

Edited by Pulitzer Prize-winner

A. SCOTT BERG



PROJECT READER

WORLD WAR I
AND
AMERICA

TOLD BY THE AMERICANS

WHO LIVED IT

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The readings presented here are drawn from *World War I and America: Told by the Americans Who Lived It*. Published to mark the centenary of the American entry into the conflict, *World War I and America* brings together 128 diverse texts—speeches, messages, letters, diaries, poems, songs, newspaper and magazine articles, excerpts from memoirs and journalistic narratives—written by scores of American participants and observers that illuminate and vivify events from the outbreak of war in 1914 through the Armistice, the Paris Peace Conference, and the League of Nations debate. The writers collected in the volume—soldiers, airmen, nurses, diplomats, statesmen, political activists, journalists—provide unique insight into how Americans perceived the war and how the conflict transformed American life. It is being published by The Library of America, a nonprofit institution dedicated to preserving America's best and most significant writing in handsome, enduring volumes, featuring authoritative texts. You can learn more about *World War I and America*, and about The Library of America, at www.loa.org.

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Preface

MANY AMERICANS do not appreciate the key role the United States played in deciding the outcome of World War I, the deep impact the war had on Americans who lived through it, or the profound ways in which it continues to resonate today. While the U.S. was a belligerent for only nineteen of the war's fifty-two months, and suffered a fraction of the losses of the other major combatants, in the climactic campaigns of the war Americans fought with ferocious intensity. In the five and a half months the American Expeditionary Forces were engaged in major fighting, the U.S. lost more than 50,000 men killed in action, a combat toll greater than that of the entire Vietnam War. Equally important, the war ushered in powerful and complex changes in American culture and society. The war helped women to finally win the vote and ushered in the permissive Jazz Age, but also led to Prohibition and a heightened fear of immigrants. Amid deadly racial violence and frustrated hopes for full citizenship for African Americans, it gave rise to the militant "New Negro" and began the Great Migration to the North. It made the United States the most powerful actor on the global stage, and brought about a dramatic debate over America's role in the world. And it called into question the traditional meanings of glory, honor, courage, causing many to believe, as Ernest Hemingway wrote, "There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity."

This Reader presents twenty-two selections by American participants in the conflict, written from 1915 to 1929. They are drawn from the Library of America volume *World War I and America: Told by the Americans Who Lived It*, and give a first-hand look at the war from different points of view. Understanding how Americans perceived the conflict at the time allows us to encounter World War I on its own terms and to draw connections with the experiences of Americans today, both combatants and civilians. The selections focus on seven

key themes. Each theme features an introduction by a distinguished scholar, questions for discussion, and suggestions for further reading. The reader is intended to help facilitate an informed and rewarding conversation about the war and its consequences.

Introduction

III. RACE AND WORLD WAR I

THE UNITED STATES in April of 1917 was a nation divided by race. Calls for unconditional loyalty and “One Hundred Percent Americanism” by the federal government and civilian groups alike stemmed from deep anxieties about the racial composition of the country’s population. The imperatives of forging a unified war mobilization effort clashed with deeply ingrained ideas about race that informed how Americans viewed both the German enemy and each other. At home and abroad, Americans fought a war within the war that had race as its defining characteristic.

African Americans experienced this tension more profoundly than any other group. Wartime economic opportunities sparked the Great Migration of thousands of black southerners to the urban North. However, as racial oppression remained unrelenting, African Americans approached America’s entry into the war and Woodrow Wilson’s call to make the world “safe for democracy” with understandable skepticism. Black Socialists like A. Philip Randolph openly opposed the war, while large numbers of African Americans, especially in the South, found ways to avoid the draft. However, the vast majority of black people, encouraged by the black press and leaders such as W. E. B. Du Bois, came to support the war effort and were determined to do their part, as both soldiers and civilians, to aid their country in its time of need.

Racial violence and institutionalized discrimination tested black people’s patriotic resolve. On July 2, 1917, a racial pogrom erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, that left entire neighborhoods in ashes and at least thirty-nine—and possibly three times as many—African Americans dead. The following month, on the night of August 23, a contingent of black soldiers of the 24th Infantry, frustrated and angered by weeks of racist abuse and fearing attack by a lynch mob, shot and killed sixteen white residents and police officers in Houston, Texas. As it worked to raise an army virtually from scratch, the United

States government remained committed to preserving the color-line. "There is no intention on the part of the War Department to undertake at this time to settle the so-called race question," Secretary of War Newton Baker declared in a November 30, 1917, memo. Official Jim Crow policies, from the administration of the draft to the final demobilization process, shaped the experience of African American servicemen through the entire course of America's participation in the war.

In spite of tremendous obstacles, African Americans made an important contribution to the Allied victory. Some 380,000 black men ultimately served in the United States army, with over 200,000 sent to France. Although the army relegated the vast majority of African American troops to labor duties, two black divisions did see action on the Western Front. The 92nd Division, composed of draftees and black junior officers and sergeants like Charles Isum, suffered from systemic racism and poor leadership from its white commanders, many of whom despised the very idea of black men serving in combat. By contrast, the 93rd Division, made up largely of black National Guard regiments and assigned to the French army, established a distinguished fighting record, highlighted by the exploits of the 369th Infantry Regiment, which became known as the "Harlem Hellfighters."

Based on their sacrifice and loyalty, African Americans greeted the end of the war with hope that the country would reward them with greater democratic rights and opportunity. Instead, race relations across the country worsened. Racial violence erupted throughout the nation in 1919, demonstrating that the end of the war had brought anything but peace, or democracy. Race riots broke out in several cities, most notably Washington, D.C., and Chicago. Fearing an uprising by black sharecroppers, whites in Phillips County, Arkansas, aided by U.S. troops, massacred more than one hundred, and possibly more than two hundred, African Americans. The number of lynchings leapt to eighty-three, including at least eleven returned black servicemen.

Many African Americans, both emboldened and disillusioned by their war experience and its aftermath, determined to fight even harder for their civil and human rights. The war created a "New Negro," characterized by a spirit of resistance

that W. E. B. Du Bois powerfully captured in his *Crisis* editorial “Returning Soldiers.” In the ensuing postwar years, African Americans would take the lessons learned from their war experiences and apply them to renewed struggle against racism and white supremacy.

Chad Williams
*Professor of African and Afro-American Studies,
Brandeis University*

“THE CRISIS OF THE WORLD”:
NEW YORK, JULY 1918

W.E.B. Du Bois: “Close Ranks”

The first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was the most prominent black intellectual in America. Teacher, sociologist, historian, writer, and political activist, he was a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the editor of its monthly magazine, *The Crisis*. Since the spring of 1917, Du Bois had pronounced support for the war while continuing to denounce racial discrimination and violence. In June 1918 he met with his friend Joel Spingarn, a wealthy literary critic, educator, and the chairman of the NAACP board. Spingarn, then serving as a major in military intelligence, offered Du Bois a commission as an army captain and an assignment to a special intelligence bureau investigating racial problems. While considering the offer, Du Bois wrote this editorial, invoking black Americans to “forget our special grievances” for the duration of the war. His change of position and willingness to serve in the army drew intense criticism within the NAACP, and the offer of a military commission was withdrawn in late July.

THIS IS the crisis of the world. For all the long years to come men will point to the year 1918 as the great Day of Decision, the day when the world decided whether it would submit to military despotism and an endless armed peace—if peace it could be called—or whether they would put down the menace of German militarism and inaugurate the United States of the World.

We of the colored race have no ordinary interest in the outcome. That which the German power represents today spells death to the aspirations of Negroes and all darker races for equality, freedom and democracy. Let us not hesitate. Let us, while this war lasts, forget our special grievances and close our ranks shoulder to shoulder with our own white fellow citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy. We make no ordinary sacrifice, but we make it gladly and willingly with our eyes lifted to the hills.

The Crisis, July 1918

RETURNING TO "A SHAMEFUL LAND":
NEW YORK, MAY 1919

W.E.B. Du Bois: "Returning Soldiers"

Du Bois had traveled to France in December 1918 to investigate for the NAACP the treatment of black soldiers. While in Paris he helped organize a pan-African Congress, held in February 1919, which called on the peace conference to protect the rights of Africans living under colonial rule. He returned to the United States in April with material for "An Essay Toward a History of the Black Man in the Great War," published in *The Crisis* in June, and with documentation of the attempts by the U.S. military to prevent black soldiers from fraternizing with French civilians. "Documents of the War" appeared in the May number along with the editorial "Returning Soldiers." Postmaster General Burleson considered withholding mailing privileges from the magazine, but he relented. The May 1919 *Crisis* sold 106,000 copies, its highest circulation ever.

WE ARE returning from war! *The Crisis* and tens of thousands of black men were drafted into a great struggle. For bleeding France and what she means and has meant and will mean to us and humanity and against the threat of German race arrogance, we fought gladly and to the last drop of blood; for America and her highest ideals, we fought in far-off hope; for the dominant southern oligarchy entrenched in Washington, we fought in bitter resignation. For the America that represents and gloats in lynching, disfranchisement, caste, brutality and devilish insult—for this, in the hateful upturning and mixing of things, we were forced by vindictive fate to fight, also.

But today we return! We return from the slavery of uniform which the world's madness demanded us to don to the freedom of civil garb. We stand again to look America squarely in the face and call a spade a spade. We sing: This country of ours, despite all its better souls have done and dreamed, is yet a shameful land.

It *lynches*.

And lynching is barbarism of a degree of contemptible

nastiness unparalleled in human history. Yet for fifty years we have lynched two Negroes a week, and we have kept this up right through the war.

It *disfranchises* its own citizens.

Disfranchisement is the deliberate theft and robbery of the only protection of poor against rich and black against white. The land that disfranchises its citizens and calls itself a democracy lies and knows it lies.

It encourages *ignorance*.

It has never really tried to educate the Negro. A dominant minority does not want Negroes educated. It wants servants, dogs, whores and monkeys. And when this land allows a reactionary group by its stolen political power to force as many black folk into these categories as it possibly can, it cries in contemptible hypocrisy: "They threaten us with degeneracy; they cannot be educated."

It *steals* from us.

It organizes industry to cheat us. It cheats us out of our land; it cheats us out of our labor. It confiscates our savings. It reduces our wages. It raises our rent. It steals our profit. It taxes us without representation. It keeps us consistently and universally poor, and then feeds us on charity and derides our poverty.

It *insults* us.

It has organized a nation-wide and latterly a world-wide propaganda of deliberate and continuous insult and defamation of black blood wherever found. It decrees that it shall not be possible in travel nor residence, work nor play, education nor instruction for a black man to exist without tacit or open acknowledgment of his inferiority to the dirtiest white dog. And it looks upon any attempt to question or even discuss this dogma as arrogance, unwarranted assumption and treason.

This is the country to which we Soldiers of Democracy return. This is the fatherland for which we fought! But it is *our* fatherland. It was right for us to fight. The faults of *our* country are *our* faults. Under similar circumstances, we would fight again. But by the God of Heaven, we are cowards and jackasses if now that that war is over, we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land.

We return.

We return from fighting.

We return fighting.

Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why.

CONFRONTING INJUSTICE:
LOS ANGELES, MAY 1919

Charles R. Isum to W.E.B. Du Bois

A bookbinder from Los Angeles, Sergeant Charles Isum served with the medical detachment of the 365th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Division, in the Meuse-Argonne and in the Marbache Sector, where he treated wounded and gassed men under artillery fire during the final days of the war. Isum himself was gassed the day before the Armistice but remained in the field. In his letter to Du Bois he related his experiences with the army anti-fraternization policies described in the May number of *The Crisis*. In 1922 Charles and Zellee Isum had a daughter, Rachel, who later became a nurse; in 1946 she would marry the baseball player Jackie Robinson.

1343 Lawrence Street,
Los Angeles, California,
May 17, 1919.

Hon. W.E.B. DuBois,
Editor of *The Crisis*,
70 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading the May issue of *The Crisis* and have enjoyed it immensely. I am indeed pleased to note that someone has the nerve and backbone to tell the public the unvarnished facts concerning the injustice, discrimination and southern prejudices practiced by the white Americans against the black Americans in France.

I am a recently discharged Sergeant of the Medical Detachment, 365th. Infantry, 92nd. Division, and I take this opportunity to relate one of my personal experiences with the southern rednecks who were in command of my division, brigade and regiment.

On or about December 26, 1918 General Order No. 40 was issued from the headquarters of the 92nd. Division. I cannot recall the exact wording of the part of the order which was of

a discriminating nature, but it read something to this effect, "Military Police will see that soldiers do not address, carry-on conversation with or accompany the female inhabitants of this area." At the time this order was issued we were billeted in the village of Ambrieres, Mayenne. There were white soldiers also billeted in the same village but they did not belong to the 92nd. Division and the order did not affect them, hence it was an order for Colored soldiers only. It was not an A.E.F. order. It was a divisional order for Colored soldiers. We were living in the same houses with the French people and under the terms of this order we were forbidden to even speak to the people with whom we lived, while the white soldiers of the 325th. Baking Co. and the Subsupply Depot #10 were allowed to address, visit or accompany these same people where and whenever they desired.

On Jan. 21, 1919 Mademoiselle Marie Meziere, the eldest daughter of Monsieur Charles Meziere, a merchant tailor of Ambeieres was married to Monsieur Maurice Barbe, a French soldier. I was invited to be a guest at the wine party, to accompany the bridal party on the marriage promenade and to be a guest at the supper, which was to take place at 8:30 P.M. I attended the wine party with four other Colored soldiers from the Medical Detachment. No whites were invited but Capt. Willis (white) of the Supply Company "butted in". He spoke miserable french and the members of the party called on the Colored soldiers to interpret for him. Willis became enraged and turned his back on the Colored boys and told the French people that it was improper for them to associate with the black soldiers. The French people paid no attention to what he said and we all left him sitting in the cafe alone. His temperature at this time was at about 104 degrees. The other Colored soldiers returned to the Infirmary and I accompanied the bridal party on the promenade out on the boulevard. There were seven persons in the party; the bride and groom, the bride's sister, the groom's brother and sister, a French soldier and myself. I was the only American. As we reached town on returning from the stroll Colonel George McMaster, Commanding Officer of our regiment accosted me and demanded, "Who are you. What are you doing with these people" I told him and he called a Military Police and ordered me taken to

the Adjutant with orders for the Adjutant to prefer charges against me for accompanying white people. On arriving at the Adjutant's hotel we found Capt. Willis there evidently waiting for me to be brought in. The Adjutant asked only two questions, "Was he with a girl?", "What is your name and to what company do you belong?". Then he said, "Put him in the guard house."

The following afternoon I was ordered to appear for trial. At 1:15 P.M. I was taken through the streets to the Town Major's office by an armed guard who was a private soldier—my rank was not respected. I was called into the room and was surprised to find there was no one present but Major Paul Murry. He read the charges which had me charged with violating the 96th. Article of War and with disobeying General Order No. 40. After reading the charges he asked for my plea. I told him that I did not care to plea that I would exercise my right as a non-commissioned officer to refuse trial in a Summary Court. This was a complete surprise to him. He had no idea that I was aware of my rights. He looked it up in the Manual of Army Court Martials and said that it was my right but I was very foolish to use it. I told him that from the appearance of things there had been no intention of giving me a fair trial. The prosecuting witness was not present, the members of the board were absent and I had not been given an opportunity to call witnesses or secure counsel. At first he tried to frighten and intimidate me by saying that if I were given a General Court Martial trial I would be left in France awaiting trial after my regiment had gone home. He also said that I might get six months in Leavenworth if I should be found guilty. (Can you imagine it—six months for walking on the street with white people). After he saw that he could not intimidate me he assumed the air of comradeship and used all his presuasive powers to entice me to submit to a speedy quiet trial in his kangaroo court but I stood pat. He said that I was trying to play martyr and was trying to make a big fuss out of a little incident, but I claimed that I was standing for a principle, that I had been unjustly treated, that the G.O. was unconstitutional, undemocratic and in direct opposition to principles for which we had fought. I asked that General Pershing be given a copy of the General Order and also a copy of the charges against me. He

laughed at this request and said that the General was too busy for such small matters. He gave me a half an hour to think the matter over and stated that I might get some advice from the officers present. There were only two present. They had come in during the argument. One was Capt. Willis and the other Capt. Benj. Thomas. I took the matter up with Capt. Thomas and in the meantime my Detachment Commander, Major E.B. Simmons (white), of Massachusetts came in and I told him my story. He became indignant and told me to fight it to the last ditch and he would do all in his power to help me. I returned to the court room, and demanded a General Court Martial Trial and a release from the guard house pending trial. Major Murry said that I was making a great mistake and reluctantly gave me a release from the guard house.

That night I visited some of my French friends and found that the whole town was in an uproar over my case. M. Meziere had been to prevail on the Town Mayor in my behalf and was informed that nothing could be done as the Americans had charge of the town. M. Meziere had also called on Brig. Gen Gehardt our Brigade Commander, another Negro-hater of the meanest type. He refused to even give M. Meziere a civil audience. M. Meziere then went to the Town Mayor and swore to an affidavit that my character was of the best, that I was a respected friend of the family and was their invited guest. Mme. Emil Harmon, my landlady also made an affidavit of character in my behalf. I now have both affidavits in my possession.

The following day I was rearrested at my billet and placed in the guard house, contrary to military rules. The Manual of Army Court Martials states that a non-commissioned officer shall not be confined in a guard house with privates but no attention was paid to that rule. No charges were given and no explanation made except that it was Colonel McMaster's orders. I was released that night and sent to my Detachment under "arrest in quarters" Nothing more has been said about the case to this day except at New York when I asked Major Murry when I was going have my trial and he said that the best thing to do was to keep quiet about it.

On March 22, 1919 I was given an honorable discharge from the army, with character grade Excellent and rank of Sergeant M.D. No mention of the case was made on my Service Record.

If I had comitted an offense sufficient to cause me to be arrested twice and placed in the guard house, why was I given an honorable discharge with and Excellent grade character and a non-commissioned officer's rank?

If space would permit I could quote other instances where our boys were shamefully mistreated by the white Americans while in France.

Respectfully yours,

Charles R. Isum

Formerly Sergeant Medical Detachment, 365th. Inf.

P.S. If you should desire a copy of G.O. #40 write to Sergeant-Major Clarence Lee, 3426 Vernon Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Questions for Discussion and Suggestions for Further Reading

I. WHY FIGHT? / Introduction by Michael S. Neiberg

1. Alan Seeger was an American who volunteered to fight for France in 1914. How does his view of the war compare with the one presented by President Wilson in 1917?
2. Why did Americans fight in World War I? How do their reasons for going to war compare with those of the Americans who have fought in more recent conflicts?
3. What reasons did the Socialists give for opposing the war in 1917? How do their criticisms compare with those directed at American foreign policy today?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Edward A. Gutiérrez, *Doughboys on the Great War: How American Soldiers Viewed Their Military Service* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2014)

Jennifer D. Keene, *World War I: The American Soldier Experience* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011)

Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (New York: Viking, 2004)

II. THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR / Introduction by Edward G. Lengel

1. How can language be used to describe modern combat to those who have never experienced it?
2. What place do traditional concepts of courage and strength have on a battlefield where even the bravest and most skilled soldiers are vulnerable to sudden, random, and unseen forces of destruction?
3. War is defined by violence, and yet much of the experience of war takes place away from scenes of violence, in moments of anticipation, recollection, or simply waiting. How do the selections portray/evoke these moments?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998)

Edward G. Lengel, *Thunder and Flames: Americans in the Crucible of Combat, 1917–1918* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015)

———, *To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918, The Epic Battle That Ended the First World War* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2008)

Michael S. Neiberg, *Fighting the Great War: A Global History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005)

III. RACE AND WORLD WAR I / Introduction by Chad Williams

1. How did W.E.B. Du Bois see the role of black Americans in fighting for democracy in “Close Ranks”? When he wrote “Returning Soldiers” less than a year later, how had his vision changed?
2. How does the military of the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries compare with the army of 1917–19 in regards to race? What impact has the desegregation of the armed forces had on American society as a whole?
3. What does Charles Isum’s story tell us about the US army in 1919? What were the senior officers in his division afraid of, and how would their leadership be judged in today’s US military?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

W.E.B. Du Bois: Writings, ed. Nathan Huggins (New York: Library of America, 1986)

Richard Slotkin, *Lost Battalions: The Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005)

Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010)

IV. AMERICAN WOMEN AT WAR / Introduction by Jennifer D. Keene

1. What are we to make of the varied experiences related in the selections? Is there a “women’s experience of war”?
2. How much has changed since World War I in the roles that women play during times of national conflict? Is their support as essential on the home front as it was in World War I?
3. Does war act as a transformative force in women’s lives?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Hazel Hutchinson, *The War That Used Up Words: American Writers and the First World War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015)

Jennifer D. Keene, *World War I: The American Soldier Experience* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011)

Susan Zeiger, *In Uncle Sam’s Service: Women Workers with the American Expeditionary Force, 1917–1919* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004)

V. THE HOME FRONT: SELLING UNITY, SUPPRESSING DISSENT / Introduction by Chad Williams

1. How did Justice Holmes defend the value of free speech? Do you find his arguments persuasive?
2. Are there legitimate political and moral limits to wartime dissent in a democratic society?
3. How do the efforts of the Wilson administration to win support for World War I compare with the attempts of more recent administrations to rally public opinion in wartime?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010)

Geoffrey R. Stone, *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime, From the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, Inc., 2004)

VI. AMERICA ON THE WORLD STAGE / Introduction by Michael S. Neiberg

1. Should the United States try to promote democracy internationally?
2. Can the United States best serve its interests and preserve peace by acting through international organizations, or by maintaining its national sovereignty and the freedom to act unilaterally?
3. Was Wilson foolish or wise in trying to build an international order that did not rest upon the balance of power? Is it possible to have an international system that does not ultimately depend upon the use of force?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

- A. Scott Berg, *Wilson* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2013)
- Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001)
- Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War, America and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916–1931* (New York: Viking, 2014)

VII. AT HOME/COMING HOME: THE TOLL OF WAR / Introduction by Jennifer D. Keene

1. Was the Great War a just and noble cause for the Americans who fought in it? Were America's interests best served by fighting in World War I?
2. Did the use of conscription in World War I result in a more fair sharing of the burdens and sacrifice of war than the all-volunteer force of today?
3. How has the experience of returning from war changed in the last hundred years? What has remained the same?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

David Reynolds, *The Long Shadow: The Legacies of the Great War in the Twentieth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014)

Ben Shephard, *A War of Nerves: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Steven Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919–1941* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2010)

Chronology, June 1914–November 1921

1914

Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife Sophie are shot to death in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on June 28 by Gavrilo Princip, a young Bosnian Serb. Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia, July 28. Russia orders full military mobilization, July 30. Austria-Hungary orders full mobilization, July 31.

Germany declares war on Russia, August 1. France orders full mobilization, August 1. Germany invades Luxembourg, August 2, and Belgium, August 4. Britain declares war on Germany, August 4. President Woodrow Wilson proclaims American neutrality on August 4. Montenegro declares war on Austria-Hungary, August 5. Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia, August 6. France and Great Britain declare war on Austria-Hungary, August 12. Japan declares war on Germany, August 23. (Alliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary becomes known as the Central Powers, and alliance of France, Russia, and Britain as the Entente or the Allies.)

Germans occupy Brussels, August 20. French and British are defeated in series of battles fought along the French frontiers, August 20–24.

Germans defeat Russians in East Prussia in battle of Tannenberg, August 24–31. Russians begin offensive in eastern Galicia, August 26.

Austro-Hungarians invade northwest Serbia, August 12, but are defeated and retreat across border, August 23.

British begin naval blockade of Germany as main body of German surface fleet remains in harbor, unwilling to risk battle with numerically superior British forces.

German troops in Togoland surrender to British and French forces, August 26. New Zealand, Australia, and Japan occupy German colonies in the Pacific, August 26–October 14.

French and British halt German advance in battle of the Marne, fought west of Paris, September 5–9. Germans withdrawn from the Marne to the Aisne River. Both sides move troops north toward the Channel coast.

Russians capture Lemberg (Lviv) in Austrian Galicia, September 3, and begin siege of Przemyśl, September 24.

Germans defeat Russians in East Prussia in battle of the Masurian Lakes, September 7–13.

Austro-Hungarians launch second invasion of northwest Serbia, September 8.

British and French capture Douala, capital of Cameroon, September 27. (Last German garrison in Cameroon surrenders February 18, 1916.)

Germans begin series of attacks on Allied forces defending Belgian town of Ypres, October 19, in attempt to breakthrough to Channel ports of Dunkirk and Calais. Belgian army retreats to west bank of Yser River and floods lowlands between Nieuport and Dixmude.

Austro-Hungarian forces in Galicia relieve siege of Przemyśl, October 9.

Ottoman Empire enters war on October 29 as Turkish fleet bombards Russian ports in Black Sea.

Battle of Ypres ends November 22 as Germans fail to break through Allied defenses. Both sides entrench along Western Front, which runs for 475 miles from the North Sea coast to the Swiss border.

Siege of Przemyśl resumes on November 6 as Austro-Hungarian armies in Galicia withdraw to the Carpathians.

Garrison at Tsingtao (Qingdao), German concession port in northern China, surrenders to Japanese, November 7, after six-week-long siege.

Austro-Hungarian forces begin major offensive in Serbia, November 6. Serbs evacuate Belgrade, November 29.

Fighting begins between Russians and Turks in the Caucasus, November 6. Ottoman Sultan Mehmed V declares jihad against the Allies, November 14, in unsuccessful attempt to foment rebellion among the Muslim populations of the British, French, and Russian empires. British and Indian troops occupy Basra in Mesopotamia, November 22.

French launch unsuccessful offensives in the Artois, December 17–January 13, 1915, and in Champagne, December 20–March 20, 1915.

Germans occupy Łódź in western Poland, December 6. Austro-Hungarian forces defeat Russians in battle of Limanowa-Lapanow, fought southeast of Cracow, December 3–12. Fighting continues in Carpathians during winter.

Serbs launch counteroffensive, December 3–6, that recaptures Belgrade on December 15 as Austro-Hungarian forces are driven from Serbia.

Turks launch offensive in Caucasus, December 22, and are defeated at Sarikamish, December 29–30.

1915 Sarikamish campaign ends, January 15, after Turks lose two-thirds of their attacking force.

Germans announce on February 4 that Allied merchant ships in war zone around Great Britain and Ireland will be sunk by U-boats (submarines) without warning and that neutral shipping should avoid entering the zone. Unrestricted U-boat campaign begins on February 18.

Germans defeat Russians in second battle of the Masurian Lakes, February 7–22.

Anglo-French naval force begins bombarding Turkish fortifications in the Dardanelles, February 19.

Russians capture 120,000 prisoners when garrison of Przemyśl surrenders on March 22.

British impose total blockade on Germany, including all food imports, March 11.

Anglo-French fleet loses three obsolete battleships to mines in unsuccessful attempt to force passage of the Dardanelles, March 18.

Germans launch offensive at Ypres, April 22, using poisonous chlorine gas released from cylinders. Battle continues until May 25 as Germans gain ground but fail to capture Ypres. (British begin using poison gas in September 1915.)

Turkish police arrest more than two hundred prominent Armenians in Istanbul, April 24. (Evidence indicates that in March 1915 the leadership of the Committee of Union and Progress, which had ruled the Ottoman Empire since 1913, decided to remove the Armenian population of Anatolia by deportation and mass murder.) British, Australian, New Zealand, and French troops land on Gallipoli peninsula, April 25, beginning land campaign to open the Dardanelles. Campaign becomes stalemated, with Allied forces confined to shallow beachheads.

French launch new offensive in the Artois, May 9–June 18, supported by British attacks at Aubers Ridge, May 9, and Festubert, May 15–25.

Germans and Austro-Hungarians break through Russian

lines between Gorlice and Tarnow in southeast Poland, May 2–4, and recapture Przemyśl, June 3, and Lemberg, June 22, as Russians retreat from Galicia.

Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary, May 23. Italian troops cross the Austrian border and advance to the Isonzo River with objective of seizing Trieste. In the first battle of the Isonzo, June 23–July 7, Italians fail to capture high ground east of the river. (Italians will launch four additional offensives in the Isonzo valley, July 1915–March 1916, that fail to break through Austro-Hungarian defenses.)

Ottoman authorities begin deportation of Armenians from Anatolia into the Syrian desert in May as mass killings are carried out by Kurdish tribesmen and criminal gangs recruited by the Special Organization, paramilitary group controlled by the Committee of Union and Progress. (By the summer of 1916 an estimated 800,000 to one million Armenians are killed, or die from hunger and disease, in the massacres and deportations, along with at least 150,000 Assyrian Christians.)

U-boat sinks British ocean liner *Lusitania* off the coast of Ireland on May 7, killing 1,198 people, including 128 Americans. United States protests sinking on May 13 as an “unlawful and inhumane act.” Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan resigns on June 9, fearing that Wilson’s continued defense of the right of Americans to travel on belligerent ships will lead to war.

German air service deploys first fighter aircraft with forward-firing machine gun in July. (British and French will introduce equivalent aircraft into service by early 1916. From the beginning of the war all of the major powers use aircraft for reconnaissance and bombing raids; Germans also use Zeppelins for bombing and maritime reconnaissance.)

Germans and Austro-Hungarians launch new offensive, July 13, that forces Russians to retreat from Poland. German forces capture Warsaw, August 5. Austro-Hungarians capture Brest-Litovsk, August 26.

U-boat sinks British liner *Arabic* off Ireland, August 19, killing two Americans. Seeking to avoid American entry into war, Germans suspend unrestricted U-boat campaign, August 27, and pledge on September 1 not to sink passenger ships without warning.

German forces in South-West Africa (Namibia) surrender, July 9.

British troops land at Suvla Bay, August 6, as part of new attempt to break stalemate at Gallipoli. Offensive ends on August 15 with Turks still holding high ground and the Allies confined to their beachheads. French launch offensives in Champagne, September 25–November 6, and the Artois, September 25–October 16. Attack in the Artois is supported by British offensive at Loos, September 25–October 19.

Germans capture Vilna, September 18. Russian retreat ends in late September along line running from Gulf of Riga south to the Romanian border near Czernowitz (Chernivtsi).

British and Indian troops in Mesopotamia advance up Tigris and capture Kut, September 28.

French and British troops begin landing at Salonika, Greece, on October 5 in effort to aid Serbs. German and Austro-Hungarian forces invade Serbia from the north, October 7, and capture Belgrade, October 9. Bulgaria invades Serbia from east, October 14. Serbian army begins winter retreat across mountains into Montenegro and Albania, November 24. (Survivors are evacuated from the Adriatic coast by Allies, January–April 1916, and later join Allied forces at Salonika.)

British begin advance up Tigris toward Baghdad, November 19, but fail to breakthrough Turkish defenses at Ctesiphon (Salman Pak), November 22–25, and retreat to Kut. Turks begin siege of Kut, December 7. Allies begin evacuation of Gallipoli in mid-December.

1916 Allied evacuation of Gallipoli is completed, January 8. Austro-Hungarians invade Montenegro, January 5, and complete occupation of the country, January 25. Russians begin offensive in the Caucasus, January 10, and capture Erzurum, February 16.

Germans begin offensive at Verdun, February 21, and capture Fort Douaumont, key French position, February 25, but are unable to breakthrough inner defensive line. Fighting extends to left (west) bank of the Meuse, March 6, as Germans continue offensive intended to exhaust French army in battle of attrition.

Germany declares war on Portugal, March 9, after the Portuguese government seizes interned German ships.

Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa raids Columbus,

New Mexico, on March 9, killing eighteen Americans. Wilson sends military expedition led by General John J. Pershing into Mexico in pursuit of Villa, March 15 (expedition ends in early February 1917 without Villa being captured).

U-boat torpedoes French passenger ship *Sussex* in the English Channel, March 24, injuring several Americans. Wilson warns Germany on April 18 that the U.S. will break diplomatic relations if attacks on passenger ships continue. German government pledges on May 4 that it will abide by established rules of naval warfare, which require that the passengers and crew of a ship be placed in lifeboats before it is sunk.

Allied forces begin offensive in German East Africa, April 3. (Fighting extends into Portuguese East Africa and Northern Rhodesia in 1917–18 before last German forces surrender on November 25, 1918.)

Irish republicans begin Easter Uprising in Dublin, April 24. Insurrection is suppressed by British troops, April 29.

Russians capture Trabzon, Turkish Black Sea port, on April 18. British garrison at Kut surrenders, April 29.

American volunteer pilots fly first patrol with Escadrille N. 124, French fighter squadron later known as the Lafayette Escadrille, May 13.

Sykes-Picot agreement, ratified May 16, divides postwar Middle East into zones of British and French direct control and indirect influence while envisioning international zone in Palestine under British, French, and Russian administration. (The borders established in Middle East during the 1920s do not follow boundaries outlined in Sykes-Picot agreement.)

Austro-Hungarians begin offensive in the Trentino, May 15, and capture Asiago, May 28. Offensive is halted on June 10.

German fleet sails into North Sea on May 31 in attempt to engage British fleet on favorable terms. In battle of Jutland, May 31–June 1, British lose three battle cruisers, three armored cruisers, eight destroyers, and 6,000 men killed, while Germans lose one battle cruiser, one obsolete battleship, four light cruisers, five destroyers, and 2,500 men killed. British retain control of North Sea and continue blockade.

Russian offensive in Galicia, June 4, breaks through

Austro-Hungarian lines and captures 200,000 prisoners by June 12. Germans make final attempt to capture Verdun, June 23.

Arab revolt against Ottoman rule begins in the Hejaz, June 10.

British and French begin offensive along Somme River, July 1, after week-long preliminary bombardment.

In sixth battle of the Isonzo, August 6–17, Italians succeed in capturing Gorizia. (Italians will launch another four offensives along the Isonzo, September 1916–June 1917, that make limited gains in the high ground east of the river.) Italy declares war on Germany, August 28.

Romania declares war on Austria-Hungary, August 27, and invades Transylvania. German, Bulgarian, and Turkish forces invade southern Romania, September 2. Germans and Austro-Hungarians begin counteroffensive in Transylvania, September 25.

British use tanks for the first time with limited success on the Somme, September 15. Russian offensive in Galicia ends, September 20. French counteroffensive at Verdun recaptures Fort Douaumont, October 24.

Wilson wins reelection on November 7, defeating Republican Charles Evans Hughes.

Battle of the Somme ends, November 18, with a maximum Allied advance of seven miles. British lose 420,000 men killed, wounded, or missing, while French casualties total 200,000; German casualties are estimated at 430,000.

Franz Joseph, emperor of Austria since 1848, dies on November 21 and is succeeded by his nephew Karl.

Herbert Henry Asquith, prime minister of Great Britain since 1908, resigns on December 5, and is succeeded by David Lloyd George. Germans capture Bucharest, December 6, as Romanian army retreats north into Moldavia. French counteroffensive at Verdun, December 15–18, regains much of the ground lost earlier in the year. French lose 377,000 men killed, wounded, or missing in battle, while German casualties total 337,000.

1917 Decision by German military and naval leadership to resume unrestricted U-boat warfare is endorsed by Kaiser Wilhelm II on January 9.

Wilson calls for “peace without victory” in address to the Senate, January 22.

Unrestricted U-boat warfare resumes, February 1. United States breaks diplomatic relations with Germany, February 3. Text of Zimmerman telegram, diplomatic message proposing a German-Mexican alliance against the United States, is published on March 1.

Germans shorten their line in France by withdrawing 12–25 miles to “Hindenburg Line,” strongly fortified position, March 16–18.

British retake Kut, February 25, and occupy Baghdad, March 11.

Food riots in Petrograd (St. Petersburg), March 8–12, result in mutiny by city garrison. Tsar Nicholas II abdicates, March 15, as provisional government is established with Prince Lvov as prime minister.

Wilson asks Congress on April 2 to declare war against Germany. War resolution is approved by the Senate, 82–6, on April 4 and by the House, 373–50, on April 6. (U.S. army has 127,000 officers and men, with another 80,000 men in the National Guard on federal service.)

British begin offensive at Arras on April 9. Canadian troops capture Vimy Ridge, April 9–12. Battle continues until May 16 as British are unable to exploit initial success; British casualties total 150,000 killed, wounded, or missing.

French launch offensive against Chemin des Dames, high ground north of the Aisne, on April 16 that fails to achieve breakthrough. Offensive ends on May 16 after French lose 130,000 men killed, wounded, or missing. Failure of attack cause widespread protests and unrest in French army, with many soldiers refusing to engage in further attacks. French commanders restore order by improving leave conditions and avoiding costly attacks.

General Pershing is appointed commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), May 10. Wilson signs Selective Service Act, May 18, making men twenty-one to thirty eligible for the draft (registration is extended in September 1918 to men eighteen to forty-five).

British capture Messines ridge south of Ypres, June 7–14.

Wilson signs Espionage Act, June 15, that includes penalties for attempts to incite “disloyalty” in the armed forces or to obstruct enlistments.

White mobs attack black residents of East St. Louis, Illinois, July 2–3, during rioting that kills at least thirty-nine African Americans and nine whites.

Greece declares war on Central Powers, July 2. Arab insurgents capture Aqaba, July 6.

Russians launch offensive in Galicia, July 1–16. Demoralized Russian forces collapse when Germans counterattack, July 19. Alexander Kerensky becomes prime minister of Russian provisional government, July 21.

Germans begin using mustard gas, a liquid blistering agent, in Flanders, July 12. (Allies will begin using mustard gas in June 1918. Poison gas causes death of an estimated 90,000 soldiers on all sides, 1915–18.)

British launch offensive at Ypres, July 31, after fifteen-day preliminary bombardment.

U-boats sink almost 4.4 million tons of shipping, February–August 1917. (Germans had sunk 4.2 million tons, August 1914–January 1917.) Sinkings begin to decline as British gradually adopt convoy system, aided by increasing numbers of U.S. destroyers made available for escort duty.

Italians capture Bainsizza plateau northeast of Gorizia in eleventh battle of the Isonzo, August 19–September 12.

Germans capture Riga, September 3.

Germans and Austro-Hungarians launch offensive at Caporetto on the upper Isonzo, October 24, and force the Italians to retreat sixty miles to the Paive River. Italians lose 280,000 men taken prisoner, while another 350,000 men become stragglers or desert.

Third battle of Ypres (also known as battle of Passchendaele) ends, November 10, with maximum Allied advance of four miles; British lose 244,000 killed, wounded, or missing, the Germans 215,000. Georges Clemenceau becomes premier of France, November 16. British break through Hindenburg Line at Cambrai, November 20, in surprise attack using more than 300 tanks. German counteroffensive on November 30 recovers much of the lost ground.

British break through Turkish defenses at Gaza, November 1–6, and advance into Palestine. Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour issues declaration on November 2 committing British government to “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.” British occupy Jerusalem, December 9.

Bolshevik coup in Petrograd overthrows provisional government, November 7, and establishes Soviet regime led by Vladimir Lenin. Romania signs armistice, December 9. Bolsheviks sign armistice, December 15.

U.S. declares war on Austria-Hungary, December 7. Congress proposes Eighteenth Amendment, establishing prohibition, to the states, December 18.

1918 Wilson outlines terms of peace settlement in Fourteen Points address to Congress, January 8.

Bolsheviks sign peace treaty with Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk, March 3.

Outbreak of Spanish influenza in Kansas in early March spreads across the United States and travels overseas.

Germans launch offensive against British at St. Quentin, March 21–April 5, and advance up to forty miles. Attack is most successful on Western Front since 1914, but fails to capture railroad junction at Amiens. Allies lose 255,000 men killed, wounded, or captured, the Germans 240,000. French general Ferdinand Foch becomes first Allied supreme commander on the Western Front, April 3. Germans break through British defenses along Lys River south of Ypres, April 9–29, but fail to capture supply center at Hazebrouck.

Romania signs peace treaty with Central Powers at Bucharest, May 7.

Wilson signs Sedition Act, May 16. (The Wilson administration will prosecute 2,168 individuals for their speeches or writings under the Espionage and Sedition acts and obtain 1,055 convictions; forty-one defendants are sentenced to terms of ten, fifteen, or twenty years.)

Germans launch third spring offensive, May 27–June 4, breaking through French lines along the Aisne River and advancing to the Marne. American troops join French in defense of Marne crossing at Château-Thierry, June 1–3, and drive Germans from Belleau Wood, June 6–25.

Italians defeat Austro-Hungarian offensive along Piave, June 15–23. American troops in Europe total 897,000 by June 30.

During final German offensive, July 15–18, Americans fight with the French along the Marne, then join counter-offensive that advances to Aisne and Vesle rivers in early August.

British launch offensive at Amiens, August 8–12, that captures 12,000 prisoners in its first day.

American troops land at Russian Pacific port of Vladivostok, August 16, and Arctic port of Archangel, September

4. (Troops are sent to guard military supplies and railroads and to assist Czechoslovak forces that seek to leave Russia and fight with the Allies.)

New and more virulent strain of Spanish influenza arrives in United States in late August. (Influenza pandemic of 1918–19 kills an estimated 675,000 Americans and at least thirty million people worldwide.)

In its first operation as an independent army under Pershing's command, the AEF eliminates the St. Mihiel salient southeast of Verdun, September 12–16, capturing 13,000 prisoners. Allies begin general offensive, September 26–29, attacking in Flanders, Picardy, and Champagne. AEF launches Meuse-Argonne offensive, September 26.

French, British, Serbian, and Greek forces begin offensive in Macedonia, September 15, and advance up the Vardar valley. Bulgaria signs armistice, September 29.

Eugene V. Debs, four-time Socialist candidate for president, is tried in Cleveland under the Espionage Act of 1917 for having made an antiwar speech in June 1918. Convicted on September 13, he is sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

British forces capture Damascus, October 1.

British break through Hindenburg Line, September 29–October 5. Prince Max of Baden, the newly-appointed German chancellor, sends note to Wilson on October 5 asking for an armistice and peace negotiations on basis of the Fourteen Points. Americans break through main defensive line in the Meuse-Argonne, October 14–17. German navy orders U-boats to end attacks on civilian ships, October 21. (Germans sink 4.1 million tons of merchant shipping, September 1917–October 1918; 178 U-boats are lost at sea, 1914–18.) American troops in Europe total 2,057,000.

Ottoman Empire signs armistice, October 30. Italian victory in battle of Vittorio Veneto, October 24–November 3, brings about collapse of Austro-Hungarian army. Austria-Hungary signs armistice, November 3. Allies launch series of attacks along the Western Front, October 31–November 4. Wilhelm II abdicates his throne, November 9, as German republic is proclaimed in Berlin. Germans sign armistice that goes into effect on November 11 at 11 A.M.

Czechoslovak republic proclaimed in Prague, November

14. Independent Polish state proclaimed in Warsaw, November 16.
Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes proclaimed in Belgrade, December 1. American occupation forces enter Germany, December 1, and cross the Rhine, December 13. Wilson sails for France on December 5 to attend peace conference.
- 1919 Ratification of Eighteenth Amendment completed, January 16 (Prohibition goes into effect on January 17, 1920). Paris Peace Conference opens, January 18, and adopts draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations, February 14. Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge announces that thirty-seven senators and senators-elect are opposed to the draft covenant, March 4. Treaty of Versailles is presented to German delegation, May 17. American troops leave North Russia, June 3–August 5. Congress proposes Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the right to vote, to the states on June 4. Treaty of Versailles is signed on June 28. Wilson presents treaty to the Senate, July 10. Race riot in Chicago, July 27–31, kills twenty-three African Americans and fifteen whites. In attempt to rally support for the League of Nations, Wilson begins national speaking tour, September 3. Peace treaties with Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary are signed, September 10–June 4, 1920. Wilson has nervous breakdown in Pueblo, Colorado, on September 25 and returns to the White House. Suffers ischemic stroke that leaves him paralyzed on his left side, October 2. White mobs and U.S. troops kill more than one hundred African Americans in Phillips County, Arkansas, September 30–October 4, in response to false reports of an uprising by black sharecroppers. Lodge presents fourteen reservations to treaty, October 24. Wilson sends letter on November 18 rejecting the Lodge reservations as a “nullification” of the treaty. On November 19 Senate rejects ratification with reservations, 39–55, and unconditional ratification, 38–53. (In first vote, thirty-five Republicans and four Democrats supported the Lodge reservations; in the second vote, thirty-seven Democrats and one Republican voted for the treaty.)
- 1920 Last American troops leave France, January 3. (American occupation of Germany ends in January 1923.) Soviet Russia signs treaties recognizing Estonian, Lithuanian,

and Latvian independence, February 2–August 11. Senate votes 49–35 to ratify Versailles treaty with reservations, March 19, falling seven votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority. (Austrian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian treaties all incorporate the League of Nations covenant, and are never submitted to the Senate for ratification.) Last U.S. troops leave Vladivostok, April 1. At conference held in San Remo, Italy, April 19–26, British and French agree that France will receive League of Nations mandate for Syria (including Lebanon) and Britain will receive mandates for Iraq and Palestine (including territory that becomes Transjordan in 1923). Peace treaty with Turkey is signed at Sèvres, August 10. (United States is not a signatory to the Sèvres treaty, which is replaced by Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.) Ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment is completed, August 18. Poland and Lithuania sign peace treaty, October 7. Warren G. Harding, Republican senator from Ohio, defeats James M. Cox, Democratic governor of Ohio, in presidential election on November 2. Eugene V. Debs, who is still in federal prison, receives more than three percent of the popular vote. (Debs is released on December 25, 1921, after Harding commutes his sentence.)

1921 Poland and Soviets sign treaty in Riga, March 18, ending their 1919–20 war. Harding signs congressional resolution ending state of war with Germany, Austria, and Hungary, July 2. United States signs separate peace treaties with Austria, August 24, Germany, August 25, and Hungary, August 29. Harding dedicates Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, November 11.

More than 116,000 Americans died while serving in the armed forces during World War I; of these deaths, 53,000 were the result of hostile action and 63,000 were from non-combat causes. Battle deaths by service were approximately 50,500 in the army, 400 in the navy, and 2,500 in the marines; 26,000 of the battle deaths were men killed in the Meuse-Argonne campaign (September 26–November 11, 1918). It is estimated that 46,000 of the non-combat deaths were from influenza.

Great Britain and Ireland lost 744,000 military dead; India, 74,000; Australia, 62,000; Canada, 57,000; New Zealand, 18,000; South Africa, 7,000; and Newfoundland,

1,200. France lost 1,400,000 military dead, including 70,000 from its colonies; Russia, 1,800,000; Italy, 650,000; Romania, 336,000; Serbia, 278,000; and Belgium, 38,000. Germany lost 2,000,000 military dead; Austria-Hungary, 1,200,000; the Ottoman Empire, 770,000; and Bulgaria, 87,500. About 15,000 African soldiers died on both sides in African campaigns, along with an estimated 150,000 porters and laborers, mostly from disease and malnutrition. The total number of military dead from 1914 to 1918 is estimated at more than 9 million, while total civilian deaths from violence and war-related food shortages and epidemics (excluding the 1918 influenza pandemic) are estimated at 6 million, including 2,100,000 in the Ottoman Empire and 1,500,000 in Russia.

Biographical Notes

Mary Borden (May 15, 1886–December 2, 1968) Born in Chicago, Illinois, the daughter of a wealthy businessman with extensive holdings in real estate, mining, and dairy products. Graduated from Vassar in 1907. Married George Douglas Turner, a Scottish lay missionary, in 1908. Published two novels under pseudonym Bridget Maclagan, 1912–13. Used her inheritance to establish military hospital at Rousbrugge, Belgium, in July 1915; her nursing staff included the American volunteer Ellen N. La Motte. Served as director of hospital at Bray-sur-Somme, August 1916–February 1917, and at hospital in Mont-Notre-Dame during the 1917 spring offensive in Champagne before returning to Rousbrugge. Published four poems in the *English Review*, August–December 1917. After divorce from her first husband, married Edward Spears, a British liaison officer who had served with the French army on the Somme. Lived in Paris, 1918–21, before moving to England. Published *The Forbidden Zone* (1929), collection of sketches and poems based on wartime experiences, nonfiction work *The Technique of Marriage* (1933) and numerous novels, including *Jane: Our Stranger* (1923), *Flamingo* (1927), and *Passport for a Girl* (1939). Organized field hospital in Lorraine in February 1940. Escaped from Bordeaux in late June 1940 and returned to England. Reorganized hospital unit and served with Free French forces in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Libya, 1941–42, and in eastern France in 1945; spent remainder of the war with her husband, who served as the British envoy in Syria and Lebanon, 1941–44. Published memoir *Journey Down a Blind Alley* (1946), describing experiences in Second World War. Continued to write novels, including *For the Record* (1950) and *Martin Merriedew* (1952). Died in Warfield, Berkshire, England.

Willa Cather (December 7, 1873–April 24, 1947) Born in Back Creek Valley, near Winchester, Virginia, daughter of a sheep farmer. Parents and other relatives moved to the Nebraska Divide in 1883, ultimately settling in Red Cloud. Attended University of Nebraska, where she studied Greek, Latin, French, German, and English literature; graduated 1894. Published poetry and short fiction and began contributing reviews to *The Nebraska State Journal*. Worked in Pittsburgh as a magazine editor and reviewer for Pittsburgh *Leader*, and later as high school Latin teacher. Published poetry collection *April Twilights* (1903) and story collection *The Troll Garden* (1905). Moved to New York in

1906 as editor of *McClure's Magazine*; subsequently spent time in Boston and London, and frequently returned to Nebraska. First novel *Alexander's Bridge* published in 1912, followed by *O Pioneers!* (1913), *The Song of the Lark* (1915), and *My Ántonia* (1918). Traveled extensively in Southwest. Toured French battlefields to research novel *One of Ours* (1922), inspired by cousin G. P. Cather, who was killed at Cantigny in 1918. Later novels included *A Lost Lady* (1923), *The Professor's House* (1925), *My Mortal Enemy* (1926), *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), *Shadows on the Rock* (1931), *Lucy Gayheart* (1935), and *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* (1940), along with story collections *Youth and the Bright Medusa* (1920), *Obscure Destinies* (1932), and *The Old Beauty and Others* (1945). Died in New York City.

George Creel (December 1, 1876–October 2, 1953) Born in Lafayette County, Missouri, the son of a farmer. Reporter for *Kansas City World*, 1896. Free-lance joke writer for newspapers and magazines in New York City, 1897–98. Co-founded *Kansas City Independent*, a weekly newspaper, in 1899 and served as its publisher and editor until 1909. Editorial writer for the *Denver Post*, 1909–10, and the (Denver) *Rocky Mountain News*, 1911–13. Married Blanche Bates, 1912. Supported Woodrow Wilson in 1912 presidential election. Served as reform police commissioner of Denver, 1912–13, before losing position in political power struggle. Wrote for magazines and published *Children in Bondage* (1914), study of child labor written with Edwin Markham and Ben Lindsay. Worked on Wilson's reelection campaign and published *Wilson and the Issues* (1916). Appointed chairman of the Committee on Public Information, government wartime propaganda organization, in April 1917 and served until its dissolution in June 1919. Published *Ireland's Fight for Freedom* (1919), *The War, The World, and Wilson* (1920), and *How We Advertised America* (1920). Moved to San Francisco in 1926. Published a history of Mexico, *The People Next Door* (1926), *Sam Houston: Colossus in Buckskin* (1928), and *Tom Paine: Liberty Bell* (1932). Defeated by Upton Sinclair in 1934 California Democratic gubernatorial primary. After death of his wife, married Alice Rosseter in 1943. Published *War Criminals and Punishment* (1944), autobiography *Rebel at Large* (1947), and *Russia's Race for Asia* (1949). Died in San Francisco.

W.E.B. Du Bois (February 23, 1868–August 29, 1963) Born William Edward Burghardt Du Bois in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, the son of a barber and of a domestic servant. Entered Fisk University in 1885; spent summers teaching in the South; graduated Fisk 1888. Studied philosophy at Harvard, awarded B.A. cum laude in 1890, M.A. in history in 1891. Studied for two years in Berlin. Awarded Ph.D. in history from Harvard in 1895. Taught at Wilberforce

University, 1894–97. Married Nina Gomer in 1896. Published *The Suppression of the Africa Slave-Trade to the United States of America 1638–1870* (1896), *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), and *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Professor of history and economics at Atlanta University, 1897–1910. Helped found National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909 and edited its monthly magazine, *The Crisis*, 1910–34. Executive secretary of Pan-African Congress held in Paris in 1919. Later books included *John Brown* (1909), *Darkwater* (1920), *Black Reconstruction* (1935), and *Dusk of Dawn* (1940). Resigned from NAACP in 1934 in policy dispute. Professor of sociology at Atlanta University, 1934–44. Returned to NAACP in 1944 as director of special research, but was dismissed in 1948 for criticizing “reactionary, war-mongering” American foreign policy. Helped found Peace Information Center in 1950 and served as its chairman. Indicted in 1951 under Foreign Agents Registration Act for his role in the now-dissolved Center; charges were dismissed at trial later in the year. After wife’s death, married Shirley Graham in 1951. Denied passport in 1952; after it was restored in 1958, visited Soviet Union and China. Settled in Ghana in 1961. Died in Accra.

Robert Frost (March 26, 1874–January 29, 1963) Born San Francisco, California, the son of a journalist. Family moved to New Hampshire in 1885 following father’s death. Attended Dartmouth in fall 1892. Worked as schoolteacher, in woolen mill, and as newspaper reporter. Married Elinor White in 1895. Attended Harvard, 1897–99, before taking up poultry farming. Moved to England in 1912 and published poetry collections *A Boy’s Will* (1913) and *North of Boston* (1914). Met Ezra Pound and William Butler Yeats; formed close friendship with English essayist and poet Edward Thomas. Returned to United States in 1915. Began teaching at Amherst in 1917 and at the Bread Loaf School of English in 1921; would also hold appointments at the University of Michigan and Harvard. Later collections included *Mountain Interval* (1916), *Selected Poems* (1923), *New Hampshire* (1923), *West-Running Brook* (1928). *Collected Poems* (1930), *A Further Range* (1936), *A Witness Tree* (1942), *Steeple Bush* (1947), and *In the Clearing* (1962). Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress, 1958–59. Recited his poem “The Gift Outright” at the inauguration ceremony of John F. Kennedy in 1961. Visited Russia in 1962. Awarded Bollingen Prize shortly before his death in Boston.

James Norman Hall (April 22, 1887–July 5, 1951) Born in Colfax, Iowa, the son of a farmer and grocer. Graduated from Grinnell College in 1910. Worked for the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Boston while studying for a master’s degree at Harvard. While on vacation in England at the outbreak of World

War I, enlisted in the 9th Royal Fusiliers by claiming to be Canadian. Landed in France in May 1915 and served as machine gunner at the Battle of Loos. Discharged in December 1915 on discovery of his nationality. Returned to Boston. Published *Kitchener's Mob: The Adventures of an American in the British Army* (1916). Sent to France by *The Atlantic* to cover the formation of an American squadron in the French Air Service. Volunteered for aviation training in October 1916. Joined the Escadrille Lafayette (Escadrille N. 124) in June 1917 and was shot down and wounded later in the month. Returned to the Lafayette Escadrille in October 1917. Commissioned as captain in the U.S. Army aviation service in February 1918. Served with the 103rd Aero Squadron and 94th Aero Squadron. Published *High Adventure: A Narrative of Air Fighting in France* (1918). Shot down and captured near Pagny-sur-Moselle in Lorraine on May 7, 1918, and was a prisoner until the Armistice. Collaborated with Charles Nordhoff on *The Lafayette Flying Corps* (1920), history of American pilots in French service. Traveled to Tahiti with Nordhoff in 1920 and settled there for the remainder of his life. Married Sarah Winchester in 1925. Collaborated with Nordhoff on series of novels, including *Falcons of France* (1929), the trilogy *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1932), *Men Against the Sea* (1934), and *Pitcairn's Island* (1934), *The Hurricane* (1936), *Botany Bay* (1941), and *Men Without a Country* (1942). Published numerous books written by himself, including *On the Stream of Travel* (1926), *Mid-Pacific* (1928), *Doctor Dogbody's Leg* (1940), *Lost Island* (1944), *The Far Lands* (1950), and *My Island Home* (1952). Died in Arue, Tahiti.

Warren G. Harding (November 2, 1865–August 2, 1923) Born in Blooming Grove, Ohio, the son of a farmer who became a homeopathic practitioner. Graduated from Ohio Central College in 1882. Became editor and publisher of the *Marion Star* in 1884. Married Florence DeWolfe in 1891. Elected as a Republican to the Ohio state senate and served, 1899–1903. Lieutenant governor of Ohio, 1904–1905. Unsuccessful candidate for governor in 1910. Elected as a Republican to the U.S. Senate and served, 1915–21. Won the Republican presidential nomination in 1920 and defeated Governor James M. Cox. President of the United States from 1921 until his death. Died in San Francisco from a heart attack.

Ernest Hemingway (July 21, 1899–July 2, 1961) Born in Oak Park, Illinois. Reporter for *Kansas City Star*, 1917–18. Served as Red Cross ambulance driver and canteen worker with Italian army in World War I and was severely wounded in July 1918. Married Hadley Richardson in 1921. Traveled to France in 1921 as foreign correspondent for *Toronto Star*. First story collection *In Our Time* appeared in 1925,

followed by novels *The Torrents of Spring* and *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926. After divorce from his first wife, married Pauline Pfeiffer in 1927. Returned to United States in 1928, settling in Key West in 1930. Subsequent fiction included *Men Without Women* (1927), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *Winner Take Nothing* (1933), and *To Have and Have Not* (1937); also published *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), about bullfighting, and *The Green Hills of Africa* (1935), about big game hunting. Covered Spanish Civil War as correspondent for North American Newspaper Alliance, 1936–37, an experience that helped inspire novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). Settled in Cuba, 1939–40. After divorce from second wife, married war correspondent Martha Gellhorn in 1940 and traveled with her to China as correspondent for *PM*, 1941. War correspondent in northwest Europe for *Collier's*, May 1944–March 1945. After divorce from third wife, married former war correspondent Mary Welsh in 1946. Published *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950) and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). Won Nobel Prize for literature in 1954. Committed suicide in Ketcham, Idaho.

Morris Hillquit (August 1, 1869–October 8, 1933) Born Moïse Hillkowitz in Riga, Russia (now Latvia), the son of a factory owner. Immigrated to New York City in 1886. Worked as cuff maker in shirt factory. Joined Socialist Labor Party of America in 1887 and became union organizer in garment industry. Graduated from New York University Law School in 1893 and became successful labor lawyer. Married Vera Levene in 1893. Led faction of Socialist Labor Party that merged with Social Democratic Party to form Socialist Party of America in 1901. Published *History of Socialism in the United States* (1903) and *Socialism in Theory and Practice* (1909). Ran for Congress in 1906, 1908, 1916, 1918, and 1920. Became counsel for International Ladies Garment Workers Union in 1913. Along with Algernon Lee and Charles Emil Ruthenberg, drafted anti-war resolution adopted by Socialist Party in spring 1917. Served as attorney for Socialist publications censored by the Post Office. Ran for mayor of New York in 1917 and 1932. Elected national chairman of the Socialist party in 1929. Died in New York City.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (March 8, 1841–March 6, 1935) Born in Boston, the son of the physician, poet, and essayist Oliver Wendell Holmes. Graduated from Harvard in 1861. Served as an officer with the 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, July 1861–July 1864, and was wounded at Ball's Bluff, Antietam, and the Second Battle of Fredericksburg. Graduated from Harvard Law School in 1866. Practiced law in Boston, wrote legal articles, and edited new edition of James Kent's *Commentaries on American Law*. Married Fanny Bowditch Dixwell in 1872. Published *The Common Law* in 1881. Served as an

associate justice of the Massachusetts supreme judicial court, 1883–99, as its chief justice, 1899–1902, and as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, 1902–32. Died in Washington, D.C.

Charles R. Isum (May 22, 1889–March 6, 1941) Born in California. Worked as bookbinder for the *Los Angeles Times*. Drafted into army and was assigned to the medical detachment of the 1st Battalion, 365th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Division. In June 1918 his regiment arrived in France, where it held the St. Die sector of the Lorraine front, August–September. Regiment was kept in reserve during opening of the Meuse-Argonne offensive before being sent to Marbache Sector along the Moselle in October. Served in battalion aid station at Pont-à-Mousson under heavy artillery fire, November 5–10, before being sent to Lesménils, where he was gassed on the night before the Armistice. Threatened with court-martial in January 1919 for violating order forbidding black soldiers from speaking with French women, but charges were dropped, and Isum was honorably discharged in March 1919. Returned to Los Angeles and job at the *Times*. Married Zellee Jones. Retired from work in 1930s as heart condition linked to wartime gassing worsened. Daughter Rachel, born 1922, began studying nursing in 1940 at UCLA, where she met star athlete Jackie Robinson and introduced him to her father shortly before his death. (Rachel Isum and Jackie Robinson married in 1946, the year before he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers.)

Vernon E. Kniptash (December 6, 1896–September 1987) Born in Terre Haute, Indiana, the son of a clerk for a dry goods wholesaler. Family moved to Indianapolis. Graduated from Manual High School in 1914. Became draftsman at architectural firm of Vonnegut and Bohm. (Firm was co-founded by Bernard Vonnegut, grandfather of the novelist Kurt Vonnegut.) Enlisted in April 1917. Landed in France in November 1917 with 150th Field Artillery Regiment, 42nd (Rainbow) Division. Assigned to regimental headquarters as wireless operator. Served in Lunéville and Baccarat sectors of the Lorraine front, February–June 1918, and in Marne-Aisne, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne campaigns, July–November 1918. Discharged as corporal in May 1919. Returned to work at Vonnegut, Bohm. Married Maude Wolfé in 1920. Studied structural engineering. Lost job with Vonnegut, Bohm during the Depression. Worked for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Joined the Carl M. Geupel Company, major Indiana construction firm, in 1942 as consulting engineer. After the death of his first wife, married Margaret Kellenbach in 1946. Retired in 1967.

Algernon Lee (September 15, 1873–January 5, 1954) Born in Dubuque, Iowa, the son of a carpenter. Attended University of Minnesota,

1892–97. Joined Socialist Labor Party in 1895 and Socialist Party of America in 1901. Moved to New York City in 1899 to become editor of *The Worker*. Became educational director of the Rand School of Social Science in 1909. Along with Morris Hillquit and Charles Emil Ruthenberg, co-authored anti-war resolution adopted by Socialist Party in spring 1917. Left Socialist Party in factional split in 1936 and helped form Social Democratic Federation. Died in Amityville, New York.

Henry Cabot Lodge (May 12, 1850–November 9, 1924) Born in Boston, the son of a successful merchant. Graduated from Harvard in 1871. Married Anna Cabot Davis in 1871. Graduated from Harvard Law School in 1874; awarded a Ph.D. in history and government by Harvard in 1876. Wrote numerous historical works, including biographies of Alexander Hamilton (1882), Daniel Webster (1883), and George Washington (1888). Elected to the Massachusetts house of representatives as a Republican and served 1880–81. Served in Congress, 1887–93, and in the Senate from 1893 until his death. Chairman of the Senate Republican conference, 1918–24, and the Foreign Relations Committee, 1919–24. Died in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Shirley Millard (November 25, 1890–March 4, 1977) Born Shirley Eastham, daughter of a socially prominent family in Portland, Oregon. Served as Red Cross nurse with French military hospital in 1918. Married Alfred Millard Jr. in 1919; they were divorced in 1931. Published memoir *I Saw Them Die: Diary and Recollections of Shirley Millard* (1936). Died in Los Angeles, California.

Horace Pippin (February 22, 1888–July 6, 1946) Born West Chester, Pennsylvania; grew up in Goshen, New York. Developed love of drawing and painting in childhood. Worked at various jobs including hotel porter, furniture crater, and iron molder. Joined the army in 1917 and was sent to France as part of 369th Infantry (“Harlem Hellfighters”), keeping an illustrated journal of his military experiences. Was badly wounded in the right shoulder near Séchault on September 30, 1918 losing the full use of his right arm. Received Croix de Guerre. Returned to United States in 1919 and settled in West Chester, living on odd jobs and his disability pension. Married Jennie Wade in 1920. Resumed activity as an artist, executing oil paintings using his left hand to assist his injured right arm; the first of these, “The End of the War: Starting Home” (c. 1930) took over three years to complete. His work, focused on historical and political themes and scenes of African-American life, attracted local attention and was championed by painter N. C. Wyeth. Began exhibiting in galleries and major museums including the Carlen Gallery (Philadelphia), the Corcoran Gallery

(Washington, D.C.), the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Museum of Modern Art. Died in West Chester.

Charles Emil Ruthenberg (July 9, 1882–March 3, 1927) Born in Cleveland, Ohio, the son of a longshoreman. Worked as bookkeeper and sales manager for regional publishing company. Married Rosaline Nickel in 1904. Joined Socialist Party in 1909. Edited *The Cleveland Socialist*, 1911–13, and *Socialist News*, 1914–19. Along with Morris Hillquit and Algernon Lee, helped draft anti-war resolution adopted by Socialist Party in spring 1917. Convicted under Espionage Act for making anti-war speech on May 17, 1917, and sentenced to one year in prison; served almost eleven months before being released in December 1918. Indicted for role in 1919 May Day march in Cleveland that ended in riot, but was never convicted. Became executive secretary of Communist Party of America, one of several competing factions, in September 1919. Convicted in October 1920 of violating the New York state criminal anarchism statute and was imprisoned until April 1922. Became executive secretary of the Workers Party of America, newly unified Communist organization, in 1922. Died in Chicago.

Alan Seeger (June 22, 1888–July 4, 1916) Born New York City. Moved with family to Mexico in 1900. Sent to Hackley School in 1902; in 1906 entered Harvard. Became an editor of the *Harvard Monthly*, where he published many poems. Went to live in Paris in 1912. After war broke out in 1914, enlisted in the French Foreign Legion. Mortally wounded during attack on Belloy-en-Santerre; awarded the Croix de Guerre and the Médaille Militaire. *Poems* (1916) published posthumously.

Ashby Williams (June 18, 1874–May 31, 1944) Born John Ashby Williams in Stafford County, Virginia, the son of a farmer. Family moved to Washington, D.C., in 1892. Worked as clerk in government hydrographic office in Norfolk, Virginia, 1898–1901. Attended Oberlin College, 1901–3, and the University of Virginia, 1903–6, where he was awarded a law degree. Practiced law in Roanoke, Virginia, where he served on the board of aldermen, 1908–12. Published *Corporation Laws of Virginia* (1909), an annotated compilation. Married Eva Wallbridge in 1911. Arrived in France in May 1918, commanding Company E, Second Battalion, 320th Infantry Regiment, 80th Division. Trained behind British lines, June–July, and then served in trenches near Ransart, southwest of Arras, July–August. Assigned command of First Battalion, 320th Infantry Regiment, on August 28; led battalion at St. Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Returned to the United States in May 1919 as lieutenant colonel. Published *Experiences of the Great War: Artois, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne*

(1919). Moved to Washington, D.C., where he practiced law. After divorce from his first wife, married Lois Allee. Died in Washington, D.C.

Woodrow Wilson (December 28, 1856–February 3, 1924) Born Thomas Woodrow Wilson in Staunton, Virginia, the son of a Presbyterian minister. Graduated from the College of New Jersey (Princeton) in 1879. Admitted to the bar in Atlanta in 1882. Entered graduate school at Johns Hopkins in 1883. Married Ellen Axson in 1885. Published *Congressional Government* (1885), the first of several works on American history and politics. Awarded Ph.D. in 1886. Taught at Bryn Mawr, 1885–88, and Wesleyan, 1888–90. Professor of jurisprudence and political economy at Princeton, 1890–1902, and president of Princeton, 1902–10. Elected as a Democrat to the governorship of New Jersey in 1910 and served 1911–13. Won Democratic presidential nomination in 1912 and defeated Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft; defeated Charles Evans Hughes in 1916 to win reelection. President of the United States, 1913–21. Following the death of his first wife, married Edith Bolling Galt in 1915. Suffered stroke on October 2, 1919, that left him an invalid for the remainder of his term. Awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1919. Died in Washington, D.C.