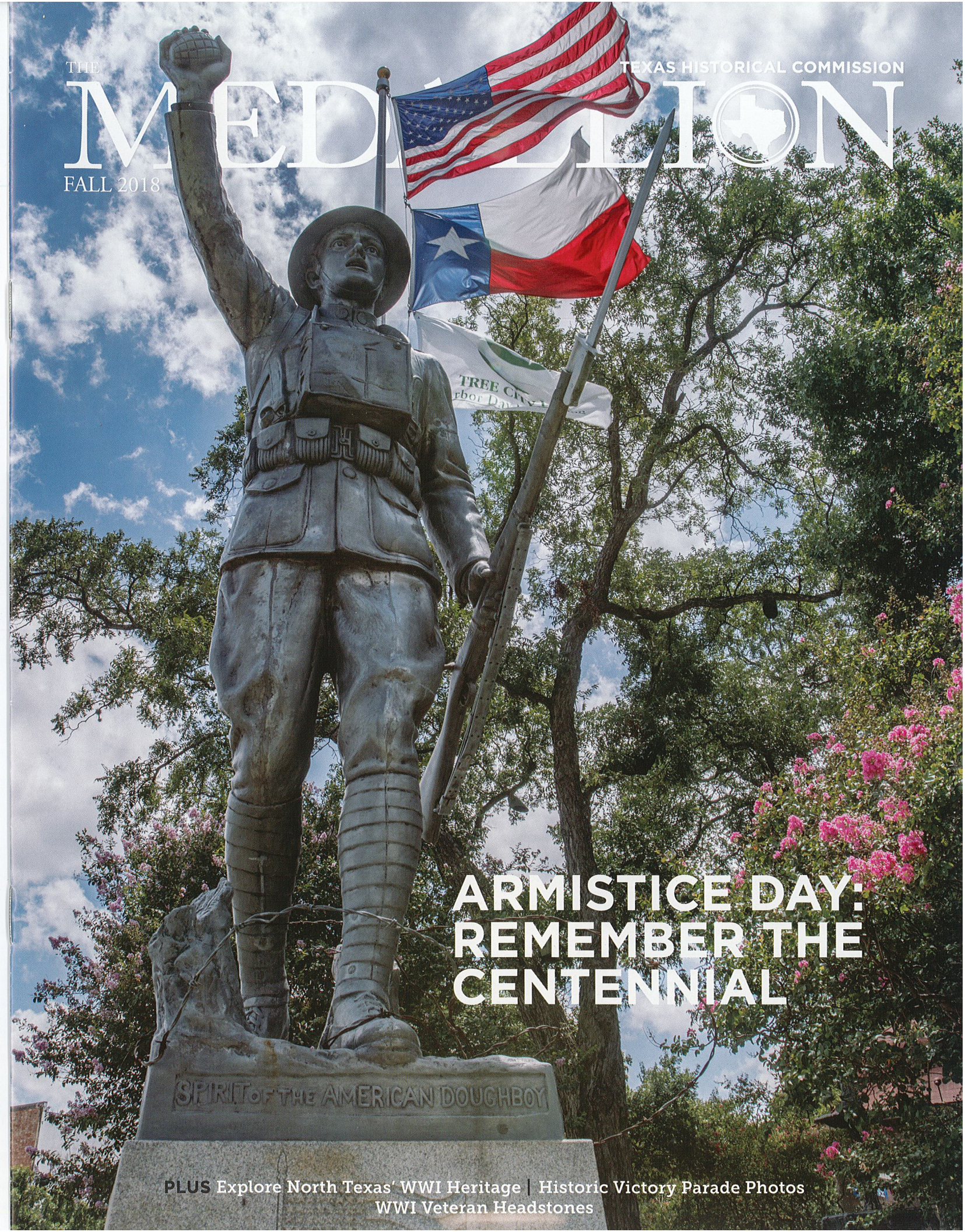


THE

MEDALLION

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

FALL 2018

ARMISTICE DAY: REMEMBER THE CENTENNIAL

PLUS Explore North Texas' WWI Heritage | Historic Victory Parade Photos
WWI Veteran Headstones





TOP: An ornate entablature with names of fallen WWI soldiers graces the exterior of Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium at the University of Texas-Austin. Photo: Leah Brown.

ON THE COVER: A WWI doughboy statue stands on Main Plaza near the Comal County Courthouse Square in downtown New Braunfels. Photo: Patrick Hughey.

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
FALL 2018

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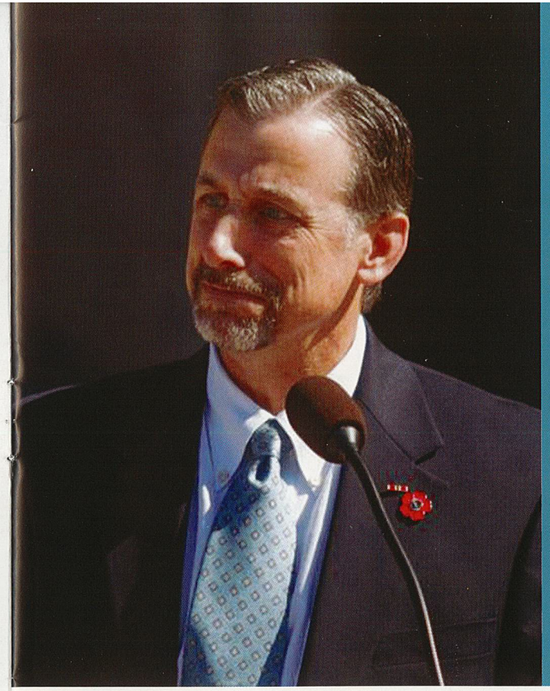
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Our Mission
To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.

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MICHAEL D. VISCONAGE, CO-DIRECTOR, TEXAS WWI CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION ASSOCIATION

LEADERSHIP LETTER

The Texas World War I Centennial Commemoration Association remembers the impact that the Great War had on Texas and Texans 100 years ago. Approximately 200,000 Texans served in uniform during WWI; 5,171 lost their lives. They came from every part of the state and represented every race, religion, and ethnicity. Texas women served as nurses, Red Cross volunteers, and switchboard operators in France.

At home, the war saw the first national effort to enlist civilian communities to conserve resources, buy war bonds, plant victory gardens, and back the war effort. The impact on Texas industry and technology was significant. Beginning in 1914, Texas livestock, cotton, lumber, and oil were being shipped to Europe from Texas ports. Texas railroads had the most track mileage in the United States. Prototype standard road networks like the Bankhead Highway were established to support military vehicles. The Texas climate made the state a natural location for military cantonments for soldiers from northern states. Nearly one-third of U.S. military aviation training fields were established in Texas, serving as a catalyst for the aviation industry in the state.

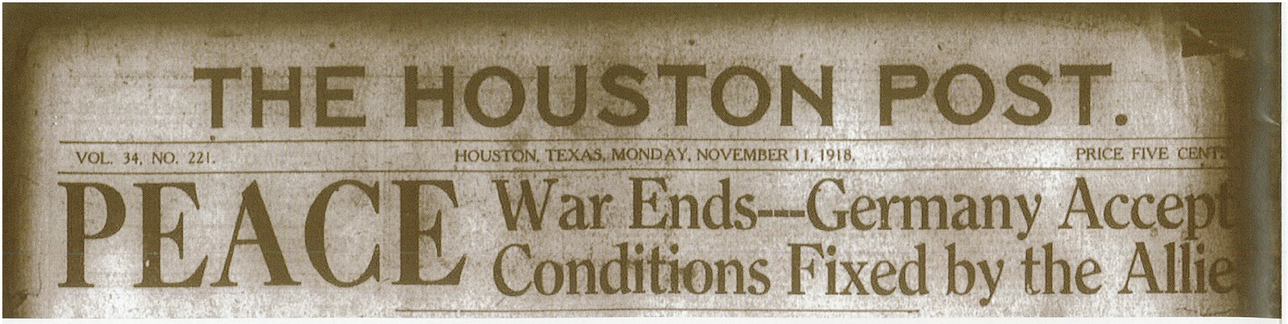
A 100 percent grassroots effort, the Texas World War I Centennial Commemoration Association (TXWWICCA), was formed in 2015 to provide information, communications, and resources to organizations interested in commemorating the role of Texas and Texans in the Great War. The TXWWICCA is part of the U.S. WWI Centennial Commission national effort, established by Congress.
www.texasworldwar1centennial.org

Organizations and individuals in Texas have taken up the challenge, holding over 135 events—including educational programs, exhibits, symposiums, living history reenactments, concerts, parades, restorations of local monuments, and remembrance ceremonies. One hundred years later, there are three things Texans can still do to honor the war's legacy this fall:

- Reach out to schools to encourage participation in 100 Years/100 Schools, a collaboration with the THC focused on incorporating the WWI Centennial into Veterans Day events in the schools.
- Sign up to participate in the Bells of Peace, a national initiative at 11 a.m. on November 11.
- Recognize those who served (in your community, organization, or family) by creating a remembrance event on or around Armistice Day.

In 1919, Texans returned from the war. Parades in cities and small towns welcomed troops home. World War I put the U.S. on the world stage. It introduced Texans to the world and the world to Texas. The WWI Centennial Commemoration will continue through June 2019 to coincide with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles.

Michael D. Visconage
Colonel, USMCR (Ret.)


THE HOUSTON POST.

VOL. 34, NO. 221. HOUSTON, TEXAS, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1918. PRICE FIVE CENTS

PEACE War Ends--Germany Accept
Conditions Fixed by the Allie

THE DAY THE GUNS FELL SILENT

ARMISTICE DAY MARKED END OF WORLD WAR I

Text by Lila Rakoczy, THC Military Sites Program Coordinator

On November 11, 1918, a 30-year-old Texan in the Intelligence Section of the 360th Infantry Regiment reflected in his diary on the day's events:

> "The orders called for continuing the artillery fire with the same intensity until eleven in the morning, when the hostilities would be suspended for thirty-five days. The Germans were granted the truce so they would enter into negotiations for the conditions for peace. Those of us who heard the orders began to breathe easier, while the rest of the soldiers continued to agonize in desperation."

What Private José de la Luz Sáenz learned that morning, and what the rest of the world would come to realize, was that the Great War was effectively over. Its official demise would come seven months later with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. But for nations around the world, the truce that silenced the guns of war—at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month—would become the real cultural touchstone that generations would turn to when remembering their nation's loss, sacrifice, and duty.

Armistice Day was born.

In the years that followed, every November 11 offered a connection for survivors with the memory of the 116,516 American military personnel who lost their lives. Newly created organizations such as the American Legion and the American Battle Monuments Commission further channeled the enduring need to remember.

In 1926, Congress took the formal step of declaring by Congressional Resolution that "the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations." But it would take another 12 years for Armistice Day to be officially recognized as a national holiday.





The U.S. would go on to experience the trauma of two more wars—World War II and the Korean War—before Armistice Day would undergo its final transformation. In 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower, himself a veteran of the First World War, issued the first presidential declaration acknowledging the holiday's new name: Veterans Day.

This November 11, on the 100th anniversary of that momentous truce, countless Texans and their fellow Americans will join millions around the world in solemnly marking the occasion. Communities large and small have organized parades, the laying of wreaths, the ringing of bells, and moments of silence. Names of the dead have been collected and will be read.

And while Veterans Day is a time to show gratitude for all those in uniform, past and present, there will be an added layer of meaning this year as we pause to recall the terrible price paid 100 years ago by those who served in "the war to end war."

To learn more about the THC's WWI-related cultural resources, visit thc.texas.gov/wwi.

Above: Texan Private José de la Luz Sáenz in 1918, left, and an undated photo, right.

As the popular song of the day proclaimed, "The Texans are ready!"
To honor the men and women who served in World War I, the Texas Historical Commission invites Texans everywhere to show their appreciation by joining in centennial activities. There are a variety of ways you can do your part.
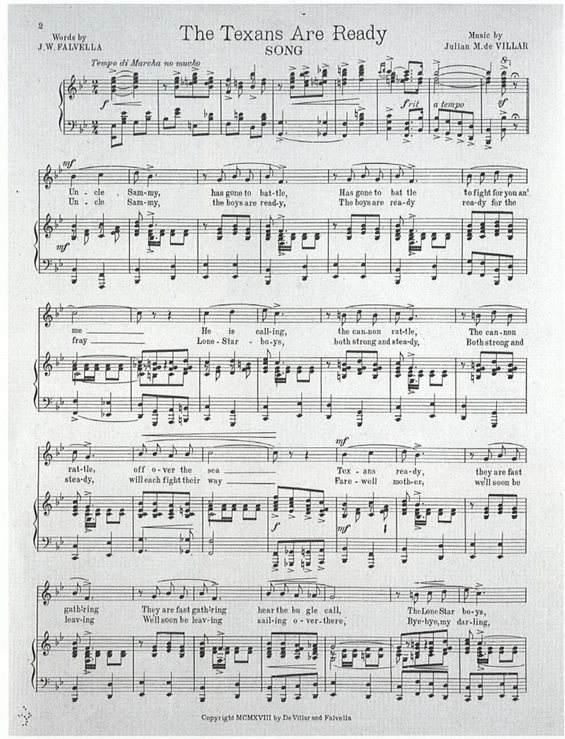
Educators are encouraged to join the 100 Years/100 Schools initiative and incorporate World War I programming into a Veterans Day event at their school.
thc.texas.gov/100

Consider going to an event, tending to World War I graves in your neighborhood, or participating in the national Bells of Peace initiative.
www.texasworldwar1centennial.org

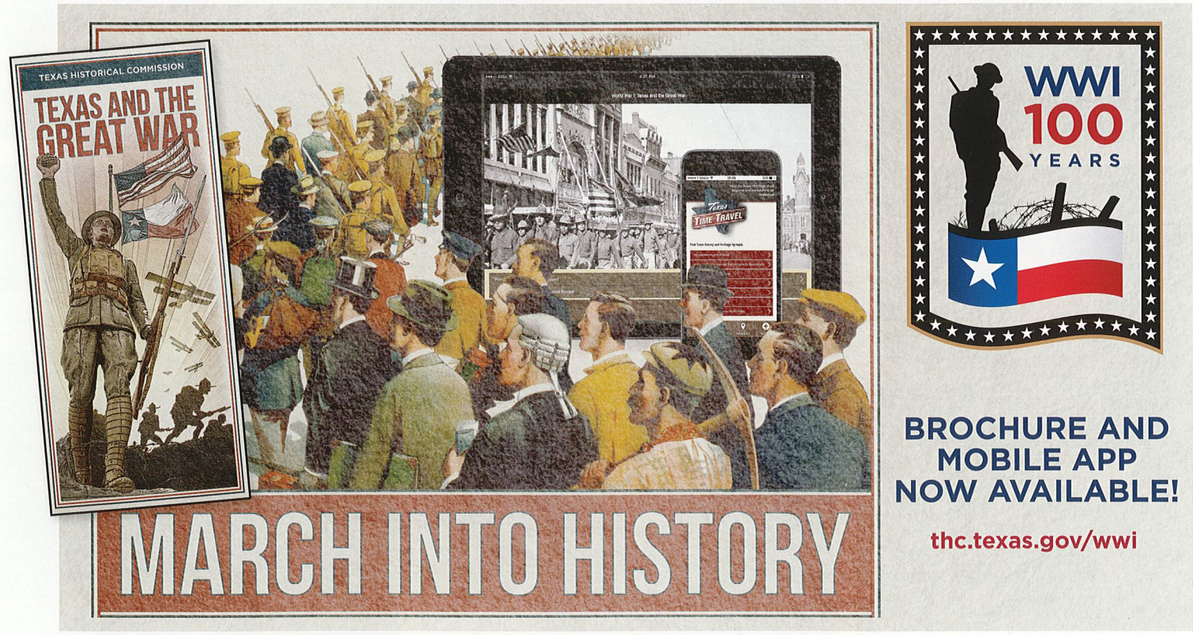
To learn more about how Texas is honoring the war's 100th anniversary, visit the THC's World War I resource page or the Texas World War I Centennial Commemoration Association's website.
thc.texas.gov/wwi
www.texasworldwar1centennial.org

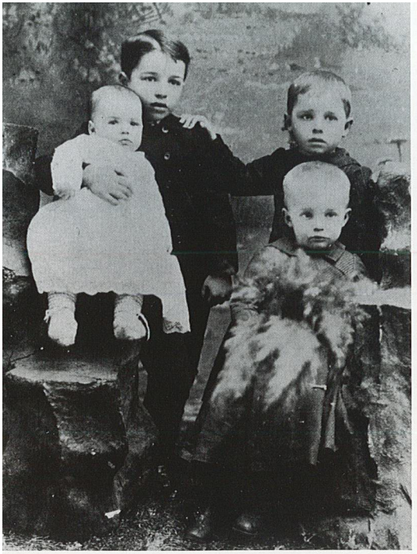
And of course, one of the simplest and most powerful acts you can do on the day is observe a moment of silence at 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 2018.

You can also widen your impact by using social media to tell the world your family's and community's World War I stories. Perhaps it's an ancestor's sacrifice, or how your town responded to the war effort. Maybe it's a treasured photograph, or the local war monument. Whatever the connection, tag your photographs and posts with **#TexasWWI** and share what the World War I Centennial means to you.



Above: "The Texans Are Ready" sheet music, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Music Division.

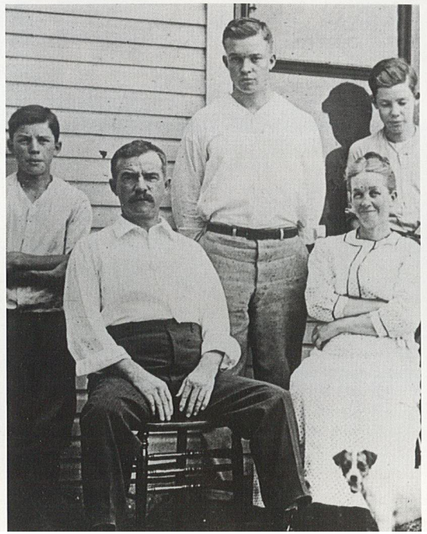












Counterclockwise from top left: First known photograph of Dwight Eisenhower, 1893. Counterclockwise from top left: Arthur, Roy, Dwight, and Edgar, 1893.

First Eisenhower family home in Abilene, Kansas, 1898. From left to right: Dwight, Edgar, Earl, Roy, and Arthur.

Dwight and friends camping along the Smoky Hill River, 1904.

Dwight with his parents and brothers, 1910. From left to right: Milton, David (father), Dwight, Ida (mother), Earl, and Flip.

Photos courtesy of Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum & Boyhood Home.

Above: Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower.

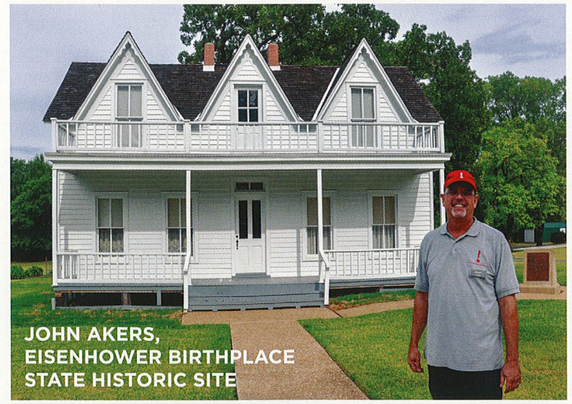
By Andy Rhodes, Managing Editor, *The Medallion*

The Great Lakes Region: Explore North Texas' World War I-Era Legacy

There isn't much material evidence of World War I in Texas. There are former training airfields, museums with weaponry exhibits, and parks containing honorary memorials, but travelers need to dig a little deeper to find a truly meaningful experience. In fact, the Great War's Lone Star legacy is most poignant in the real stories that bring wartime drama to life.

Many of these tales are told in the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Lakes Trail Region. Two of the THC's State Historic Sites in the region—Denison's **Eisenhower Birthplace** (visiteisenhowerbirthplace.com, 903-465-8908) and Bonham's Sam Rayburn House—offer insightful stories about significant statesmen who made lasting impacts during World War I and beyond.

Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site Manager John Akers welcomes the opportunity to educate visitors about Ike's humble North Texas roots, and shares anecdotes and photos detailing the professional and personal impact of his home state.



JOHN AKERS, EISENHOWER BIRTHPLACE STATE HISTORIC SITE

"Ike has a deeper World War I connection to Texas than most people know," explains Akers, recently named by THC as its Site Manager of the Year. "He spent the first half of the war in Texas, and he even met his wife here. Those are pretty major lifetime events."

Akers' favorite story about Eisenhower's Texas-related experience is a testament to Ike's tenacity and leadership. Beginning with his role in a punitive expedition against Pancho Villa along the Mexican border in 1916 and continuing with his experience at Leon Springs Military Reservation near San Antonio, Ike developed a reputation for persistence. For months, he repeatedly requested transfers to Europe so he could fight in the war and direct troops. He was even reprimanded by a commanding officer for too many transfer requests.

Finally, the day he'd been eagerly anticipating arrived—Eisenhower received his orders to ship out in November 1918. On November 11, the war ended. He never had the long-awaited opportunity to fight overseas.

"He was despondent, but he was determined more than ever to show his dedication to the military and his country," Akers explains. "He came away from that experience with even more drive and focus. He vowed to make up for his missed opportunity in World War I, and boy did he ever."

Eisenhower developed and sharpened his leadership skills as a second lieutenant at San Antonio's Fort Sam Houston in 1915. He learned to effectively train and organize soldiers and hone the qualities that would define his later success as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II and as the 34th U.S. president. While at Fort Sam Houston, Ike moved up through the ranks, drew positive attention from the top brass, and developed a network of military relationships.

On July 1, 1916, Eisenhower was promoted to first lieutenant—the same day he married Mamie Geneva Doud. The two met in San Antonio the previous year and immediately fell for each other. Once married, Mamie moved into the officers quarters with Ike at Fort Sam Houston.

"She was a very important part of his life there, and she helped with getting him and other military officers connected at events and activities," Akers says. "Ike did his best to return her affections by purchasing gifts that would make her happy. He was an excellent poker player, so he used his winnings to buy china and special items for Mamie."


SAM RAYBURN HOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

Akers adds that the Eisenhower Birthplace strives to share stories of Ike's modest beginnings with visitors by focusing on his family's background and the community's impact on his life. His father worked on the railroad in a working-class Denison neighborhood, which made an impact on Ike's development and offered a connection to middle-class Americans. The local community retains a strong affinity for Eisenhower's heritage, and visitors from across the country travel to the site to learn about Ike's roots and how he was impacted by his upbringing. (See page 14 to learn more about the site.)

"It's interesting how much Eisenhower is still connected to our modern world—he played major roles in developing the highway system, space travel, and creating the states of Hawaii and Alaska," Akers says. "His legacy is still very much with us."

Remembering Rayburn

Just 30 miles southeast of Denison is the **Sam Rayburn House State Historic Site** in Bonham (visitsamrayburnhouse.com, 903-583-5558). Rayburn served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 48 years, including 17 as speaker. His first presidential administration was under Woodrow Wilson, who asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany in April 1917. Rayburn confidently cast his vote in favor.

"Mr. Sam" later returned to Bonham to deliver a speech at the Fannin County Courthouse. Hundreds gathered to hear his reassuring words about their fathers, sons, and husbands coming home soon. Although Rayburn was 36 years old at the time, he signed up for the draft to show support for his nation.

"Mr. Sam ultimately realized he could best serve his country in Congress working for soldiers and helping win the war—that's where he felt he could make the biggest difference," says Anne Ruppert, the site's curator.

At the site, Ruppert shares a selection of war-related items from the home's collection that reflect the war's impact on rural Texans. Newspaper clippings with news of local soldiers' combat deaths and literary contributions from the era depict loss and pride among the community.



Right: WWI-era artifacts at the Sam Rayburn House include a Victor 78 rpm record, above, and poems from soldier-poet Joyce Kilmer.

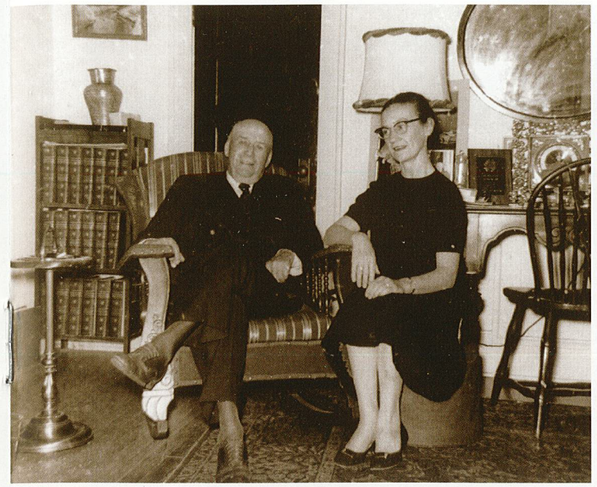
Ruppert tells a story about local soldier Rufus Shelton, the first Fannin County resident to be killed in action (May 28, 1918). His mother wrote to Rayburn, asking to help bring his body back. Rayburn submitted an official request to the war department to return his remains; his request was approved, and Shelton was buried in Oakwood Cemetery, where locals often gathered to pay their respects.

"Mr. Sam was an important part of the war movement, especially in this part of Texas," Ruppert says. "People in the 4th District looked to him for support, and he helped serve as a link to their men overseas."

Regional Reconnaissance

Covering a vast 31-county area in North Central Texas, the Lakes Trail Region is perhaps the richest in World War I heritage of the THC's 10 heritage trail regions. With seven destinations featured in the agency's *Texas and the Great War* travel guide and a half-dozen former military airfield sites, the region still retains a connection to the war.

North Texas' flat terrain and warm weather made it an ideal location for



training aviators, spurring construction at airfields and schools across the region in 1917. Hundreds of airplanes and servicemen occupied three Fort Worth-area fields—Barron near Everman, Carruthers at Benbrook, and Taliaferro north of Fort Worth.

"The airfields really set a lot of things in motion with infrastructure development and population growth around here," says Jill Campbell, executive director of the Lakes Trail Region. "Fort Worth has always been on the forefront of military aviation advancement, and the families who moved and stayed here have made great contributions to the region."

To learn more, visit the **Fort Worth Aviation Museum** (fortworthaviationmuseum.com, 855-733-8627), which tells the story of North Texas' flight-related heritage. The museum contains fascinating photos of World War I training fields, along with an impressive collection of historic warbirds. A few miles south is **Greenwood Memorial Park** (817-336-0584), containing the Royal Flying Corps Cemetery, developed by the British government in 1924 to honor airmen who died during training at the three nearby airfields.

Head east to Dallas to learn more about the region's aviation history at Love Field's **Frontiers of Flight Museum** (flightmuseum.com, 214-350-3600). The Army built Love Field in October 1917 as a training base, and one of its most common planes was the Curtiss JN-4, nicknamed the "Jenny." The museum features an impressively restored Curtiss Jenny that was used at the field in 1918.

Continue exploring the Lakes Region's World War I history at Hillsboro's **Texas Heritage Museum** (hillcollege.edu/museum, 254-659-7750). Located on the Hill College campus, the museum features a remarkable collection, including personal stories of native Texans' wartime experiences along with a weapons gallery containing armaments from the Great War.

Though located a few hours away, it's worth making the drive to Fredericksburg to experience the THC's **National Museum of the Pacific War** (pacificwarmuseum.org, 830-997-8600). While there, learn about Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, commander of the Pacific Fleet in World War II. His grandfather Charles Nimitz, a town founder, immigrated from Germany in 1844; when anti-German prejudice flared up during World War I, Chester Nimitz provided an important counterpoint.

In the years before the Great War, Nimitz supervised the building and installation of the first diesel engine ever used in a U.S. Navy ship. During the war, Cmdr. Nimitz served as chief of staff to the commander of the Atlantic Submarine Force and later was appointed executive officer of the battleship *South Carolina*. From that point forward, he became a rising star in the military.

To discover more heritage travel destinations in the area, download or order a free copy of the *Texas Lakes Trail Region* travel guide at texastimetravel.com.

For more information about the Lone Star State's role in World War I, download or order *Texas and the Great War* at thc.state.gov.

Above: Sam Rayburn and his sister Lucinda.
Below: National Museum of the Pacific War hotel.



PHOTOGRAPHERS Capture the regal monument to Davy's wife Elizabeth Crockett at Acton State Historic Site.

OUTDOORS Hike, bike, or fish at the cozy Bonham State Park, created by the CCC in 1935.

LOCAL EATS Denison's Best Burger Barn lives up to its name in a historic downtown building.

HAPPY HOUR Enjoy a local brew in one of the many 1920s Magnolia Avenue bungalows in Fort Worth.

VICTORY MARCH

Texas Cities Large and Small Hosted Parades for Returning Soldiers

After Armistice Day on November 11, 1918, Texans honored soldiers throughout the state by hosting Victory Parades on downtown main streets. Texas residents arrived in droves—many dressed in their finest clothes and fashionable hats—to greet the men and women in uniform and show support for their service overseas.

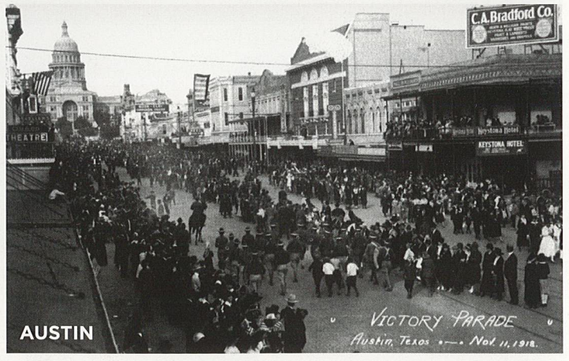
Nearly 200,000 Texans joined the armed forces for the war, including 450 women serving as nurses. Contact your local County Historical Commission to learn more about resources in your community that may have archives with Victory Parade photos.

Find your local CHC at thc.texas.gov/what-are-chcs.



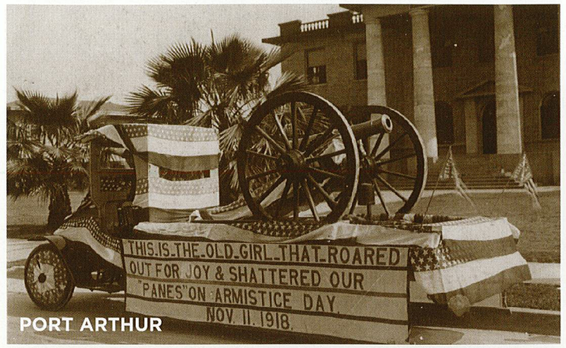
DALLAS


AUSTIN

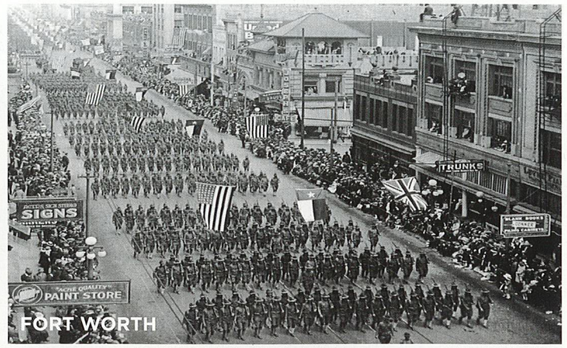


AUSTIN

Top, Dallas. University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Tarrant County College NE, Heritage Room. Left and above, Austin. University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

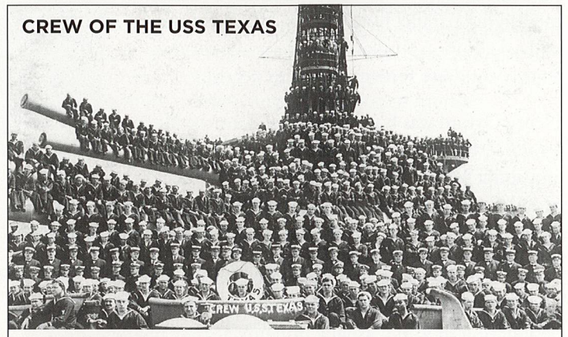


PORT ARTHUR



FORT WORTH





> **TO THE SAILORS**
> Tho your mission in the World's War was not so spectacular as the army, to you belongs just as much laud. Without your aid, poor torn and bleeding France would today be writing under the tyrants heel. In transporting two millions of soldier boys across the sea with the loss of a few hundred, you performed one of the greatest miracles of the whole war. You did your duty, and did it well. What more could be said.

Above, left: Port Arthur, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Port Arthur Public Library. Above, right: Fort Worth. Above: The *USS Texas* was present at the surrender of the German Imperial Fleet in 1918, TPWD-Battleship TEXAS Archives. Left: *Denton Record-Chronicle* ad, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Denton Public Library. Below: A joyous crowd attends a ceremony at El Paso High School Stadium on Nov. 11, 1918. *El Paso Times*.

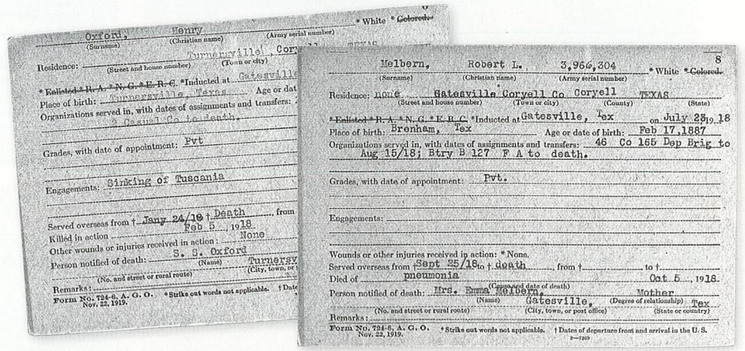
> **TO THE DOUGHBOYS**
> We are glad to welcome you back to God's country, to the land of the free and the home of the brave. Your splendid battle record on the fields of Flanders, in the Argonne Forest, has given you immortal fame. Your actions on foreign fields has excited the admiration and love of all the freeborn and freedom-loving people of the earth. You have brought back old glory unsullied and untarnished; loved and revered as she never was before. You have proved yourselves to be men in every sense of the word, and we are proud of you, not alone for your deeds of bravery and heroism, your sufferings and hardships, but because you fought like true Americans.


EL PASO

LINKED BY LAND AND SEA

A TALE OF TWO CORYELL COUNTY SOLDIERS IN WORLD WAR I

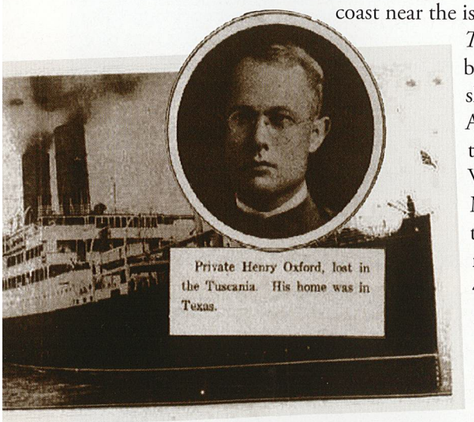
Text by Bob Brinkman,
THC Historical Markers Program Coordinator



We don't know if Henry Grady Oxford and Robert Lee Melbern knew each other in life. At the outbreak of World War I they both lived in Coryell County, and their farms were about 10 miles apart. We do know that these young men living parallel lives on Central Texas soil embarked upon similar lives of service for their country and are forever linked in death.

Henry Oxford was born in 1893 at Turnersville, a rural settlement along the Middle Bosque River and about 10 miles north of Gatesville. In the fall of 1910, Oxford and several Turnersville classmates enrolled in Daniel Baker College in Brownwood. In October 1917, he was inducted into the U.S. Army.

Oxford and other troops were given the temporary designation of 2nd Casual Company as they boarded *SS Tuscania* in Hoboken, New Jersey on January 24, 1918. After a journey of nearly two weeks, the converted luxury liner carrying more than 2,000 American troops was torpedoed by a German submarine and sank within sight of the Scottish coast near the island of Islay.



Tuscania became the first ship carrying American soldiers to be sunk in World War I. More than 200 troops died that night, at least 40 of them from Texas. Henry Oxford was among the casualties.

Robert Melbern was born in Brenham in 1887, and grew up on his family's farm and ranch six miles west of Gatesville. His father, Edward Fred, was a Fayette County native; his mother, Emma Bertha (Schloeman), was born in Germany. Robert joined the army in July 1918.

Melbern and his fellow soldiers boarded *HMS Otranto*, an armed merchant cruiser of the British Navy, in New York City on September 25, 1918. The ship was part of a convoy that neared the Scottish coast two weeks later in a fierce storm, and after daybreak on October 6, *Otranto* collided with the cargo liner *HMS Kashmir* in the same seas where *Tuscania* sank eight months before. More than 470 lives were lost, with Robert Melbern among them.

Each man is memorialized in meaningful ways. Oxford's gravestone in Prairie View Cemetery near Turnersville illustrates his military service and notes that "He Lost His Life on the Tuscania." His siblings established a scholarship in his name at Daniel Baker College, and catalogues show that the scholarship was still offered a generation later during World War II.

Robert Lee Melbern's name is among those at Suresnes American Cemetery near Paris, a final resting place of American troops from both world wars. Bronze tablets on the chapel walls record the names of 974 men missing from World War I. He also has a military headstone in his family plot at Gatesville City Cemetery.

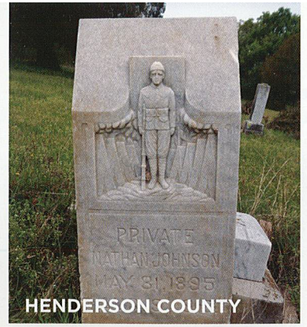
One of more than 200 individual bronze plaques placed in the 1920s honors Melbern at the University of Texas' Memorial Stadium, dedicated in 1924 to the war dead. And Melbern and Oxford are closely tied in another way, with "Melbern, R. L." and "Oxford, H." listed close together on a 1931 bronze tablet outside Memorial Stadium. With the names of more than 5,000 Texas casualties from World War I, the tablet illustrates the statewide scope and the local loss that are part of the legacy of World War I in Texas.

To learn more about the THC's efforts to commemorate Texans in the Great War, visit thc.texas.gov/wwi.

Above: Oxford's and Melbern's registration cards. Left: Oxford's portrait from *Mid-Week Pictorial's* Our National Roll of Honor.



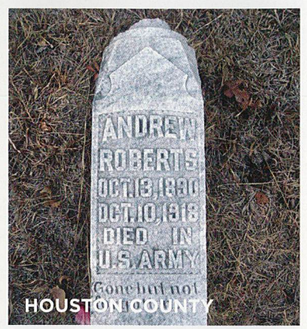
FRIO COUNTY



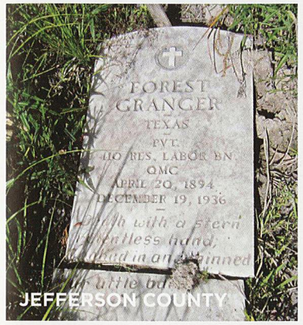
HENDERSON COUNTY



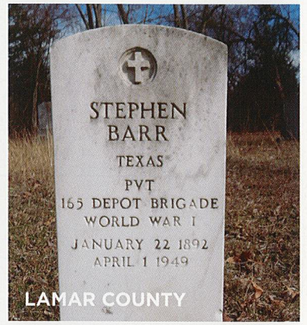
CORYELL COUNTY



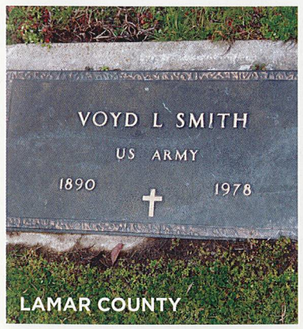
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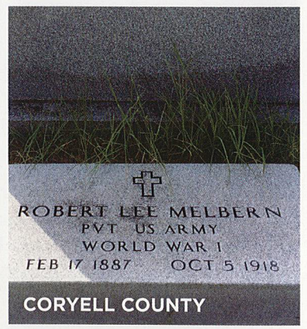
JEFFERSON COUNTY



LAMAR COUNTY



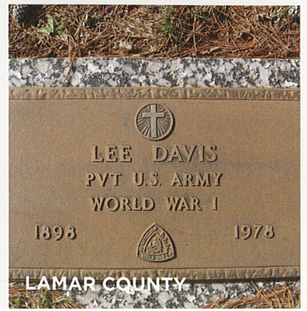
LAMAR COUNTY



CORYELL COUNTY



CORYELL COUNTY



LAMAR COUNTY

TURN TO STONE

CEMETERIES PROVIDE INVALUABLE INFORMATION ABOUT WWI VETERANS

Text by Lila Rakoczy,
THC Military Sites Program Coordinator

Signs of the First World War are all around us—hiding in plain sight, in fact. One obvious but overlooked place is local cemeteries. For those with an interest in World War I, grave markers are an invaluable source of information about the men and women who served.

MILITARY HEADSTONES AND MARKERS

After World War I, the repatriation of American dead from Europe resulted in a redesign of military headstones. The result was the so-called "General Type," consisting of an upright headstone in marble or granite. In later years, the U.S. government would also offer two other options: a flat marble or granite marker, and a flat bronze marker.

The amount of information displayed about the veteran depends on when the marker or headstone was issued. In addition to the name of the veteran and the death date, it might also include: a date or year of birth; the wars or conflicts the veteran served in; military rank; branch of service; details about the veteran's division, brigade, regiment, and company; and his or her home state. In addition, the veteran's family members were given the opportunity to request the inclusion of a religious symbol.

CIVILIAN HEADSTONES

Not all the veterans in local cemeteries will have a military headstone. Some who died during or soon after the war were given civilian headstones, often with patriotic flourishes. Others received markers which made no mention of their wartime service, either because their family did not know the U.S. government would provide one, or because they chose not to have one. Many veterans have no headstone at all or have one which is no longer visible.

Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides new or replacement military headstones for the graves of qualifying veterans.
cem.va.gov

ARCHIVAL RESOURCES

Several resources are available for sleuths who want to know more about the World War I veterans in their midst.

All headstone application records between 1925 and 1963 are maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration and are accessible online.
archives.gov

Texas is one of only a few states which still possesses its World War I military service cards and Victory Medal applications. The originals are held at the Texas Military Forces Museum in Austin but are freely available online. And don't forget about local or regional libraries—archived newspapers contain information about the home front, war mobilization, names of service personnel, and how communities bore the brunt of World War I.
familysearch.org

At left: These headstones for WWI veterans show the variety of styles found in Texas.

THE POWER OF EISENHOWER

THC'S HISTORIC SITE HONORS TEXAS-BORN HERO'S BIRTHPLACE

Text by Heather McBride,
THC Senior Communications Specialist

A stately statue of Dwight Eisenhower stands near the Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site in Denison. Surrounded by rose gardens and lush greenery, the statue is a favorite photo-op for visitors who duplicate his stance with arms akimbo, or use selfie sticks to capture a group shot.

The site's Interpretive Master Plan calls for moving the statue to a showcase plaza where Eisenhower will gaze upon his historic home.

"The photo-ops will be even better with Ike and his actual birthplace in the background," says Site Manager John Akers. "People are going to love it."



EISENHOWER BIRTHPLACE
STATE HISTORIC SITE

The Texas Historical Commission's Eisenhower Birthplace features the simple frame home where Ike was born in 1890. A year earlier, David Eisenhower brought his wife and their two young sons from Hope, Kansas, to pursue a new life in Texas working on the railroad. The Eisenhowers rented the house near the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad yards where David worked as a wiper, earning less than $40 a month cleaning the steam engines.

The site tells the story of Ike, the first U.S. president born in Texas. Antique furnishings fill the modest, restored house, illustrating the Eisenhowers' working-class life. The visitors center celebrates Ike with memorabilia and exhibits featuring his many accomplishments as president and war hero.

Eisenhower gained national fame after America entered World War II. In 1942, he was promoted to major general. Months later, he became commander in chief of the Allied Forces and led Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, Eisenhower commanded the Allied forces in the Normandy invasion—the largest amphibious invasion in history.

Moved by patriotism, Denison residents raised money to purchase the house where he was born and opened it as a museum in 1946.

"Eisenhower was always the pride of Denison, and he was hailed as a hometown hero when he came back to visit that same year," Akers explains.



Ike returned to town on a presidential campaign trip in 1952, and Eisenhower Birthplace became a state park while he was still president in 1958. He made his final visit to the home in 1965 to dedicate the Eisenhower Auditorium at Denison High School.

Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site
visiteisenhowerbirthplace.com
609 S. Lamar Ave.
Denison, TX 75021
903-465-8908



NEWS BRIEFS

ENTER THE THC'S #TEXASWWI PHOTO CONTEST

The Texas Historical Commission is seeking photos and stories of people, places, and events that took place during World War I. Nearly 200,000 Texans served in World War I, and the THC will commemorate their service by sharing photos and stories of these homeland heroes leading up to the 100th anniversary of the armistice. Simply tag your posts or photos or leave a comment on social media with #TexasWWI for a chance to be featured on our social media channels.

The 100th anniversary of Armistice Day—November 11, 2018—provides an opportunity to remember Texans who went beyond the call of duty, and to commemorate their valor and sacrifice. The holiday was first known as Armistice Day in recognition of the Great War ceasefire—achieved by the signing of an armistice at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

Learn more about upcoming Veterans Day events and how to get involved with the Texas World War I Centennial.
www.texasworldwar1centennial.org

Explore World War I history by discovering World War I sites across the Lone Star state, downloading the THC's newest free travel guide *Texas and the Great War*, and experiencing the war through the THC's interactive mobile app tour.
TexasTimeTravel.com

FIND PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFTS AT STATE HISTORIC SITES IN TEXAS

If you're looking for meaningful gifts for a Texas history buff, look no further than one of the THC's state historic sites.

Sip hot chocolate in style this holiday season with wraparound mugs—each uniquely designed with artistic renderings of its corresponding state historic site. The mugs are available at the following sites: Caddo Mounds, Confederate Reunion Grounds, Eisenhower Birthplace, Fort Griffin, Fort Lancaster, Fort McKavett, Fulton Mansion, Landmark Inn, Magoffin Home, Mission Dolores, Sam Bell Maxey House, Sam Rayburn House, San Felipe de Austin, and Varner-Hogg Plantation. T-shirts, a heritage tourist favorite, are available at the following state historic sites: Caddo Mounds, Confederate Reunion Grounds, Eisenhower Birthplace, Sam Bell Maxey House, San Felipe de Austin, and Starr Family Home. Historic site magnets are available at Caddo Mounds, Casa Navarro, Confederate Reunion Grounds, Eisenhower Birthplace, Fort Griffin, Fort Lancaster, Fulton Mansion, Landmark Inn, Magoffin Home, Mission Dolores, Sam Rayburn House, San Felipe de Austin, and Starr Family Home.

This holiday season, get away from the crowds and take a step back in time as you shop for gifts while experiencing Texas history. These gifts and more timeless treasures are available at a state historic site near you.

Go online for holiday hours of operation and a guide to the sites throughout Texas.
texashistoricsites.com

ENTER THE THC'S STAY AN EXTRA DAY SWEEPSTAKES CONTEST

The THC's Texas Heritage Trails Program (THTP) is wrapping up its 50th anniversary this year, and it's not too late to celebrate by entering the final Stay an Extra Day Sweepstakes contest. The Stay an Extra Day Sweepstakes encourages travelers to take a deeper dive into their explorations of the Lone Star State by staying an extra day.

Entries are being accepted until December 31 for a chance to win lodging, tours, and meals for two in the Forest and Hill Country Trail Regions. The Texas Heritage Trails Program is the THC's award-winning heritage tourism initiative. An economic development measure, the THTP encourages communities, heritage regions, and the state to partner and promote Texas' historic and cultural resources.

The contest is open to adults ages 18 and older. Follow @txhistcomm on Twitter and Instagram for dates and announcements.

Get more information and enter the contest.
ExtraDayInTexas.com

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Texas Historical Commission
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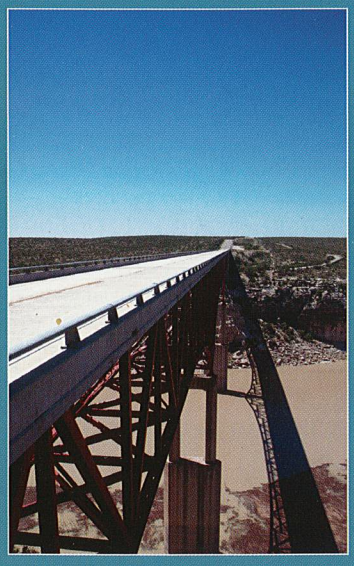
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

thc.texas.gov

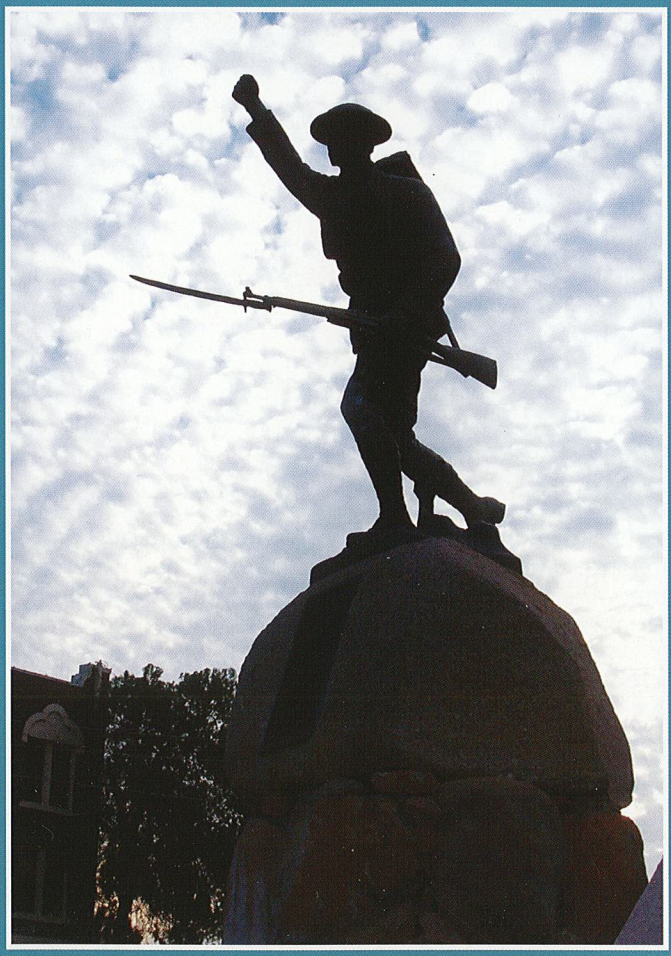
WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

Know Your Texas History? Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email to medallion @thc.texas.gov. Limit one prize annually per contestant.

Need a clue? This World War I memorial stands at the southeast corner of a Central Texas downtown square featuring a restored courthouse.



Answer to the photo from the last issue: The photo at left is the 1,300-foot-long Pecos River Bridge on Highway 90 near Langtry. Many readers answered correctly and shared stories of westward journeys. Congratulations and prizes go to the first three readers who correctly identified the site: Craig Bass of Dallas, Mike Brittain of Horseshoe Bay, and Ann McElhaney of Austin. Thanks to all who participated!



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