100,000 Japanese Americans interned during World War II were held in facilities run by the War Relocation Authority and Wartime Civilian Control Agency. Of these, approximately 7,000—mostly Japanese men living in the United States and Latin America—remained in the custody of the Department of Justice (through INS and Bureau of Prisons) and the U.S. Army in the internment camps. Justice Department internment camps held detainees far longer than the other facilities; the last one closed in January 1948.

Persons who died while interned by the U.S. Army were provided with a burial like that afforded POWs. Unlike POWs, however, many of the Japanese American men had family and friends to claim their remains and hold burials rights and ceremonies elsewhere. Among the relatively few burials at government cemeteries are six *Issei* located in NCA national cemeteries.

Fort Bliss National Cemetery contains three *Issei* graves. Yahei (Harry) Shiota, a widowed miner's helper from Juneau, Alaska; Ayao (Frank) Tahara, an editor at *Great Northern Daily News*, a daily published in Seattle until April 21, 1942, just days before the U.S. government forced the city's Japanese American community into internment camps; and Hirota Isomura, a fisherman from Los Angeles. All were imprisoned at Lordsburg Internment Camp in the New Mexico desert. Built between February and July 1942, Lordsburg was the only facility constructed specifically to hold Japanese Americans. When it opened, 613 Japanese *Issei* —including these three men—were transferred via train from Fort Lincoln Internment Center in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Headstone of Ayao Tahara, at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX, today (NCA); and in the Lordsburg Internment Camp, NM, ca. 1942 (Photo courtesy of Mollie Pressler, Lordsburg Hidalgo County Museum)
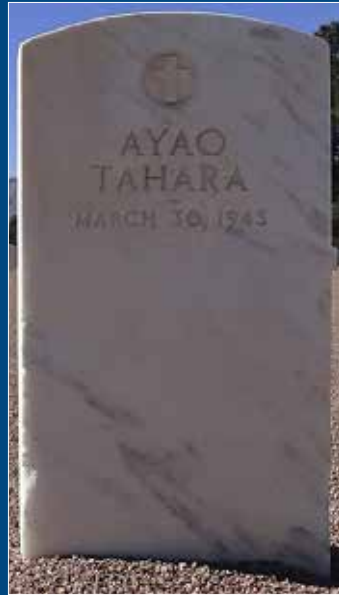
On July 27, 1942, Isomura and Toshio Kobata, both older men with health issues, were being marched under guard from the rail depot to the camp, when by all accounts they fell behind. A young soldier who claimed they were attempting to escape shot them. One died immediately and the other survived for a few hours. Both men were initially buried in the camp cemetery. Less than month later Kobata's remains were disinterred, cremated and the ashes given to another Japanese internee in an internment camp at Poston, AZ.

By 1943, all Japanese enemy aliens had been transferred from Lordsburg to other facilities, and between 1943 and 1945 this camp held 4,000 Italian POWs. After the camp was closed in February 1946, burials in the cemetery were moved to Fort Bliss.

Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery contains the graves of Ueda (Uyeda) Nisuke and Itsuo Inazaki, 56 and 61, respectively, when they died. Both men were held at Camp Livingston, a U.S. Army facility at the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana used during World War II. It included an enemy-alien internment camp that housed more than 900 persons of Japanese ancestry (400 from the West Coast, 354 from Hawaii, and 160 from Panama and Costa Rica) from spring 1942 until May 1943 when the custody of civilian internees was transferred to the INS. After the enemy aliens were removed, Camp Livingston served as a POW camp for German, Italian, and Japanese soldiers.

The remains of these Japanese men, along with the remains of a Japanese POW were disinterred from the Camp Livingston cemetery and moved to a post section of Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX, prior to August 1946. (NCA)

Post-War Disposition of POW Remains

In April 1946, the Army debated the best course of action regarding the remains of POWs. A memorandum from the Quartermaster General, Major General T. B. Larkin, laid out two options: consolidating all POW remains from temporary cemeteries into one permanent location at one time, or continuing the policy of moving remains as each internment camp was deactivated and reinterring them in the nearest permanent post cemetery or post section of a national cemetery.

Larkin's choices were informed by the Treaty of Versailles (1919) and the reburial of World War I POWs after a 1930s query to the U.S. Army from the German government. The treaty contained provisions whereby the graves of prisoners of war and interned civilians who were nationals of the different belligerent states and who died in captivity should be respected and maintained by the government of the nation in which such interments had been made. Though the United States did not ratify this treaty, it signed a separate Treaty of Peace with Germany in which it agreed to certain stipulations of the Versailles treaty—including about POW graves.

POW gravesites at Finns Point National Cemetery, NJ. The graves are confined to one corner of the enclosed Civil War-era cemetery adjacent to Confederate POW graves. (NCA)

POW gravesites at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX. (NCA)

In May 1930, the German government requested information about the graves of German POWs who had died in the United States during World War I. While men buried in a post cemetery or national cemetery post section were easily accounted for, the Army found that some graves in private cemeteries had not been maintained, or in some instances could not be located. It was with this background in mind, Quartermaster General Larkin raised the issue of disposition of POW remains after World War II.

Many of the dead were interred in temporary cemeteries established next to POW camps built on leased land during World War II, and those camps were now being inactivated and the land disposed of. Several military commands had already moved POW remains to permanent post cemeteries or post sections of national cemeteries. To plan for future disposition, the Quartermaster's office initiated a study to ascertain the total number of POW burials, locations, status of affiliated camps, and the nearest permanent qualifying military cemetery where the remains could be reinterred. The study, completed in 1946, identified 830 POWs: 136 in POW plots in post sections of national cemeteries; 272 in POW sections in permanent post cemeteries; and 422 in temporary cemeteries at various camps.

By fall 1945, the POW remains in temporary cemeteries, along with the marble government-furnished headstones that marked their graves, were being moved to permanent locations— where most remain today. In the 1980s and 1990s, the remains of seven Italian POWs were removed from Fort Bliss, Hampton, and Long Island national cemeteries and repatriated.

Common grave at Long Island National Cemetery. On August 16, 1943, a British ship in route from Bone to Oran, Algerian port cities on the Mediterranean, with 1,800 enemy POWs aboard was struck by an aerial torpedo. The vessel was able to return to Bone where the injured, killed, and drowned were unloaded. The ship then proceeded to the United States where upon arrival, the bodies of thirty-six Italian POWs were discovered in two of the vessel's damaged holds. Identification being impossible at that point, all the remains were interred together in Sec. 2C, Site 44, on February 16, 1944. (NCA)

Officers at funeral of POW Soldato Pasquale Cerbone, 35th Italian Quartermaster Service, June 1944, at Hampton National Cemetery, VA. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Post-War Disinterment and Reinterment of POW Remains

Original Burial Location	Permanent Burial Location & Reinterment Date	No. of Remains Moved
Aliceville, AL	Fort McClellan EPW Cemetery, AL | Date unknown	9
Camwp Atterbury, IN	Camp Butler National Cemetery, IN | After June 1953	19
Camp Beale, CA	Golden Gate National Cemetery, CA | June 1947	6
Camp Bowie, TX	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | March 1947	5
Camp Butner, NC	Chattanooga National Cemetery, TN | March 1947	11 or 12
Camp Chaffee, AR	Chattanooga National Cemetery, TN | March 1947	8
Camp Cooke, CA	Golden Gate National Cemetery, CA | November 1947	14
Camp Como, MS	Fort McClellan EPW Cemetery, AL | November 1945	7
Camp Fannin, TX	Alexandria National Cemetery, LA | February 1946	5
Camp Grant, IL	Camp Butler National Cemetery, IN | June 1946	2
Camp Gruber, OK	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | May 1947	4
Camp Hood, TX	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | April 1947	3 or 4
Camp Joseph T. Robinson, AR	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | February 1947	10 or 11*
Camp Livingston, LA	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | Date unknown	2
Camp Maxey, TX	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | February 1947	7
Camp McCain, MS	Fort McClellan EPW Cemetery, AL | October 1945	6
Camp McCoy, WI	Camp Butler National Cemetery, IN | June 1947	3
Camp Polk, LA	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | May 1947	6 or 8
Camp Swift, TX	Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | February 1947	12
Crossville, TN	Chattanooga National Cemetery, TN | Date unknown	95
Dodd Field, TX	Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery, TX | March 1947	83 or 84
Florence, AZ	Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX | March 1946	30 or 31
Fort Niagara, NY	Woodlawn National Cemetery, NY | May 1949	4
Camp Roswell, NM	Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX | March 1946	5
Fort Robinson, NE	Camp Butler National Cemetery, IN | July 1947	11
Lordsburg, NM, POW Camp	Fort Bliss National Cemetery, TX | March 1946	6
PW Camp, Rupert, ID	Golden Gate National Cemetery | August 1946	6

*One of the German POWs is also listed as buried in another cemetery

Other Government and Private Cemeteries with POW Burials

Cemetery Name & State	No. of Burials	Original Burial Location and Date Moved
Arlington National Cemetery, VA	3	N/A
Camp Lewis Post Cemetery, WA	3	N/A
Fort Bragg Main Post Cemetery, NC	7 or 8	N/A
Fort Benning Main Post Cemetery, GA	51 or 52	7 from Camp Blanding, FL (April 1946) 7 from Camp Wheeler, GA (November 1945) 5 from Clinton POW Camp, MS (March 1946) 9 from Camp Shelby, MS (May 1946) 4 from Opelika, AL (October 1945)
Fort Campbell POW Post Cemetery, KY	5	N/A
Fort Drum POW Cemetery, NY	7 or 8	N/A
Fort Gordon POW cemetery, GA	22	N/A
Fort Knox Post Cemetery, KY	18	3 from Ashford General Hospital, WV (June 1946) 5 from Camp Breckinridge, KY (date unknown)
Fort Leavenworth Post Cemetery, KS	14	N/A
Fort Leonard Wood Post Cemetery, MO	4	N/A
Fort George G. Meade Post Cemetery, MD	34 or 35	N/A
Fort Reno Post Cemetery, OK	70	3 Alva, OK, PW Camp (February 1946) 5 from Camp Hereford, TX (April 1946) 3 from Camp Howze, TX (March 1946) 5 from Fort McLean, TX (February 1946) 2 from McAlester, OK (October 1945) 11 from Monticello POW Camp, AR (February 1946)
Fort Riley Post Cemetery, KS	78	2 from Algona, IA (January 1946) 23 from Camp Carson, CO (February 1946) 1 from Clarinda, IA (November 1945) 13 from Camp Clark, MO (February 1946) 9 from PW Camp Concordia, KS (October 1945) 6 from PW Camp Douglas, WY (January 1946) 4 from PW Camp Trinidad, CO (February 1946)
Fort Sill Post Cemetery, OK	1 or 2	N/A
Frances E. Warren Air Base Cemetery, WY	9	N/A
Presidio of Monterey Main Post Cemetery, CA	1	Japanese American civilian
Private cemeteries in McAlester, OK • Oak Hill Cemetery • Calvary Cemetery	3 1	N/A

Recommended Reading and Sources

Visit **https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/history/index.asp** for resources in addition to those cited here.

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ALLIED FORCES, POW,
NATIONAL BURIALS

WA
▲ FT LAWTON POST CEMETERY

ID *MT*

ND

OR ■ VANCOUVER BARRACKS

SD

WY

CA

NV

NE

UT
FT DOUGLAS POST CEMETERY ◆

CO
FT LOGAN ◆

KS

SAN FRANCISCO ▲▲ BENICIA ARSENAL POST
GOLDEN GATE ■

AZ

NM

OK

TX

▲ LOS ANGELES

● PRESCOTT

▲ FT. ROSECRANS

FT. BLISS ■

AK

FT. RICHARDSON ■

SITKA

FT. SAM H◻

NATIONAL MEMORIAL
CEMETERY OF
THE PACIFIC (CR)

HI

, AND OTHER FOREIGN
IN NCA CEMETERIES

MN

ME

WI

MI

NY

VT

NH

FT. SNELLING

FT DEVENS POST CEMETERY

MA

WOOD

RI

CT

IA

WOODLAWN

FT. CUSTER

PA

IL

NJ

FT SHERIDAN

CYPRESS HILLS

LONG ISLAND

IN

OH

KEOKUK

MT.MORIAH NAVAL PLOT

FINN'S POINT

MD

MO

DAYTON

WV

LAUDON PARK

DE

CAMP BUTLER

ZACHARY
TAYLOR

ANNAPOLIS

JEFFERSON
BARRACKS

NEW
ALBANY

HAMPTON

FT. SCOTT

VA

NC

KY

NEW BERN

AR

TN

NASHVILLE

SC

CHATTANOOGA

WILMINGTON

MS

AL

GA

FT McCELLAN POST
CEMETERY

BEAUFORT

LA

ALEXANDRIA

BARRANCAS

FL

ST. AUGUSTINE

OUSTON

LEGEND

▲ WWII Allied Forces
♦ WWII POWs
■ Both
● Other Foreign Nationals

National Cemetery Administration

As of October 2023, VA's National Cemetery Administration administers 155 national cemeteries. Nearly 5 million individuals, including Veterans of every conflict in which Americans have fought, are honored by burial in VA's national cemeteries. More than a hundred of these properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as being "exceptionally significant as a result of their Congressional designation as nationally significant places of burial and commemoration." More than 22,000 acres and growing, from Hawaii to Maine and from Alaska to Puerto Rico, are devoted to the memorialization of those who served this nation.

In addition to providing a gravesite and a grave liner, VA opens and closes the grave, and provides a headstone or marker, a Presidential Memorial Certificate, a U.S. flag, and perpetually cares for the grave at no cost to the Veteran's family. Veterans who have met minimum active-duty service requirements, as applicable, and with discharges other than dishonorable, their spouses and dependent children, may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery by virtue of their service. Those who die on active duty may also be buried in a national cemetery. Reservists who are called to active duty and fulfill the term of service for which they were called and those who retire with pensions are also eligible.

For more information or to confirm eligibility, please contact the nearest national cemetery or visit www.cem.va.gov.

Headstones of Private Poshtar and Lieutenant Vessey, in the Allied Section (Plot Z) at Fort Richardson National Cemetery. This was the third and final resting place for these Canadian soldiers. (NCA)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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

Theodore O'Hara,
"Bivouac of the Dead"