

EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR DOCUMENTING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SOLDIERS  
IN THE GREAT WAR

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# EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR DOCUMENTING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SOLDIERS IN THE GREAT WAR

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## **ABSTRACT**

My thesis argues that studying the experiences of average American soldiers in the Great War can help in the search for the creation of meaning in any type of strange surroundings. For historians and theologians, the consensus is that it is crucial to understand that we live our lives based upon the past, present, and future. Since war has been a part of man's past, for the World War I trench soldiers, surely the meaning of their battle must have meant something to them. It should have meant something to us. The problem is how to document soldiers' experiences in WWI. In using research methods surrounding the academics of the humanities, the paper will reestablish the history of five soldiers of the Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry in World War I.

To

Edgar Burton Barnett, a true American Hero

Florence Elizabeth Barnett-Jones

Rosella Jeannette Jones-Davis

Angela Jeannette Jordan

*Rest in Peace*

Carl Davis

Gregory Barfield

Isabeau

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Hopefully, unlike the soldiers of WWI, they will document it.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1. Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2. Defining the Need .....	4
Chapter 3. The Approach.....	29
Chapter 4. The Men .....	46
Chapter 5. Conclusion.....	62
Notes .....	68
Bibliography .....	91

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Recent world events over a nation-state and their territorial boundary rights have caused escalated and increased anxiety for the masses. In the United States, recent national divisive events have also caused additional anxieties for its citizens. Together, the national and the world events, combined with a COVID-19 pandemic global disease spread, has also increased the tensions among nations and among its citizens. A part of the increase in tensions is the isolation that has occurred locally, nationally, and globally. It is through that isolation, combined with anxiety and fear that has caused individuals to lose hope in the world around them. Most citizens of any nation would describe their lives at this moment as being in a state of flux. It is reported daily that the younger generation sees and values no hope for the future. They do not see a way through the current state of flux.

In World War I (WWI), Americans were much more isolated than today. When war broke out in Europe, the Americans who had experienced devastation in the Civil War chose to delay their entry into the conflict. A part of the delay was that America did not want another war and it was also because the Americans did not understand Europe's war. After entering the war, most American soldiers were unprepared for the horrors that the conflict would bring. Upon entering the actual battlefields in France, the members of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) saw for themselves the devastation that modernity and the weaponry associated with such modern warfare could bring to man. To them, they saw human suffering and slaughter at a pace that no prior human had experienced or could have imagined. However, for most Americans, the war, that war, the Great War, seems to mean nothing to them today. It is partly because for Americans, we simply still do not understand it. For most, the learning of the history of WWI

seems to rapidly fly by as students study American history. Many contribute this to the confusion caused by historians that still do not agree as to what the war was about, or as to who even started it. If historians are unable to define the war, then the question becomes as to how can teachers instruct students about a conflict if they don't understand it themselves?

While this paper will leave the historians to battle out the events that led up to the war, the focus of this paper will be more of a review on the isolation of the history of the First World War from the Americans' historical memory. The individual has always distanced itself from the horrors of war just as society has also distanced itself from the realities of the past. Much like an individual feeling isolated today, it is because of forgetting the historical lessons of the past that we, as humans, have caused ourselves to be in this current state of flux. Being in the current state of flux causes a struggle to find hope for the future. To capture the hope for the future, society must revisit the past. In viewing the past, society can see how humanity survived that past, and then it is able to move towards a more peaceful and meaningful existence.

It is a goal of this paper is to bring alive the brief histories of five men of the Headquarters Company of the AEF's 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry. All of the five soldiers selected served in the heart of combat and were considered "combatants." They served in and around the trenches in France in 1918. Those five soldiers are: Private Edgar Burton Barnett; Private Alex Joseph Barbier; Private Francis Gilbert Brownfield; Private Harley Perle Gano; and Private Peter Manner. It is through understanding their experiences that one can understand how they adapted to the strangeness of their surroundings that they found themselves in during the war. By bringing their histories to the forefront, it will allow for them to not just be perceived as merely deceased

soldiers, but instead as real human beings that once lived. For it is their stories that must be a part of the search for meaning.

### **Summary and Outlook**

In summary, Chapter 1 has offered an introduction and background on the goal of the paper which is to briefly document the lives of five WWI combat soldiers with the goal of establishing their histories. It also sought to create an introduction as to why the research is important and how it pertains to today's societal needs. The paper will now turn to Chapter 2 for a review of the need for research and then in Chapter 3 it will provide a discussion of the research methods for the project. Chapter 4 will review the information gathered on the soldiers and Chapter 5 will conclude the paper with how the research of the past relates to today.

## Chapter 2. Defining the Need

Historians, philosophers, and theologians have always warned society about forgotten memories of the past. In understanding such warnings, most translate their often complicated, but delicate writings, into a simple everyday expression in that everyone seems to say, “History is doomed to repeat itself.” Although some past global conflicts are what Augustine may have defined as “just wars,” it is the goal of this paper not to study the causes of war, but rather to study the experiences of average American soldiers in the Great War.<sup>1</sup> It is through their experiences that perhaps this research will contribute to the search for the creation of meaning in any type of strange surrounding especially in one of war. In justifying the need for this research, the focus will not be on Augustine’s definition as to whether World War I (WWI) was a needed war or not. There are professionally qualified scholars that should continue to debate that issue. Instead, the approach will be for a more generalized understanding of what the war meant to the average soldier.

If the statement is true in that: “History is doomed to repeat itself,” then the logical natural thought would lead one to wonder as to how the horrors of the past can mean something. Although a Marxist at heart, theologian Ernst Bloch’s future “utopian vision” for humanity arose right after WWI.<sup>2</sup> It is through an understanding of his “utopian vision” that this paper can begin to explore the topic of why history matters. Being in Europe at the time of the Great War, Bloch saw the devastation that the war caused humanity.<sup>3</sup> It was then that he began to focus his attention on a topic surrounding the need for man to realign itself to create a society with a “possible future.”<sup>4</sup> To him, the path for society to obtain a better future was through a vision of what is possible for the future.<sup>5</sup> In order to achieve that vision, Bloch’s message was that we

must pay attention to the past, as it was "...the events produced by working people together..." that makes up the "...interweaving process-connections between the past, present, and futures."<sup>6</sup> In order to define future hopes, Bloch turned to defining what it means to be human by describing man's current state.<sup>7</sup> Being human to him, was the "Humanization of nature..."<sup>8</sup> It's the natural instinct that man is born with that makes him want to do good and to do better in the world.<sup>9</sup> It is through wanting to do better in the world that man flourishes.<sup>10</sup> As to Bloch, "...everything passes over into the Possible..."<sup>11</sup> This can be easily understood in that if man wants to do good and then sees himself doing good in the future, then it will affect his present moment. By being confident in the present, it then creates the possibility for man to change the future. By knowing that the future can change, then a man's sense of hope is generated. If one were to translate his thoughts in relation to war, then it would be that "if man has the possibility to do better," then, "man can do better than war."<sup>12</sup>

Prior to WWI, citizens of Europe understood their place in society. Most of society at that time was ruled by monarchical dynasties located throughout Europe.<sup>13</sup> After WWI, that old world order of leadership changed.<sup>14</sup> Monarchies ceased to exist or had already begun to disappear. It is because of this slow progressive change in the world order, coupled with the anxieties created by the years of destruction of the war, that caused societies to be stuck in a state of "unfinishedness."<sup>15</sup> A state of "unfinishedness" can be defined as "confusion" or a state of "flux." To Bloch, a part of the state of confusion for society is because of the anticipation as to we are "...not-yet-being."<sup>16</sup> This means that society hasn't become what it should be if it wants to exist in a utopian setting. It is through this state of unsettledness of not knowing what the future entails and not understanding the past that creates this state of "flux." This can be further

summed up by describing a feeling that many have experienced on a personal level. Often, if someone has lost a loved one unexpectedly, they are in a state of shock. It is in that state of shock that they attempt to process what happened. At the same time, memories of their deceased loved one collides with their dreams of what the future would have held for them. This creates a terrible mix of emotions of which one can define as “shock.” It is this dreamlike state of chaos that creates uncertainty for the individual and a sense of hopelessness for the future. It is this described state of dreamlike chaotic existence that Bloch attempts to describe as the state of being for society after the end of WWI. A further description of this state of being would be the feelings expressed by soldiers after leaving the trenches following heavy warfare. They would have been in a state of shock. In a sense, many may sum up a further description of this by using the everyday expression as to “What the hell just happened?”

It is at those moments of “flux” for both the individual and society that Bloch explains that “Man is still not solid...” and that “...the course of the world is still undecided...”<sup>17</sup> To him, the “world itself, just as it is a mess, is also in a state of unfinishedness and in experimental process out of that mess.”<sup>18</sup> After the war, his conclusion that man and society were in a state of “flux” made sense to those that had experienced the devastation and suffering from the war. To many today, his words describing that man and society are still trying to figure out their current state of being may sound hopeless, but that was not his message. For Bloch, it was a way of providing hope in that man and society were moving towards a future. It is an understanding that a part of moving towards the future is by comprehending that while society may be in a temporary moment of despair, it is through remembering the past, that one discovers that “things could always be worse.” If one can define how things could be worse using human history to

define it, then hope is generated by knowing that things are better today than they were yesterday. This is Bloch's message. For example, by turning to a WWI soldier returning home on the ship after the war, who paused for a moment to reflect on his experience in the war, then surely that reflection would have helped to bring him out of despair and into hope. After all, "he made it." For those living now and looking back at the soldier's experience over 100 years ago, we can see the joy he must have felt in getting on the ship and returning to America in knowing the hell that he had experienced is finally over. A story such as this would bring society the feeling of hope today.

*In Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology*, J. Matthew Ashley translates the work of Johann Baptist Metz. It is through his translation of Metz's work that we can begin to understand why many stories of the veterans of WWI were not documented. Metz, a catholic theologian at heart, worked towards steering people back to their faith in God and in humanity. A part of Metz's teachings guides one towards the importance of remembering history. It is through our memory that we can recall historical events of the past and it is those events of the past which provides us meaning.<sup>19</sup> It also provides us reasoning.<sup>20</sup> A part of society's memory of the past has been created for the living by the relaying of those historical stories to future generations. One example of this can be found in the biblical stories of the Christian faiths that have been passed down. One such story would be that of Jesus.<sup>21</sup> If the Christian faith did not have the history of Jesus, then there would be no faith, thus no hope.<sup>22</sup> It is through the sufferings of Christ, in the Christian stories, that members of the faith can see hope in their future and the future of humankind.

Since there is value in remembering historical events of the past, then it is important to ensure that those stories are accurate. A part of the accuracy is through determining who's telling the story or leading the narrative. Both Bloch and Metz caution in their writings the importance in determining as to who has written the history. Metz in particular writes that history should be written by those that have suffered.<sup>23</sup> Usually in war, or in slavery, it's the victors, or the conquerors, that write the history or ensure that certain histories are erased from the collective memory.<sup>24</sup> Those that suffered include the men on the battlefield in WWI, but it's their stories that have not been told.

Recently, similar concerns to that of Metz have caused the narrative for America's WWI history to be called into question. In particular, the concern is in the stories that have been relayed about the war. In *War Isn't the Only Hell: A New Reading of World War I Literature*, author and historian Keith Gandal reviews the narrative of WWI.<sup>25</sup> In his book, the titles of the chapters include: "War Literature by Noncombat Males," and "War Literature by Female Participants and Nonparticipants."<sup>26</sup> Gandal sums up the differences between combat and noncombat writers:

The relatively recent recovery of the history of the US Army during World War I means that all of the literature of the conflict appears in a dramatically new light, including the texts written by some of America's most celebrated writers. Classifying works as pro- or antiwar, as has been the tendency, is too blunt a procedure. It has missed the fundamental and crucial distinction between the male noncombatant and the combatant experiences. This is not to say simply that combatants experienced the war more intensely – though this distinction definitely applies in the cases of F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Faulkner, who never made it to Europe, and arguably in those of ambulance drivers John Dos Passos and E.E. Cummings as well. Ernest Hemingway, however, was badly wounded as a non-combatant. Rather, the distinction between combatant and noncombatant matters because, socially speaking, combat roles were validated and non-combat positions were not. American recruits, most of whom got nowhere near the front, experienced distinct kinds of disillusionment depending on their wartime experiences.<sup>27</sup>

As Gandal discusses, it is the non-combatant that had the need to be validated by society.<sup>28</sup> It was through the need for their validation by society that drove the authors' desires to set the false narratives of the experiences of the combatant American soldiers that fought in the trenches in WWI. Through Hemingway and others, the war became a fictional accounting of what had occurred. WWI historian Jennifer Keene concurs with Gandal and also notes that the authors at the time, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos and F. Scott Fitzgerald, "wrote enduring classics that embraced themes of disillusionment, cynicism, absurdity, and sexual dysfunction."<sup>29</sup> Of which, "These novels portrayed the war as a rite of passage for young men and women who lost their adolescent naivete within the crucible war."<sup>30</sup> They directly contributed to the romantic "disillusion of war," which was not the reality of war for combat soldiers.

As Gandal and Keene both pointed out, it was the non-combatant writers that also deterred soldiers from telling their stories by setting the narrative as to how the stories should be told. An example can be found through the story of John Lewis Barkley. Barkley received the medal of valor for his service in WWI.<sup>31</sup> Although his buddy was the ghostwriter for his book, Barkley was credited directly with being the author of the book on WWI entitled *No Hard Feelings!*<sup>32</sup> It was originally released on September 5, 1930.<sup>33</sup> The stories in the book were filled with accounts of Barkley's experiences during the war.<sup>34</sup> Recently, the book has been republished under the title *Scarlett Fields* by Historian Steven Trout. Trout notes in the recent book's introduction that: "The violence depicted in *No Hard Feelings!* is brutal."<sup>35</sup> It was Barkley who understood "his audience's appetite for carnage" at the time and he "was more than willing to highlight the horrors of war."<sup>36</sup> Upon its original release, Trout provides insight into the reviews that the book received in the 1930's:

[The reviews]...were small in number and mixed in their appraisal, not because Barkley's memoir was poorly written or insincere, but because its vision of war experience perhaps reached the public too late, at the tail end of a wave of books such as Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, and Robert Graves's *Good-Bye to All That* that for a time set the tone for literature about the Great War.<sup>37</sup>

Although it was not his intention, in addition to the "war story," a part of the tone set by Barkley in his book was his description of growing up and not having friends due to his stuttering.<sup>38</sup> This caused him to be lonely. It is through being lonely that he hunted a lot by himself which caused him to become an excellent marksman and warrior.<sup>39</sup> By becoming an excellent warrior, he was able to hold off waves of German attackers which saved his fellow soldiers in combat.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, his book was not successful. In a year, Barclay had earned \$130.97 in royalties.<sup>41</sup> He owed half of that amount to his ghostwriter friend.<sup>42</sup> Trout further noted that: "In short, his [Barclay's] perspective did not line up with accepted wisdom (at least among writers and intellectuals) about how soldiers of the Great War were *supposed* to remember their experience."<sup>43</sup> To Metz, this is when "The past passes through a filter of harmlessness; from it; it seems robbed of any future."<sup>44</sup> No one cared to hear about his story. Like him, for most veterans, their stories would become "forgotten memories" or the "fading of memories."<sup>45</sup>

It is Metz who best defines the "fading of memories" as a process in which memory fades and that overall society "does not take the relationship to the past very seriously."<sup>46</sup> This means that the story fades, changes, or is diminished in its significance. Metz, like many theologians, noted that human suffering is something that unites all humans universally.<sup>47</sup> In viewing the combined suffering of humans, as a whole, then as humans, it should be a natural compelling instinct to bring an end to that suffering. A part of bringing an end to that suffering is by remembering what it was like to suffer. Metz's direct warning in relation to war is that if war

memories are allowed to fade over time, then they eventually transgress from the horrors of war to “the good old days.”<sup>48</sup> His explanation on the subject seems to be written directly to veterans:

There are memories in which one does not take the relationship to the past very seriously, memories in which the past turns into an untroubled paradise, an asylum from the disillusionments of the present - the past as “the good old days.” Here memory bathes everything in the past in a mild, conciliatory light. “Memory transfigures,” as the saying goes. This becomes radically clear, for instance, when veterans trade war stories across the regimental tables. The hell of war fades away in these memories; it seems that all that is left is the grand adventure that everybody had so long ago!<sup>49</sup>

To Metz, “This is how memory easily turns into a ‘false consciousness’ of the past, [and becomes] an opium for the present.”<sup>50</sup>

After the conclusion of the war in 1918, most of the companies of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry documented their unit histories by having their units create a small booklet relaying their time in the war. The Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> entitled their booklet: *In The Great War, Headquarters Company of the Three Hundred Fifty-Sixth Infantry, United States Army, American Expeditionary Forces, from Midwest America to Germany, 1918-1919, Round Trip In One Year.*<sup>51</sup> The booklet was completed in Trier, Germany, in 1919. To sum up their book, they wrote: “This little history is written for the benefit and pleasure of the members of this company who have contributed their best in arms, and have stood the perils and hardships of war together.”<sup>52</sup> For soldiers ending the Great War, one would think it would have been a “grand history” instead of a “little history.”<sup>53</sup> In reading the first page of their booklet, Metz’s idea of “false memories” and “false consciousness” began to take shape for the soldiers immediately following the end of the war. Throughout the brief story, one can see the humor surrounding their descriptions of events that they provided as a collective group in the war.

It is through Swedish author and historian Peter Englund and his book, *The Beauty and The Sorrow: An Intimate History of the First World War*, that can further offer an understanding of the need to record WWI individual histories. In his book, Englund selected twenty characters and used those characters to help tell the history of the war in a timeline pattern.<sup>54</sup> These characters left some sort of written personal account of their experiences during WWI.<sup>55</sup> In his introduction, Englund clarifies that his book in relation to war was not about, "...its causes, course, conclusion and consequences –but a book about what it was like."<sup>56</sup> Through his characters, he was able to define the moment. He writes:

For even though those of us alive today perceive the war through the optic of its conclusion and, not least, what came after, and therefore quite rightly regard it as the tragedy it was, it took a while for the majority of those who lived through it to see it that way. Some never did.<sup>57</sup>

Those that never did included those that gave the ultimate sacrifice in the war.

For the Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry, that list included: Private Alcide Benoit; Corporal Carl Lee Colvin; Private Harley Perle Gano; Private Roy D. Hunterson; Private Peter Manner; Corporal Richard B. Munkres; Private Frank Joe Patrick; Private Curt J. Polst; and Private Elmer W. Taake.<sup>58</sup> For these American soldiers, prior to their departure to France, and as with any family, their romance with death was to occur in natural stages. Grandparents were to die, then mothers and fathers were to die, followed by their sons and daughters. Instead, they died. WWI, like that of other wars, shook that natural order of death, which caused tremendous sufferings for the loved ones of those that had died on the battlefield. It's the relaying of the personal experiences of the relatives of the deceased that can also help to justify and define the existence of a soldier that was killed in battle. In his book, Englund also writes that the goal of his work was to "...depict the war as an individual experience, to go beyond the usual historical

and sociological categories, and also beyond the usual narrative forms in which, at best, people such as these appear as no more than tiny specks of light, flickering by in the grand historical sweep.”<sup>59</sup> “The tiny specks of light” included the men of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry whom history seemed to not pay attention to.

A key discussion that must also be reviewed is the use of modern technology and its role in diminishing the historical value of the WWI soldier.<sup>60</sup> It is modern technology in its common form that has caused the additional isolation of society from its past. In viewing the work of both Metz and Bloch, one can immediately find their concerns with modern technological advances. While the technological advances in warfare are of extreme concern, this paper’s focus is more concerned with technology that caused the diminishment of the significance of history. Walter Benjamin explores this notion of modern technology in his essay entitled, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction: An Influential Essay of Cultural Criticism; The History and Theory of Art*.<sup>61</sup> Benjamin published the essay in Paris in 1936, after fleeing Germany in 1933 before World War II.<sup>62</sup> In his publication, he attempts to awaken the followers of the Nazi regime by his promotion of a more socialist way of life.<sup>63</sup>

It is through Benjamin’s essay that his description of the transformation of art can be applied towards understanding as to how the narrative changed for WWI. Through being altered by its original state, or mass produced, art, to him, causes the art to no longer be in its original form.<sup>64</sup> By no longer being in its original form, the art becomes a piece which then can be perceived differently.<sup>65</sup> By being perceived differently, the art then causes “...the reaction of the masses toward art.”<sup>66</sup> Through this statement, Benjamin means that it becomes overconsumed.<sup>67</sup> By being overconsumed, it causes the art to eventually become boring, dull, or irrelevant. The

attitude of the individual then becomes “I have seen it before.” The problem is that it loses its original “ahh” reaction value. It causes the individual to no longer relate to it. To them, it is no longer real or original.

In addition to the discussion on the American writers that have set the narrative for WWI, a part of why Americans no longer identify with the suffering of the soldiers from WWI is due to the “overconsumption” of war. A part of the overconsumption of war, including fictional novels, is the images depicted or the stories told through other forms of art such as film, photography, video games, etc. In reviewing Metz’s message as discussed previously, it is important to define who is directing the narrative.<sup>68</sup> For example, in film, the question revolves around whether it is the director or the cinematographer that decides what the viewer sees? Or is the writer/s that determine the messages that the viewer receives? Another part of Benjamin’s discussion on art is that the viewing of art requires the independent concentration by the viewer.<sup>69</sup> It is through that concentration that one can think logically and independently about what they are seeing.<sup>70</sup> Then, the viewer can determine what the art means to them.<sup>71</sup> The mechanical reproduction process takes away from the viewer having the ability to create their own opinion of what they are seeing.<sup>72</sup> They are told what they should be seeing. Nowadays, when entering a museum to see a piece of art, most people are told by the guide what they are seeing or what they should see. To Benjamin, this has made the experience mechanical.<sup>73</sup>

In replacing Benjamin’s concept of the history of “art” with the history of “war,” one can find a similar understanding as to why war and the memory of the suffering of war has become irrelevant. As war becomes mass produced, in that it is seen over and over (internet, movies, television, internet, video games, etc.), the viewer eventually becomes bored with it or more

importantly used to it. This causes a “numbing effect.” Society perceives it differently. This “numbing effect” can be explained by thinking about the reaction of the individual today when hearing or seeing that someone was shot and killed on the nightly news. It’s the norm. Americans continue to eat their dinner as if nothing has changed. With images of war and conflict, society has also become numb to it. It is no longer their reality unless it affects the individual directly. In turning back to WWI and the previous discussion related to the writers of WWI and how they selected the narrative for the literature surrounding the war, the same statement is true in relation to current mass media that has focused on war. For Americans, the war story has become one in which the need for adventure and romance in the movies have driven ticket sales. Movies surrounding that of decorated war hero John Lewis Barkley who stuttered are nonexistent.

Recent video games have also added to the “numbing effect” by setting the tone for WWI. Dutch Companies M2H Game Studio and Blackmil Games have created three video games where players can take the role of the soldier in WWI.<sup>74</sup> In the game *Verdun*, the player can experience trench warfare on the western front.<sup>75</sup> In the game, *Isonzo* the player can discover the war experience on the Italian front in the Alps.<sup>76</sup> And in the game *Tannenberg*, the player can battle it out on the Russian front.<sup>77</sup> Each game promises the player “an authentic” and “intense battle.”<sup>78</sup> The *Verdun* game’s “Press Fact Sheet” sums up the game:

Verdun is the first multiplayer FPS set in an authentic World War One setting. Merciless trench warfare offers a unique battlefield experience, immersing you and your squad in intense battles of attack and defense.

The gameplay in this true WWI battlefield experience is as immersive and gritty as it can get, with features such as optional horrendous gore which portrays the true horror of the First World War and authentic weaponry including artillery and gas. Verdun's weapons need to be handled with skill - each gun handles differently and there are no floating crosshairs to aid your aim, along with realistic bullet physics that require you to lead your shots when firing

on a moving target at long range. Always be ready to take cover in case of artillery, gas, and even air attack... or grab your binoculars and call in strikes on your enemies. You'll have to attack and defend with equal skill to emerge victorious!

The Frontlines game mode sees players ordered to go over the top as they assault enemy positions, and then hold their ground against counter attacks. Realistically laid out trenches are challenging to fight in and require tactical cunning to capture and defend. The Entente and Central Powers strive to gain control of frontline sectors and push their opponents out of their final trench line.<sup>79</sup>

The game developers indicate that “the development teams carried out extensive field research at the battlefield itself and were advised by knowledgeable historians to make sure the individual elements in Verdun are as historically accurate as it can get.”<sup>80</sup> There is no indication as to whom the historians were that advised them and drove the narrative of the battles, but the M2H claims that they “are veterans when it comes to developing video games.”<sup>81</sup> In viewing the promo videos that are well presented, one immediately discovers the “cartoonish setting” of the game. The players soldiers are “cartoonlike,” and the enemies are “cartoonlike.” In its “cartoonish” form, one can determine that games such as this have turned the narrative of WWI into more of a “cartoonish” experience. These WWI video games raise all sorts of interesting questions. One such question is whether the players bury their imaginary friends that are killed in the game? The real soldiers in the battles around Verdun did! That question is raised to point out that the aspects of understanding the suffering that took place in the war are simply missing. That suffering is replaced. Instead, the suffering experienced by the player is now one of selfishness in that they suffer if they do not receive the points to continue to play the game. It has become “mechanical.” Through becoming “mechanical,” as Benjamin describes, it loses its “physical shock effect” in that the player, or the viewer of the game, no longer sees the suffering or genuine experiences of the WWI trench soldier that occurred.<sup>82</sup> Instead they equate the war with “fun.”

An example of how the “physical shock effect” can affect how a viewer identifies with the suffering of the past can be found in the public’s reaction to recently discovered WWI bodies. In Italy, Andrea Piccinini et al. cite in a case report entitled, “World War One Italian and Austrian Soldier Identification Project: DNA Results of the First Case,” that in their country, “Every year remains are occasionally found along the front lines.”<sup>83</sup> To the Italians, the WWI front lines are defined as “Northern Italy bordering on Austria in the North and the Adriatic Sea in the South-East.”<sup>84</sup> It is in this mountainous region that in WWI the Austro-Hungarian military faced the Italian military in battle.<sup>85</sup>

While many are contributing it to climate change, it is now an area that is seeing the melting of glaciers.<sup>86</sup> It is from the ice of the glaciers melting that has caused bodies to be exposed that have been frozen since the Great War.<sup>87</sup> In 2004, the Italian media published photos of three recovered WWI bodies that had been frozen over by the glaciers for 80 years.<sup>88</sup> The printed photos were rather shocking to the general public that had observed them.<sup>89</sup> They were shocking to the general public as they were “...much more likely to cause discomfort and a sense of piety and sorrow because they appear[ed] ‘more’ as living persons compared to skeletal remains.”<sup>90</sup> To them, the public, in contrast to skeletal remains, they saw the photos of the dead bodies of the soldiers as real deceased human beings. This led to an experience of the public identifying with the suffering of the soldiers. To Walter Benjamin, this discovery by the public would have been what he would have considered to be art in its original form. For Metz, this would have been the experience of the “memory of the suffering.”<sup>91</sup>

Turning from a philosophical need to a more practical need for additional research and documentation into WWI, we must also review the human desire for families to know more.

Genealogy has become more advanced due to accessible testing processes for DNA. Online databases have also allowed more accessibility to various records to include census data, death certificates, marriage certificates and ship transport records. For companies focusing on genealogy, it has become a fruitful venture. The interest to the public is a natural curiosity to know more. For Americans, they want to know more about their family history beyond that of their grandparents or occasionally their great-grandparents where the common knowledge of the American family history seems to stop.

One popular show on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) is “Finding Your Roots,” which is hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Often, on the show, Gates, Jr. conducts genealogical research for various actors or actresses. The show highlights the results of their genealogical research into the guest’s family tree. Eventually the host “surprises” the guest with their findings.<sup>92</sup> Often the “surprise” moments occur when they are given information about a relative that lived before the guest was born. Sometimes the guest did not know that the ancestral family member existed. Once the deceased relative’s history is discussed, the guest experiences sadness and more than often sheds a tear. To them, the guest, the ancestor that they never knew, or knew existed, suddenly becomes real and identifiable to them when their history is brought to the forefront. They become alive in their memory.

On a recent show, one guest was Actor Terry Crews.<sup>93</sup> At the start of the show, Terry Crews reviewed with the host his immediate family background and relayed the hardships experienced by his family due to his father being a regular gambler and non-provider.<sup>94</sup> His relationship with his father was almost nonexistent due to his father’s behaviors.<sup>95</sup> Not knowing anything about his father’s father, Terry was very surprised to learn that his grandfather had

abandoned his family which included Terry's father.<sup>96</sup> In learning more about his grandfather, he learned that he had also served time in prison twice.<sup>97</sup> Upon learning the history of his family that was presented to him, the actor was "shocked" and then began to think of his father differently.<sup>98</sup> He began to have compassion and understanding in light of learning of what his father went through as a child.<sup>99</sup> He was also shocked as he was able to identify and understand more of his father's behavior towards him.<sup>100</sup> Terry's story is a prime example as to how learning of past experiences of others can help to change a future perception and outcome.

Many families can identify with the Terry Crews' story in that they do not know much about their family member's history. Sometimes, like Crews, they are estranged from their families and have no connection to the family history. Occasionally, it is the media that sometimes highlights such stories. In 2021, a Purple Heart medal was found at a Goodwill Store in Phoenix, Arizona.<sup>101</sup> The employee found a name on the medal and searched for possible relatives through Facebook.<sup>102</sup> Her search eventually allowed her to "contact two of his children."<sup>103</sup> The children had no close relationship with their father and he left his belongings to his doctor.<sup>104</sup> This made "it difficult for his children to get access to any token of his life."<sup>105</sup> The found medal had been awarded to him from his service in the Korean War.<sup>106</sup> The return of the medal helped bring the closure that the family needed.<sup>107</sup> Another story that occurred in 2016 was reported in *The Washington Post* about a found dog tag.<sup>108</sup> The dog tag had the inscription of "Joseph E. Hughes," "Pvt. M.G. Co. 101<sup>st</sup> INF U.S.A."<sup>109</sup> The item was then turned into the local police department who posted it on Facebook.<sup>110</sup> A researcher contacted the department through email and assisted them to locate the soldier's grandson.<sup>111</sup> Upon learning about the medal, the grandson indicated that the family "...previously didn't know much about

his military service.”<sup>112</sup> Police Officer Kevin Aldred summed up his reasoning for further investigating the turned in WWI dog tags:

And the item itself...it’s just a piece of aluminum, but there’s so much more to the story about the war, and the person, and all of his experiences. Like I said, it was an extremely personal item that he took with him every single day, and he had on him 24 hours a day for how many years. Even though it’s a small item and it may seem insignificant, there’s much more to it other than the physical tag.<sup>113</sup>

Although Officer Aldred brought Private Hughes’s story alive, what is important to know is how much the family was unaware of their grandfather’s service in WWI. This adds to the previous discussion of the paper in that very few veterans documented or discussed their stories.

It is through these stories that society learns of the need for families to positively identify the deceased in order to bring them closure that. In 2009, the grave of a WWI United States Marine was discovered by a French national.<sup>114</sup> The body was recovered in the French Village of Rembercourt-Sur-Mad.<sup>115</sup> At the time, there were 11 United States Marines that were unaccounted for from WWI.<sup>116</sup> Two artifacts were found with the well-preserved body which helped to narrow down the initial identification of the remains.<sup>117</sup> Upon receiving dental records, the body was identified and returned to the United States.<sup>118</sup> Eventually, DNA was also processed from hair on a razor found at the gravesite.<sup>119</sup> The DNA on the hair confirmed the remains as the body of First Sergeant George Humphrey.<sup>120</sup> First Sergeant Humphrey was killed during the St. Mihiel offensive and “due to the ongoing battle, was buried hastily with all of his belongings.”<sup>121</sup> A summary of events follows:

A few days later, after the battle concluded, one of Humphrey’s Marines wrote a letter to his family including a map of where his body was buried.

“When the family received the map, they turned it over to the American Graves Registration,” said Johnson. “However, they were never able to find where it was.”

Although Humphrey's body could not be located, lost to the flow of time which was to claim his body for more than 90 years, his family never gave up hope.

“When we would go to Arlington National Cemetery, our mother would take us to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and say, ‘That could be your cousin, George,’” said Edith Scott, Humphrey's first cousin and next-of kin.<sup>122</sup>

Humphrey had died before Edith, his next-of-kin, was born.<sup>123</sup> Prior to his discovery, he just existed only as a name on a list to the Marines. After the discovery, he became a man with a story.

Another topic that must be reviewed is the need to continue to document research on WWI soldiers to ensure for future identification of the missing or unidentified. In WWI, there were over 4.7 million American personnel that served in the Army, Navy and Marines.<sup>124</sup> The total number of American casualties that were members of the Army, Navy and Marines was 116,516.<sup>125</sup> At the conclusion of the War, the United States Government commissioned the Graves Registration Service “to relocate the human remains of the Soldiers to a manageable number of locations since the human remains of more than 70,000 Soldiers were scattered in 23,000 burial sites.”<sup>126</sup> Immediately following the war, the United States Government took an extremely difficult undertaking by temporarily moving the bodies of the soldiers into 700 burial sites.<sup>127</sup> It was then that the United States Government offered the families of the deceased (if they had family) three options.<sup>128</sup> They could bury the soldier in the military cemeteries overseas that had been established.<sup>129</sup> They could also request that the body be returned to the United States to be buried at a Military Cemetery.<sup>130</sup> Or they could move the body of the soldier to a local graveyard of their choosing in their community.<sup>131</sup> The last option would incur some expense from the family.

Throughout the process, including the initial burial, the United States Army Quartermaster's Grave Registration Service claimed an identification success rate of 97%.<sup>132</sup> To ensure a correct identification of a soldier took place, the Quartermaster's considered that the "Timely identification and burial..." was key.<sup>133</sup> A part of the identification process "...relied heavily on the units' ability to identify their own soldiers in a timely manner and on the new dog tags, which had been adopted as standard issue in 1913."<sup>134</sup> The United States Army Quartermaster also noted that "When necessary, however, the graves registration personnel used the procedures of comparing physical characteristics to known information..."<sup>135</sup> In the case where a soldier could not be identified, they were laid to rest among their fellow soldiers in American cemeteries abroad. For those that were killed in the Headquarters Unit of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry, the cemetery where they were laid to rest if they were not repatriated to the United States by their families was the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery & Memorial.<sup>136</sup> The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery & Memorial has over 14,000 American soldiers interred there.<sup>137</sup> Among those 14,000, there are over 450 graves of unknown soldiers of which many are located in Plot G of the cemetery.<sup>138</sup> These graves have a standard white marble headstone with the engraved words: "Here Rests In Honored Glory An American Soldier Known But to God."<sup>139</sup>

It was after WWI that the United States established "The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," in Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>140</sup> The establishment of the Tomb was through legislation whose purpose was "...to bring home the body of an unknown American warrior who in himself represents no section, creed, or race in the late war and who typifies, moreover, the soul of America and the supreme sacrifice of her heroic dead."<sup>141</sup> The process for selecting the unknown soldier from WWI was done so in a manner that would not allow for the soldier to be

traced to a specific battlefield in France or be identified.<sup>142</sup> Four unidentified bodies of soldiers were selected randomly and exhumed from three different American cemeteries in France.<sup>143</sup> The bodies were then examined to ensure that he was “a member of the American Expeditionary Forces, that he had died of wounds in combat, and that there were no clues to his identity whatsoever...”<sup>144</sup> The bodies of the soldiers were then “...placed in identical caskets and shipping cases.”<sup>145</sup> Sergeant Edward F. Younger was chosen to select the soldier from among the four shipping crates.<sup>146</sup> Since his selection, an unknown soldier’s body from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War have been placed to the west of the WWI Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.<sup>147</sup> Prior to the placement of the unknown soldier from the Vietnam War, there was some concern in the decision making process in that the one unidentified body could become identifiable.<sup>148</sup> Disregarding this possibility, the Administration under President Ronald Reagan decided to move forward and proceeded to bury the soldier.<sup>149</sup> 14 years later, at the request of the family, the body was exhumed and then identified as “...Air Force First Lieutenant Michael Joseph Blassie...,” through a DNA match from his surviving family members.<sup>150</sup>

Under the United States Department of Defense, it is the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency’s mission to “Provide the fullest accounting for our [the United States] missing personnel to their families and the nation.”<sup>151</sup> On the Agency’s website, an individual can search for missing POW/MIA’s from “WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the Gulf Wars/other conflicts.”<sup>152</sup> However, an individual cannot search for a soldier’s name that is still “missing in action” from WWI. It’s not a part of the feature as the government considers them “deceased.” Some of the 4,400 WWI soldiers that are still classified as “missing in action” are buried in the graves marked with the familiar language on the marble cross for the

“unknown.” With a 97% success rate as claimed by the United States Government in identifying the deceased at the time of their burial in WWI, coupled with the government’s own need to reexamine the bodies that they exhumed from the unmarked graves to ensure that they were Americans when they were selecting the soldier for the “Tomb of the Unknown,” is a cause for concern.

Another concern is that the United States Government’s records related to veterans overall has not been positive. For WWI soldiers, those records have been inaccurate or are missing. Historian Robert Laplander has worked to create the “Doughboy MIA Project,” which has taken the role of the government’s responsibility by actively searching for the fallen war dead of WWI. Laplander’s research has taken him and his team out in the field to attempt to identify possible remains and relics of deceased soldiers.<sup>153</sup> His research has also taken them deep into archives which has helped develop a strategy to assist in identifying soldiers of WWI and in correcting records of the United States Government’s American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC).<sup>154</sup> Laplander responds to the question as to why he does what he does:

The answer is the same always – why not? The First World War was the very first time we sent a major expeditionary force overseas to fight on foreign shores—not for land, not for wealth, but for an idea, [Laplander said] “If we stand the chance of giving somebody a grave, why wouldn’t we?

Even if we don’t recover any more remains or identify anybody else, we’ve got people thinking about these guys....<sup>155</sup>

His team has created a motto that reads: “A man is only missing if he’s forgotten.”<sup>156</sup> An example of one record that Laplander corrected was that of Herbert H. Renshaw.<sup>157</sup> Renshaw was a Navy sailor that “...was washed overboard...” during the war.<sup>158</sup> For those that were “...lost at sea, missing or buried in an unmarked grave [their names] were carved into walls or

tablets....”<sup>159</sup> The walls or tablets would list names as a memorial to them in military cemeteries or monuments managed by the ABMC abroad. Renshaw’s name had not been added to the official list of those “lost” or “missing” by the War Department.<sup>160</sup> Therefore his name was excluded from the memorial. Laplander was able to convince the United States Government to finally add his name to the memorial.<sup>161</sup> He is now recognized “at the Brookwood American Cemetery in England...” a 100 years later.<sup>162</sup>

In addition to “inaccurate record keeping,” another concern is that the records of former soldiers that were held by the United States Government are missing or destroyed. The records of former service men and women are held by the National Archives. While the United States National Archives is responsible for maintaining the military records of former servicemembers, it is the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis that manages and stores the files. On July 12, 1973, the facility in suburban St. Louis, Missouri caught fire.<sup>163</sup> It was reported that the “fire destroyed up to 80 percent of the 22 million records of veterans of the Army, Army Air Force and Air Force who served between 1912 and 1963....” Included in the records that caught fire were the records of the men that served in WWI. Many records had no backup copies. While the archivists saved every document that was salvageable and possibly restorable, the reality is that most of these documents will not be recovered soon if at all. The concern, as this paper has previously reviewed, is that this unfortunate event has further caused the distancing of WWI from American history.

One such scholar that has spent a lot of time attempting to bring meaning from WWI is historian Jennifer Keene. Keene notes that for Americans, the First World War was “...the ‘forgotten war’ because Americans never developed a unifying collective memory about its

meaning or the political lessons it offered.”<sup>164</sup> She notes that “despite a plethora of scholarly works examining nearly every aspect of the war, interest in the war remains limited even among academic historians.”<sup>165</sup> In knowing the lack of interest, most authors today tailor their books to that audience. In fact, a recent publication by editor A. Scott Berg, which included Keene on the editorial advisory board, created a book entitled *World War I and America: Told by the Americans Who Lived It*.<sup>166</sup> The book included three pages of the diary of Vernon E. Kniptash, a radio operator in the war.<sup>167</sup> It is the only story found in the chapters of the book from an enlisted “combat” soldier.<sup>168</sup> His diary detailed his time in the Rhineland and his frustration with the German people’s response to President Wilson’s negotiations in the peace process after the war.<sup>169</sup> The second half of his account described his journey back to the United States on the ship and his description of the soldiers with shell shock and that were disabled from the war.<sup>170</sup> Here’s Kniptash’s account of what he wrote in his diary dated April 19, 1919:

Watched the shell-shocked boys for a while. They are caged in on all sides. At times they act perfectly sane, and then again, they’re hog wild. One of them thinks he owns a white horse, and he spends the biggest part of the day grooming him. Another ties and unties knots in a rope for hours at a time. The worst case of them all is the one that walks back and forth with his head sunk on his chest and his hands clasped in front of him. He never says a word and never gets off his path. It’s a shame to see these big huskies in such a condition. It would be far better to lose an arm or a leg. They say that they will be alright in two or three years. I sincerely hope so.<sup>171</sup>

It is Kniptash’s description of his experience that doesn’t seem to resonate with Americans on the history on the war. Instead, they identify with the 26 pages out of the 828 pages that belonged to that of Ernest Hemingway, E.E. Cummings, and Jon Dos Possos.<sup>172</sup> In Berg’s book, the excerpts of Kniptash’s diary consisted of only about two and a half pages.<sup>173</sup>

It is through understanding how the narrative was misdirected that we understand a part of the lack of interest in the war. Keene writes that: “By comparison, the First World War failed

to find a stable place in the national narrative.”<sup>174</sup> This is the opposite for the European states as there is much printed about their soldier’s experiences in the war since the war was fought over a lot more years. While there are several reasons why the war is unfamiliar to most Americans, the reality is that it should not be. Historians agree that the war should be of more interest to the United States, and it is historian Christopher Clark that best sums up the reasoning in his book, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*.<sup>175</sup>

And yet what must strike any twenty-first-century reader who follows the course of the summer crisis of 1914 is its raw modernity. It began with a squad of suicide bombers and a cavalcade of automobiles. Behind the outrage at Sarajevo was an avowedly terrorist organization with a cult of sacrifice, death and revenge; but this organization was extra-territorial, without a clear geographical or political location; it was scattered in cells across political borders; it was unaccountable, its links to any sovereign government were oblique, hidden and certainly very difficult to discern from outside the organization.<sup>176</sup>

Clark’s description should be of more interest in understanding the events at the start of WWI. If one was to remove the year and the location in his paragraph above, then perhaps it would become more identifiable to the modern world.

## **Summary and Outlook**

In summary, the goal of this Chapter was to review the humanities approach for the justification of the need for further research into the documenting the experiences of the soldiers of the Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry that served in WWI. Through a theological review, it is understood that the past allows us to understand the present which offers a hope for its future. Through a historical review, it is understood that history needs to be documented accurately and that the American narrative and understanding of WWI needs to change. In order to change that narrative, the stories should come from the soldiers themselves that suffered. The next Chapter will focus on the methods in conducting the research.

### CHAPTER 3. THE APPROACH

It is the goal of this Chapter to work towards defining the humanities research approach for identifying the soldiers of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry from World War One (WWI). Since the humanities approach to research allows flexibility, it is through that flexibility that other academic fields can be introduced to determine the best manner in moving forward. These academic fields include anthropology, genealogy, and history. An understanding as to how multi academic disciplines can work together on an identification project can be found by returning to the review of Daniel Gaudio et al.'s article from Chapter Two. The article centered on the identification of the WWI remains in the Italian Alps that had been discovered after the ice glaciers began melting.<sup>177</sup> In that area, the recovery of remains of WWI soldiers is generally undertaken by the Italian Archaeological Heritage Office.<sup>178</sup> They oversee "...the operation of human remains recovery through archaeological methodology at high altitude, including glacier environments..."<sup>179</sup> After the remains are transferred from the mountains by the archeological team, the identification of the soldier requires a team of experts. Those experts include teams of "...archeologists, forensic anthropologists and forensic pathologists..."<sup>180</sup> As they "...are the main specialists involved, but they can be supported by radiologists, geneticists and historians or military equipment experts."<sup>181</sup> Together, the combination of these academic disciplines created the team of experts for success of the identification projects.

According to the authors of the article, "The most challenging task related to this activity, despite the logistic and scientific effort, is reaching a positive identification of the soldiers."<sup>182</sup> The analysis effort can be quite challenging as no stone is left unturned. It is through the identification that they seek to "...examine and document the context in order to maximize the

correct interpretation and facilitate the consequent analysis of the remains and of the items connected (or potentially connected) with them.”<sup>183</sup> The process is so thorough that it can include the analysis of the intestine to determine the soldier’s “last meal.”<sup>184</sup> Even after 100 years, the recovery team of experts can offer an analysis of the “... ‘last meal’ of the soldier [which] gives [them] the opportunity to add a compelling element in building the ‘story’ beyond the dead body even in absence of name....”<sup>185</sup> In this case, one of the soldiers was determined to have had “boiled oat starch granules,” which they described as “a probable soup.”<sup>186</sup> Building the story in this manner is the “human approach” to their project. It is through the “human approach” that the discipline of humanities is able to further define the lives of those involved.

Another example that was also previously reviewed briefly was the discovery of the body of the WWI Marine soldier in France. In that case, one major area of focus in the identification process of the anthropologists and scientists was on the deceased servicemember’s teeth.<sup>187</sup> In fact, there was a complete and detailed scientific case report that was generated in *The Journal of Forensic Sciences* on it.<sup>188</sup> In the report, the author noted the interest:

The recovered remains reflect an individual who was fortunate enough to have access to exceptional dental care: extractions, a porcelain crown, and multiple amalgam and gold restorations. This is quite remarkable since dental care during the early 1900s was considered a luxury; the Army Dental Corps was not established until March 3, 1911, and esthetic, strong porcelain crowns were not introduced until the early 1900s.<sup>189</sup>

The enthusiasm of the author’s findings can be found throughout the report, which also included seven different photos of the deceased soldier’s unique dental work.<sup>190</sup> The complex description related to the Davis Crown placement on a tooth that the author provided is extremely detailed.<sup>191</sup> For most, in the anthropology and scientific arenas, it is this excitement in wanting to know more about the person that drives the research further. In the humanities field, it is an

attempt to “help them.” In helping them, it is a part of making the deceased person “human” and “identifiable.” It’s the description of the deceased soldier’s teeth that brings forth the fact that he was a human being. In his summary, the author noted that ...all lines of evidence (historical, material, evidence, anthropological, and dental) corresponded to the associated casualty and circumstances of his loss.”<sup>192</sup> His comments reiterated that it requires a unique process from multi-disciplines to recreate the identity of the soldier.

In addition to the inclusion of various academic disciplines in the research process, it must include various related subfields such as those found in anthropology. Thomas Hulland Erikson in *Why Anthropology?* offers that “Anthropology can be defined as the comparative study of humans, their societies and their cultural worlds.”<sup>193</sup> Anthropologists research experiences to determine “what makes us human.”<sup>194</sup> It is through those experiences that anthropology seeks to explore diversity and commonality among humans.<sup>195</sup> The field of anthropology “is generally divided into four subfields.”<sup>196</sup> Those fields are archeology, biological anthropology, cultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology.<sup>197</sup> Each field is unique in that they cross each other in similarities to include their research methods as “Each subfield applies theories, employs systematic research methodologies, formulates and test hypotheses, and develops extensive sets of data.”<sup>198</sup>

One of the most known subfields of anthropology is archeology. While many believe that archaeology is the study of “the earliest human beings,” the reality is that their work includes up to “...the present day.”<sup>199</sup> The discussion of the recovery of the bodies of the WWI soldiers in the Alps is a prime example of some of their work in the present day. When archaeologist “dig,” whether in a field or in a research room, in addition to the item or items

found, they are also interested in the environment that pertained to the discovery. They are also looking for the emotional aspect or the “human side.” This contrasts slightly with historians in that they perform through a process that is more document orientated. It also differs slightly from genealogists who are looking for more of the immediate family connection.

The role of the field of anthropology in WWI is best described through the review of the book by Reinhard Johler et al., *Doing Anthropology in Wartime and War Zones: World War I and the Cultural Sciences in Europe*.<sup>200</sup> The authors note that WWI for the field of anthropology was a pivoting point.<sup>201</sup> During the war, from 1914-1919, the field of anthropology essentially was non-existent.<sup>202</sup> Afterwards, anthropology marked a “...decisive turn away from the paradigms of the nineteenth century, a turn away from speculative histories of humankind and toward a functionalist analysis of present-day societies.”<sup>203</sup> Most of the field work by anthropologists during the war were conducted by the Germans and the Austrians.<sup>204</sup> Field work was concentrated into “...three major arenas: in the trenches among the soldiers in search of what was quickly termed ‘war folklore’; in occupied territories among the local populations; and in POW Camps.”<sup>205</sup>

While the last two items are of historical interest and value, for purposes of this paper, the focus will turn towards “war folklore.” In their field work, during the Great War, the Austrian and German anthropologists “sought to collect and document soldiers’ songs, trench art, and what it perceived as a dramatic rise in ‘superstitious’ practices.”<sup>206</sup> Prior to the start of the Great War, Karl Larsen published a book that became a future model for the collection of artifacts for the field of cultural anthropology.<sup>207</sup> His collection was first published in German in 1907 and was well received by the *Volkskunde* academic circles.<sup>208</sup> The “war folklore” contents of the

book itself consisted of "...a collection of soldiers' letters and journal entries from the Danish-Prussian war..."<sup>209</sup> There seemed to be a fascination of the bourgeois in not only the soldier, but also in the soldier's style of communicating.<sup>210</sup> Because of this previous fascination, in addition to the Austrians and Germans, the French and Italian researchers were also conducting their own research into "war folklore" as well.<sup>211</sup> Surprisingly, even though their respected nations were at war with each other, these anthropologists were sharing their research among each other during the conflict.<sup>212</sup> In fact, Johler et al. noted that "...there was intensive and extensive scientific exchange between these countries."<sup>213</sup> The exchange that took place did not include the United States as Johler and et al. further noted:

Activities of US anthropologists during this time have also been quite thoroughly examined, most recently and systematically by David H. Price. They either lent their particular experience expertise to the government or used opportunities created by the war to do research from which the government ultimately benefitted.

Since the United States did not conduct studies of their own at the time, then the understanding on the "war folklore" must be guided by those that did, especially the research conducted by Austria and Germany. It is important to note that many argue that war folklore is a contribution to a country's folklore.<sup>214</sup> A part of that folklore can be found through the soldiers own stories such as that of Barkley's.

While "war folklore" or "cultural folklore" is a field of ethnohistory in anthropology, the reality is that it encompasses many disciplines as well. Ethnohistory was defined "...by James Axtell as 'the use of historical and ethnological methods and materials to gain knowledge of the nature and causes of change in a culture defined by ethnological concepts and categories.'"<sup>215</sup> It was a term that was first used by "American cultural anthropologists to describe their work in the history of North American aboriginal groups."<sup>216</sup> However, since its inception, the field then

“expanded to refer to historical studies of non-European peoples, especially before or in the early days of European contact.”<sup>217</sup> It has since evolved for the studying of groups in various social settings of commonality.

Originally, the term was used to describe groups that lacked the “conventional historical documents most used by historians.”<sup>218</sup> In Europe, as groups such as gypsies roamed, it caused the group to not have much identifying individual or group documented history. In the United States, the same is true for certain tribes of Native Americans that roamed. Traditionally these groups relied on oral histories instead of “self-created written materials.”<sup>219</sup> Since there are very few, or nonexistent early written histories, it then becomes the focus of the ethnohistorians to recreate such histories. It is because of the lack of documented historical materials that they “have evolved a methodology which utilizes a broad range of ‘unconventional’ materials.”<sup>220</sup>

American anthropologist Bernard S. Cohn offers the explanation about:

...three basic aspects of ethnohistorical method, each of which roughly corresponds to a type of source like material. Like the historian the ethnohistorian can begin with written materials, but these materials are almost always sources from outside the group whose past is being reconstructed. Travel accounts by early European explorers and missionary journals and documents are among the most commonly used. Secondly, the ethnohistorian utilizes ethnological data (often the result of the scholar’s own fieldwork) because a solid, and preferably firsthand, acquaintance with the culture is essential. Oral tradition constitutes a third potentially major source. To these three aspects we might add the study of physical objects, whether from the findings of archaeology or from the inferences drawn from the material artifacts of the contemporary culture.<sup>221</sup>

Cohn lays out the three steps necessary for the groundwork to occur for the research of the five men selected from the Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry. The first in that process emphasizes the collection of the history of the unit and other material. The second emphasizes the independent research that should be conducted outside of the immediate written history. The third indicates that an oral tradition can include a family member with knowledge. It can also be

some sort of letter, journal or the relaying of their story in their own words that can be sought out.

In ethnohistory, it is the use of different “nontraditional” sources that must occur to recreate the past. Thomas Abler in his paper, “Ethnohistory: A Choice Between Being Anthropology or Being Nothing,” reviews the struggle for more unconventional research methods outside of the norm.<sup>222</sup> Abler places an emphasis in that ethnohistorical research needs to be conducted in addition to field work where people are interviewed about the past.<sup>223</sup> To him, this means digging into written accounts, documents, photographs, or other relevant material depending on the time period being studied.<sup>224</sup> Abler also defines the work of the ethnohistorian as “...involving highly tedious labor of reading documents or sitting long hours before a microfilm reader....”<sup>225</sup> The process has advanced quite considerably since Abler completed his paper, but his point is the process for the research of the work of ethnohistorians is extensive. That has not changed.

In Abler’s article he also provides an example of how he compares ethnohistorian research to fieldwork through discussing his analysis of the work by William N. Fenton in his study of the Iroquois and their suicide rates in 1941. In this study, Fenton discovered that sometimes the documented history of a group or individual can be overwhelming.<sup>226</sup> He realized that in contrast to those societies that did not have their history recorded, the “...documentary record concerning the Iroquois is indeed rich, allowing the investigation of problems of cultural continuity and change over the course of several centuries.”<sup>227</sup> Fenton’s approach to the documented materials of the Iroquois was with skepticism. His skepticism related not only to the

overwhelming amount of material, but perhaps to the concern as to who wrote the narrative for their history.<sup>228</sup> Abler further explains his point:

In his suicide paper, Fenton began with descriptions of suicides within the memories of living Iroquois in various communities in the United States and Canada. Women, he found, committed suicide by eating a poisonous root after an unhappy marriage or love affair. Men were more likely to kill themselves by violent means after having committed some heinous crime such as murdering a relative. A third type of suicide was that of children abused by parents. Fenton examined the historical evidence and found cases of similar Iroquois suicides dating back to 1656 and to even earlier times for the Iroquoian-speaking Huron.<sup>229</sup>

Fenton worked “backwards” in his study. The success of his research was through a process that he redefined as “upstreaming.”<sup>230</sup> His words offer the explanation best:

New material has accumulated, historical perspective has deepened and widened, and methods of handling historical problems call for a different presentation. Experience has indicated that it is best to look at historical sources from the viewpoint of the field and to test early descriptions of Indian behavior against a knowledge of how Indians behave as persons. When I at first proceeded from ethnology to the earlier historical sources and tried to reconcile the two types of data across the chasm of several centuries by reading history chronologically up to the present, I met with small success. It works better to being with the present and work steadily backward. For this application of the archeologists’ method of “direct historic approach” I have borrowed the term “upstreaming,” from the classical archeologists.<sup>231</sup>

Essentially, through “upstreaming” Fenton started from interviewing present tribe descendants and then worked backwards. His initial step was to seek information from “informants.” The “informants” he defined as “...the bearers of the oral tradition...”<sup>232</sup> A further understanding of this can be found by reviewing his research related to the “Indian Dance,” where he chose to live and observe the Seneca Native American Tribe living on the Alleghany Indian Reservation in southwestern New York.<sup>233</sup> His first visit was in 1933.<sup>234</sup> He then returned after World War II.<sup>235</sup> In his observations, Fenton realized that in observing the Eagle Dance that the songs and procedures were historical rituals that had been passed down without much variance from the past.<sup>236</sup> It was the ancestors’ dance. Since that tradition had been carefully passed on from

generation to generation, Fenton sought out the history of the dance from the living tribal members. He found that they were “quite ignorant concerning the origin and history of the ceremonies.”<sup>237</sup> The members of the tribe knew how to perform the dances and songs and they knew when it was appropriate to perform them or sing them, but they did not know the true origins as to how they started.<sup>238</sup> Fenton’s research into the history of the dance ceremony progressed and he realized that certain members of the tribe had very specific pieces of the history that had to be put together. His “tracking” of the information, as he described it, was through his “housemother” from where he boarded on the reservation.<sup>239</sup> In reference to his inquiry as to who may have the history, the “housemother” replied:

Hemlocks-lying down is a good singer, and he knows all about medicines; Snorer is the best speaker, he knows the origin legends, and you will have to pay him; Woodeater is proud, he speaks little English, and he may not tell you; I guess my man Corn-husker does not know what his father knew; and old Stick-lodged-in-a-crotch is always asleep and they say he never hears what the speaker says.”<sup>240</sup>

It is through her reply that Fenton knew who to turn to first to begin his study of the history of the dance. He wrote that he “began to realize that within the framework of a simple community of 72 households and 326 persons, individuals participate differently in affairs which are their common social heritage.”<sup>241</sup> After outlining the rituals, Fenton discovered that the individual participant stories were important within the overall culture of the group.<sup>242</sup> He realized that “the varied personalities participated in the situation, and that possibly their behavior, both individually and collectively, was the result of historical processes.”<sup>243</sup> By examining the historical accounts of the individual and that of the group collectively and comparing them with documents such as journals from French explorers, he was able to determine that the Eagle Dance originated from the Calumet Dance of the tribal extended ancestors.<sup>244</sup>

What's important in Fenton's message is threefold as it pertains to this paper and its discussion. First, it is through Fenton's observations from his first visit to his second visit after World War II, that he witnessed the change in the Native American culture. Children were no longer learning their native language and they were focused more on lacrosse and baseball more than their native games. He also noted that their homes and lifestyles had begun to change from their traditional ways of doing things.<sup>245</sup> This signified the importance to him to document their history before it disappeared through generations. It also signified their society's transition from the old world as they knew it into a new world. Secondly, he further noted that the stories can change its context over time depending on who's in control of the narrative. For the men of the 356<sup>th</sup>, this leads to the question as to who knew what, but more importantly it is their histories combined that can tell the entire story. Thirdly, he discovered that through gathering the oral traditions that he was able to work backwards and compare the oral understanding of the history to the documentation of the past to generate a conclusion.

While members of the 356<sup>th</sup> are deceased, it is their "tracks" that they left behind that can help with a starting point in defining their histories. In order to find those "tracks," the process of "upstreaming" must occur. In conjunction with genealogical methods, the process must begin with the present and work in reverse. That process will include reviewing obituaries, census records, etc., and other historical data about the soldier and then move backwards from the end of their life towards their time in the service. Through using this method, it allows for the learning of the soldier's history to include where they lived at the time of their death. The process also allows for the search for ship records that were recorded for the arrival and departure of the soldiers to and from England and France. As it is through the locating of a

soldier's arrival back into the United States that a soldier can be further investigated as to their time in the war. In addition, it is also through reviewing veterans' records, census information, incarceration, and court records, that one can also come to establish the role that their experiences in the Great War would have impacted their future lives after the war. In reviewing family trees through genealogy research sites, one is also able to establish the soldier's impact in prospering in the future after the war.

It is through historian Mark Meigs that a further understanding as to how the historical interpretation can also be included in identifying histories of the past. Meigs is currently Professeur d'histoire at civilisation américaines at the Université de Paris. In his book, *Optimism at Armageddon: Voices of American Participants in the First World War*, Meigs concurs with the analysis presented in Chapter Two in that "World War I has been a matter of unresolved interpretation for American Participants from the first moments of their involvement to the return of the last soldiers and bodies of soldiers in the 1920s and even to the present day."<sup>246</sup> It is because of that interpretation that he also notes that "World War I is an opportunity for studying the creation of meaning in strange surroundings, adopting and accommodating beliefs to realities, [and] testing a national identity against foreign identities."<sup>247</sup> Through the flow of his book one can see the research conducted included: as to the reasons a soldier volunteered or how they were drafted in the army; what combat meant to the soldiers; their cultural experiences with the French; as well as the deaths of American soldiers and the meanings of their deaths. In discussing the research, Meigs offered in his book that "A Study of Americans in World War I must examine a great many different kinds of sources and address many different kinds of experiences beyond combat."<sup>248</sup> Meigs found very unconventional

methods to conduct his research to get to the heart of the experiences of the American soldiers. He spent many hours reading old French police reports and combing through the archives not only in the United States, but in France as well.<sup>249</sup> This is precisely why as additional materials are transferred from the private to the public domain through diaries, photos, and letters that they must be documented to preserve the experience of the American soldier. That experience has predominately entailed documenting their experiences in the trenches and little focus has gone into their training, arrival into France to participate in the war as well as their experiences of being injured and returning home. Detailed accounts of the daily life of the soldier are also limited. Meigs' research into documenting their experiences was an incredible first step into gaining that insight as the individual experience is limited.

In continuing with the historical aspect of research methods, concurring with Meigs, is historian Ernst Breisach. Breisach emphasized the importance of discovering new historical material and incorporating it into today's research of the past. Through his book *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, as he reviews the development of historiography. To him, the development of historiography has led to the question as to "Why Western culture has 'exhibited a concern for the past and produced so great a variety of historiographical interpretations?'"<sup>250</sup> WWI is no exception. There are many different interpretations as to why the war started and why it continued. He writes that "historians attempt to construct theories of history to justify the discipline and defend [their] territory, [and that] the lack of a comprehensive survey of historiography" causes historians to make "ad hoc judgements on the nature and theory of history" which "fails to understand the problems of historiography historically."<sup>251</sup> He uses the psychological explanation of time in that "they have found that the

span of time which we actually experience as ‘now,’ the ‘mental’ present, is only a fraction of a second long.”<sup>252</sup> However, as humans “in everyday life we mean a longer time span when we refer to the present.”<sup>253</sup> We view the past as a longer venture in time than the moment that we are living in. His point, however, is that those experiences of the past were not that long ago. This can be further described in attempting to remember when someone like their child was born. “Was it that long ago?” is often a question posed upon the realization that the time of the past has flown by. “The conclusion” he writes is “that human life is never simply lived in the present alone but rather in three worlds: one that is, one that was, and one that will be.”<sup>254</sup> This means that the view must be tailored to research studies to adapt as society progresses and the explanation for history evolves. By evolving, they allow their discipline to analyze as to how it has affected the present.<sup>255</sup> This, in the end, will in turn cause society to create a vision of a better future.<sup>256</sup> It is through researching the past with the combination of all three, (past, present and future), that will allow for a “historical nexus” that will assist in the attempts to “make sense of the human condition...” as it relates to today and tomorrow.<sup>257</sup>

While Breisach’s analysis concurs also with the discussions related in Chapter Two, the messaging of Breisach directly pertains to the research methodology in that he calls for a revisit to history. A part of the revisiting of history is understanding the context of many documents that are presented today and comparing them with the history that was written about it in the past. Many United States Government documents concerning the war were not released until after many authors, historians, etc. had concluded their analysis on the Great War. Considering the “new evidence,” Breisach compels his readers to realign the history with a more modern day of understanding it. It is a way that researchers can contribute to the past. By contributing to the

understanding of the past, it allows for the meaning of the soldier's existence. After all, the soldiers' experiences in WWI benefitted the soldiers of World War II and other wars. Those benefits included advancements in combat strategy, machinery, medicines, etc.

In understanding Breisach's concerns, as well as that of Metz and Bloch, it is imperative that the research for the 356<sup>th</sup> be done as accurately as possible to ensure its integrity. The research conducted on this project must be done so with the understanding that the history could change as more historical and personal documents are released in the future. It is imperative that the viewer of the research maintain that understanding and view that the overall goal of the project is not to be inaccurate, but to be as conclusive as possible with the facts on hand. It is also through both Breisach and Meigs that the research will proceed with the understanding of the development of the young soldier and how the cause of that development through their experiences in war affected them. This means that war can change a man.

In studying history today, one of the key elements that must also be included is the viewpoint of "new social history." Jennifer Pustz discusses "new social history" in her book, *Voices from the Back Stairs: Interpreting Servants' Lives at Historic House Museums.*<sup>258</sup> She reviews how historic house museums have failed to include the entire "house history" in their interpretations.<sup>259</sup> Pustz's research focused on smaller house museums and their presentation of the overall history of the house. To her, most of the museums were providing their historical tours that indicated "this is a chair" similar "to what the owner would have sat in."<sup>260</sup> They failed to include the "new social history," which offers a broader perspective of what was occurring in and around the house during the historical period of history the house portrays. "New social history" includes the struggles for civil rights, women's suffrages, immigrant

concerns, etc.<sup>261</sup> The author suggests that this would be a way for the museums to offer a better experience for their visitors.”<sup>262</sup>

In her book, she also reviews the need for the documenting the lives of the servants that lived and became a part of the household of the museums.<sup>263</sup> To her, the need for documenting the servants was that “they were significant too.”<sup>264</sup> Through her research, she discovered that for those homes that included slavery as a part of their history, many tour guides had a challenging time describing or mentioning the history for appearing to offend or because they simply didn’t identify with it.<sup>265</sup> Therefore, the tour guides and the museum chose not to relay the history.<sup>266</sup> In briefly reviewing Pustz’s work, it can caution a researcher to be cognizant of the fact that the history presented must be inclusive of events rather than exclusive. In documenting WWI, the role of women and that of African Americans should also be noted as the “new social history.” However, the “new social history” for WWI should also include the suffering of the perceived enemies at the time and what their deaths and their lives meant. Surely their deaths and suffering meant something too. By including these elements into current and future research, it allows for the documentation of the history to be “...more authentic.”<sup>267</sup> It also allows for people to understand the full impact of war.

As a starting point for the research related to this paper, one of the first steps will be through the United States National Archives which provides an overview of the historical background of their collections on WWI. This includes the soldier’s WWI draft cards. In addition to the overall function of the system, the website explains the process of the draft and the description of the records for holding the drafts.<sup>268</sup> The website also includes the link to finding the now digitalized microfilm roll of the draft cards which are categorized by the

soldier's domicile state of entrance. While they do not offer any suggested searches for WWI, they do offer a brochure online that relates to "Finding Information on Personal Participation in World War II."<sup>269</sup> Since the information provided pertains to the Second World War, the information can be helpful in determining the next approach to finding records. The United States National Archives also offers limited other primary resources online. However, the best source in discovering the next steps in the process through the reading of the booklet created by Debra M. Dudek entitled the *World War I Genealogy Research Guide: Tracing American Military and Non-Combatant Ancestors*. In the book, Dudek offers additional insights as to where to seek out information in researching soldiers from WWI. Some suggestions might be helpful while others might not. The researcher sums up the lack of materials on WWI:

Yes, there are people who know or suspect their ancestor served, but the barriers to American research seem like an unrewarding struggle with limited return on investment. This lack of motivation is unusual amongst weekend and dedicated genealogists. This lack of enthusiasm is strange, as genealogists by and large are a group of people who will spend hours shifting through tax rolls for three separate counties in a succession of creepy basements and dimly lit storage rooms just to pinpoint an ancestor's migration year from one state to the next. This same group could potentially spend years attending lectures and searching for copies of 'burned' courthouse records with a song in their heart. Entire genealogical careers are built on locating copies of 'burnt records' from courthouses and churches to city and municipal government archives.<sup>270</sup>

Dudek concurs with other researchers in that a search must involve various resources and unconventional techniques to obtain the information that is necessary in identifying those of the past.

## **Summary and Outlook**

In summary, a review of potential research methods was presented in this Chapter. It is through the analysis of this review that the determination of the research approach in recreating the histories of the soldiers of the past through humanities must include research elements of historiography, genealogy, and ethnohistory. Those methods include the reviewing of the “tracks” left by the men of the 356<sup>th</sup> themselves. The process will proceed first through “upstreaming,” by researching history from the end of the soldier’s life and then proceed backwards towards their time of starting out in the war. While information is gathered, it is that information that must be verified to ensure its historical accuracy. It is through these methods that the documenting of the histories of the five men selected from the Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry will occur. The results of that research will then be presented in the next Chapter.

## CHAPTER 4. THE MEN

It is in this Chapter that the paper incorporates the last three Chapters and presents those findings. Those findings are the brief histories of five men of the Headquarters Company of the 356th Infantry AEF that served in France during World War One (WWI). The five soldiers selected for this paper are: Private Alex Joseph Barbier; Private Edgar Burton Barnett; Private Francis Gilbert Brownfield; Private Peter Manner; and Private Harley Perle Gano. Prior to doing so, it is important to first acknowledge that it is all of the fighting men of the 356<sup>th</sup> that deserve the utmost respect for not only their service to the Nation, and to the world, but also for all their trials and tribulations that they went through in their attempt to change that world. While there is more history to be recorded both individually and collectively, this research will provide a condensed version as it was completed with the constraints of completing a thesis as per the requirements (time, pages, etc.). These brief histories are in no way an attempt to limit their stories or exclude the stories of other men. In addition, it must also be noted that this paper proceeds in a non-judgmental manner in relation to the histories presented. The goal of this paper was an attempt to describe and document what the soldier was going through as a young man headed off to the strangeness of war. These men did nothing wrong.

While each soldier deserves more research, this paper placed more of an emphasis on the story of Peter Manner as it seemed as though it was needed. It appeared in reviewing documents related to him, that at every turn, he just wasn't sure who to note as his next of kin. While the other soldiers had families that they communicated with, he didn't seem to have that connection. As an example, on one of the military registries, he had his father listed as the next of kin. After he died, the military had crossed out his father's name and location in Finland indicating that it

was not valid. Not only was Peter also the least searchable, but his obituary was nothing more than a name on a list that some newspapers decided to print.

The Headquarters Company of the 356<sup>th</sup> was assigned to the 89<sup>th</sup> Division in WWI. The unit was organized at Camp Funston, Kansas, where most of the members were from “northwestern and southcentral Missouri,” that trained together.<sup>271</sup> The majority of the men arrived at the camp around September 1, 1917.<sup>272</sup> On May 23, 1918, they were transported by train to Camp Mills in New York.<sup>273</sup> On June 4, 1918, they departed on the steamship Caronia bound for Liverpool, England.<sup>274</sup> From Liverpool, the units were moved by train towards Southampton.<sup>275</sup> Then on June 19<sup>th</sup>, as they described it themselves, the “night found us snugly packed on another boat like sardines and forgetting the submarine dangers across the English Channel we slept like logs.”<sup>276</sup> They arrived in France where they continued training until July 31, 1918, when they began to move towards the battlefields.<sup>277</sup>

As they prepared to move on July 31, 1918, they would experience the first casualties among their friends. A “premature explosion of a Stokes Mortar Gun” would take the lives of Privates Harley Perle Gano, Curt J. Polst, and Corporal Carl Lee Colvin.<sup>278</sup> In reading through the story that the soldiers of the Headquarters Company created, there is something about the way it was written that one can almost feel the emotions and what it meant to them to see the first of their friends die. There is something raw in the tone and the wording that differentiates the story apart from that of the other writings in their booklet. To Metz, as discussed in Chapter Two, this would have been a part of their struggle in ensuring that some of their memories of war did not fade away. Here are their stories.

## Harley Perle Gano

Harley Perle Gano was probably the most searchable soldier as his story seemed to appear in many places including *Find a Grave.com*.<sup>279</sup> All the stories are the same as they seem to be based off the same information through a simple online search. While most of the stories entertain the same information, there are some that report inaccuracies about him. Gano was one of only 18 soldiers from Kansas in the unit.<sup>280</sup> Being from Kansas meant that he and the others did not have to travel far to get to Camp Funston.<sup>281</sup> Like most of the soldiers in the 356th, he was a farmer, single, medium height, medium build, with blue eyes and light brown hair.<sup>282</sup> Gano's father, George W., was one of the founding "Washington County, Kansas Pioneers," after settling in the area from Ohio in 1860.<sup>283</sup>

Before, the war, Gano would become somewhat of a celebrity in the hometown newspaper, the *Republican Register*. His headlines of visiting his family or attending a family member's birthday party were highlighted.<sup>284</sup> So was his headline regarding his trial for "...breaking into McNeal's shop," with Ralph Chaplain and stealing "a slot machine."<sup>285</sup> According to another paper, he was sentenced to the reformatory for that in 1913.<sup>286</sup> His friends in the community then petitioned for his release from the reformatory as was reported in the July 18, 1913 edition.<sup>287</sup> On March of 1918, the story centered on the paper's front page focused on Harley's departure for the Army camp."<sup>288</sup> It appears the community had changed their opinion about him.

After arriving at Camp Funston, it is not clear if Gano trained with the other soldiers in the unit or a different outfit. It is clear that something occurred which needs further clarification between his arrival at Camp Funston and the time of his departure for Europe. Separate from the

unit, Gano would instead depart from Boston and arrive in France about a month later on June 30, 1918, aboard the Persic steamship.<sup>289</sup> What is interesting about the passenger list is that it had a mix of soldiers that they classified as “Casual Detachments.”<sup>290</sup> On the list were several men where handwritten notes indicated that they were “Detained at Camp Mills,” etc. This lateness and lack of training with the unit in advance would mean that Gano would have less training than the other soldiers as they had been drilling and training together since the prior September. Gano’s final headline back home in the local newspaper would be about his death and the condolences to his parents.<sup>291</sup>

A lot of what is not known or immediately searchable is how Gano’s remains were treated after the war. Gano, whose Army Serial Number was 2206211, was first buried after the accident on August 1, 1918, at Grave No. 967, in the American Cemetery of Bazoilles-sur-Meuse, Vosges.<sup>292</sup> He was then “disinterred and reburied in Grave 358, American, Bazoilles Sur Meuse, Vosges,” on February 10, 1921.<sup>293</sup> The Graves Services notified his family that he was buried with a bottle; identity tags; and his identity was noted on the grave marker. Gano’s body was then moved to his final resting place on November 17, 1921.<sup>294</sup> He is currently buried at “Grave 6, Block D, Row 46, at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery.”<sup>295</sup> His parents were notified of the final movement of his body on November 28, 1922.<sup>296</sup> A few rows over from where Gano currently lies is the gravesite of Carl Lee Colvin who also died with him in the accident.<sup>297</sup> Gano’s mother, Mrs. Louis Gano requested a pilgrimage as a Gold Star Mother to visit her son’s grave.<sup>298</sup> It is unknown if she was able to complete that journey or not. What is important to acknowledge about Gano’s story is the tragedy and the effect of his death on his family. If one could imagine being notified that their loved one was deceased and buried, only to

be notified two additional times when the Government continued to move his body had to affect his parents tremendously. The experiences, especially for Mrs. Gano, must have been one of reliving the death over and over again.

### **Edgar Burton Barnett**

Edgar Burton Barnett was 25 years old when he registered for the draft. He wrote that his employer was “working for self” as a farmer in northwest Missouri on his draft card.<sup>299</sup> His eyes were gray, he had light brown hair, and he was single at the time.<sup>300</sup> He was born on December 5, 1891. A local historian, George Wannamaker was able to interview Edgar about his service not too long after he returned from the war.<sup>301</sup> This is what Wannamaker wrote:

Edgar B. Barnett was reared on the home farm and educated in the public schools. When the United States entered the World War, he entered the United States Army and was sent to Camp Funston, Kansas, for training.

After remaining there for eight months, he was sent to Camp Mills and ten days later, June 4, 1918, he sailed for overseas, landing at Liverpool, England, June 11th.

From there he was sent to Southampton, England, and thence to La Havre, France, and after a period of six weeks' training there was sent to the front and participated in the battles of St. Mihiel, Argonne Forest, and the Meuse-Argonne.

In the latter engagement, Mr. Barnett was wounded by shrapnel, being struck on the shoulder and on the knee. He was then sent to Base Hospital No. 19, and after remaining there about a month, [then] he was sent to Brest, France and from there to New York to Hospital No. 2.

From there he was sent to the general hospital in Iowa. He was honorably discharged from the service September 12, 1919 and returned to his home in Harrison County.

Mr. Barnett was married April 10, 1920, to Miss Ella M. Harris, a native of Harrison County. To Mr. and Mrs. Barnett have been born one child, Lee Franklin.

Cecil Harris, the brother of Mrs. Barnett, was killed in the battle of Argonne Forest, March 16, 1918.

Mr. Barnett is a member of the American Legion and one of the progressive and enterprising men of Harris County.<sup>302</sup>

In the description written by Wannamaker, both he and Edgar seem to follow the script as to how a soldier's experience was to be written based off the narratives established by the writers at the time. It is very cut and dry and to the point. Unfortunately, it causes the reader to not fully identify with the understanding of the suffering that Edgar went through in the war and after the war. The 89<sup>th</sup> Division in its official report under "Casualty Section" provides a full "list of casualties in the 89<sup>th</sup> Division overseas."<sup>303</sup> The classifications were listed in the following order: "The Dead;" "Officers and Men Missing in Action (Presumed Dead);" "Severely Wounded;" "Wounded – Degree Undetermined;" "Gassed;" and "Slightly Wounded."<sup>304</sup> Edgar's name fell under "Severely Wounded."<sup>305</sup> As he noted through his timeline, it was almost a year after being injured before Edgar could recover enough from his injuries to leave the military hospital system.

Although the United States started the planning in 1915 as to the handling of the wounded in anticipation of the war, the reality was that they were unprepared for the number of casualties that they would treat.<sup>306</sup> A part of the early planning was laying out "an evacuation system."<sup>307</sup> The system's comprehensive plan was designed to "...give to the commander of forces in the field unhampered freedom of action, and to conserve military man power."<sup>308</sup> The military did not want to have the units bogged down with taking care of the wounded, but instead they wanted them focused on fighting. Therefore, the goal of the military was to move the wounded out as quickly as possible. It wasn't so much for the soldier's sake, as the emphasis was more focused on ensuring that the system didn't get "clogged up."

Fortunately, for soldiers such as Edgar, the system helped them tremendously in getting the quick medical attention that they needed. The hospital system was set up rather elaborately and moved the patient from the battlefield, to the “dressing station,” either by stretcher, ambulance, or by the men that carried them there.<sup>309</sup> Then if the patient couldn’t return to battle and needed further care, they would be moved by a “Sanitary Train,” or by an ambulance to a mobile hospital, then a field hospital or a mobile surgical unit in the rear of the theater of operation.<sup>310</sup> From there, the soldier would either return to battle or move to the evacuation hospitals and then on to the base hospital. If needed, they would then be loaded onto a hospital ship and be returned to the United States for further treatment. This process was Edgar’s final journey home.<sup>311</sup>

After being injured in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Edgar would return to the United States on the U.S.S. Mercy Hospital Ship, which sailed from Brest, France, to New York, on November 25, 1918.<sup>312</sup> He spent Thanksgiving on the ship and after the 18-day journey, he would eventually arrive into the port of Hoboken, New Jersey.<sup>313</sup> On the passenger list, he was classified as a passenger that was “Bedridden Class B.”<sup>314</sup> Edgar’s lifespan after the war would only be about 20 years. Edgar’s son, Lee Franklin Barnett, was born about two years after he was discharged. In World War II, Lee, his son, registered for the draft and listed his father as his “next of kin.”<sup>315</sup> In answering the “Place of Employment” question on the draft form, Lee wrote his answer as “Farm with father.”<sup>316</sup>

### **Gilbert Francis Brownfield**

When Edgar boarded the ship bound for France, right behind him according to the passenger list was Gilbert Francis Brownfield.<sup>317</sup> Like Edgar, Gilbert was also a single farmer that was 25 years old.<sup>318</sup> He grew up in Alma, Lafayette County, Missouri, which is located not

too far outside of Kansas City.<sup>319</sup> When the first draft drawing of 500 names occurred in Lafayette County, Missouri, Gilbert was the 10<sup>th</sup> name drawn to report for an examination.<sup>320</sup> He seemed to have that sort of luck. Gilbert joined the unit at Camp Funston for his training and then proceeded to France.

On December 6, 1918, there was one sentence that appeared in Gilbert's hometown newspaper, *The Lexington Intelligencer*: "Gilbert Brownfield has been reported as being seriously wounded in battle in France."<sup>321</sup> The 89<sup>th</sup> division would also confirm this in their official report on November 8, 1918.<sup>322</sup> His wounds occurred three days prior to the armistice that brought the war to an end. Private Brownfield was then sent home on the steamship *Koningin Der Nederlanden* on Christmas Day in 1918 and arrived in Newport News, Virginia on January 8, 1919.<sup>323</sup>

In viewing the documents surrounding Gilbert's life, one may come to the impression that life was always a bit of a struggle for him. Francis Segal Brownfield, Gilbert's father, fought for the Union in the Civil War in C Company of the 145<sup>th</sup> in Illinois from 1864 to 1886.<sup>324</sup> It was reported that he had "general disability incurred from [the] measles."<sup>325</sup> His father then died in 1901 at the age of 40 when Gilbert was around nine years old. Through a review of United States Census Reports over the decades, it indicated that Gilbert only went to school through either the second or the fourth grades.<sup>326</sup> It was also noted on his Draft Card that his mother was his dependent.

The 1977 obituary of Gilbert Brownfield stated that he was born in Blackburn, Missouri and that he had nine grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. It also stated that he was survived by his wife Lille Mae and that they had two daughters, Vera (step) and Vivian.<sup>327</sup> Up to

his death, he remained a member of the Higginsville, Missouri, American Legion Post.<sup>328</sup>

Although experiencing a lot in the war with the 356<sup>th</sup> and all of the suffering that occurred throughout his life, he would maintain his faith in God and continue to be a member of the Higginsville First Baptist Church. He died at the Veteran's Hospital.

### **Peter Manner**

In the United States, after the Civil War, there was a shortage of workers to include the mining industry.<sup>329</sup> Immigration increased significantly from 1860, as immigrants and migrant workers began to fill in the labor gaps.<sup>330</sup> Over 200,000 Finns arrived in America between 1890 and 1914.<sup>331</sup> In Arizona, The Shattuck & Arizona Copper Company was established after the turn of the century in 1904.<sup>332</sup> Due to labor shortages, mining companies found themselves sending corporate representatives abroad to encourage men to migrate to America.<sup>333</sup> Many of these men were from the mining and farming communities in Finland who wanted to escape “poverty, famine and increasing Russian oppression”<sup>334</sup>

One such miner to leave Finland during that time was “Petter Manner,” which was his Finnish name. He was born in the Kuaponlaani (Kuopion Lääni) region of Finland on April 22, 1887. After arriving in the United States, his name became “Peter Manner.” Peter would turn out to be a bit of a traveler. Peter's first voyage to the United States was to Michigan in 1897 when he was 10 years old.<sup>335</sup> He then returned to Europe. In 1916, Peter was 29 years old when he boarded the steamship Bergensfjord from Kristiania, Norway where he traveled in a third-class cabin to his destination port of Ellis Island in New York.<sup>336</sup> Upon his arrival on December 5, 1916, in New York, he claimed to immigration that his last known address was Meldalen, Norway.<sup>337</sup> It was also recorded that he was married.<sup>338</sup>

After his arrival, Peter then headed out west to work in The Shattuck & Arizona Copper Company in Lowell, Arizona.<sup>339</sup> It was there that the 5'8," medium built, blue-eyed, and blonde-haired Finn would have stood out among many of the immigrant and migrant miners especially those from Mexico.<sup>340</sup> While working at the mine, he lived at the Calanodo Boarding House for miners in Lowell.<sup>341</sup> It was quite the booming rough and tough mining town.

When the draft occurred for WWI, Manner registered as required in Cochise County, Arizona.<sup>342</sup> On the draft card, it was indicated that he was "Single," and that he was not a United States Citizen as the word "Alien" was written on the card.<sup>343</sup> In the answer to the marriage question on the draft, one can find that it contrasted with his answer on the immigration form that was completed when he first arrived in the country. There is no explanation available for that variance. The 7<sup>th</sup> question on the form was "Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)?" He started to write "Mot" then crossed it out, and then wrote "Father" next to it. It is not clear if he understood the question. The 12<sup>th</sup> question on the draft form was, "Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?" Peter wrote, "No." The completion of the draft card would take Peter's journey in a different direction.

It is important before proceeding to review of the relationship of the immigrant and the draft that occurred in WWI. An explanation of that experience can be found through writer and historian Jennifer Keene. After the soldier completed the draft card, Keene writes:

After receiving a white postcard scheduling him for a physical exam, a man had seven days to file a claim for a deferment. A second white postcard in the mail alerted a man that the claim was approved, while a green postcard indicated that the draft board had rejected his application and ordered him to report. Men requesting a deferment had to complete a daunting twelve-page questionnaire that was often beyond the capabilities of recent immigrants with imperfect English skills or barely literate workers or farmers.

Selective Service regulations exempted foreign-born men who had not declared their intention to become citizens. Because the burden of receiving any exemption lay with the recruit, men who barely spoke English or were unknowledgeable about Selective Service regulations often found themselves caught up in the net of the draft. Nearly 200,000 nondeclarant immigrants served during the war. A few thousand contended that they had been drafted against their will. Once in the training camps, despite the pressure to stay, these men went to court or appealed to their embassies to contest their conscription. Over the course of the war, the War Department received 5,852 diplomatic protests over the drafting of nondeclarant aliens, and the army released 1,842 of these men.<sup>344</sup>

Other men took a different approach, as would be the case with Peter.

However, before continuing with a review of Peter's history, the paper must also provide some of the history around the mining town to explain the "new social order" that was occurring. Prior to 1917, the miners' union had attempted to organize the workers at the mines, and they failed miserably.<sup>345</sup> After the union's first attempt, they kept trying and eventually they were able to establish a union.<sup>346</sup> Then, the International Workers of the World (IWW), a newer radical union, attempted to intervene and organize the workers into a new union in 1917. The IWW then called for a strike.<sup>347</sup>

On November 6, 1917, the President's Mediation Commission under the Department of Labor issued its summary "Report on the Bisbee Deportations."<sup>348</sup> It is through this report that the Commission described the accounting of the events that had occurred on July 12, 1917.<sup>349</sup> Prior to the July 12 deportation, on June 26, 1917, a strike was called by the mineworkers for lack of follow-up on their grievances by their union.<sup>350</sup> Many of the individuals that decided to strike didn't necessarily believe in it but they did not want to be viewed as "scabs."<sup>351</sup> In addition, the report noted that some of the workers had been threatened by those in the union with death.<sup>352</sup> On the "early morning of July 12, the sheriff and a large armed force presuming to act as deputies under the sheriff's authority, comprising about 2,000 men rounded up 1,186 men

in the Warren district, put them aboard a train, and carried them to Columbus, N. Mex.”<sup>353</sup> The men were refused by the local government in Columbus and they were then sent “to the desert town of Hermanas, N. Mex., a near-by station.”<sup>354</sup> The men went without food, water and shelter for two days.<sup>355</sup> Out of the 1,186 men deported from the county, only “199 were native-born Americans.”<sup>356</sup> The rest of the men were immigrants including those from Finland. The report concluded that the miners had been mistreated.

After the Bisbee Deportation, not only did the mine companies begin a practice of hiring more United States born American males, but the towns surrounding the mining area began to discriminate against immigrants<sup>357</sup> Examples of this can be found in the local media where they began to highlight negative stories and advertisements not only about unions, but also about immigrants. One example of this can be found through an advertisement promoting the English Café in Bisbee.<sup>358</sup> The ad stated, “An American Restaurant conducted by American people on American principles – Popular Prices, Best of Service.”<sup>359</sup> “We employ only American help.”<sup>360</sup> It is through the explanation of the prior two points, immigration in relation to the draft and the environment of the mining towns views on immigration that the paper can further explore and explain Peter’s history as an immigrant during the draft period of the war. On August 7, 1917, *The Arizona Daily Star* had a headline on that read “Draft Open to Aliens Declares Crowder.”<sup>361</sup>

Then on September 9, 1917, the *Bisbee Daily Review* had a headline that read:

Hundreds Failed to Report for Exam In First Three Call: Several hundred men who registered in the selective draft on June 5 in Cochise County failed to appear when called for examination, according to figures given out by the exemption board. They have been reported, consequences to the provost marshal general’s office, as called for military service.<sup>362</sup>

In the article was also a list of all of the names of the men that failed to report. It probably would seem odd to most that several hundred men failed to report, but regardless, for Peter, this was the moment that the miner from Finland who could probably not read and write much in English was drafted into the Armed Services. Peter eventually surfaced later as the headline appeared in *The Bisbee Daily Review* on March 30, 1918, "Delivers Deserter."<sup>363</sup> Manner was discovered in a mining camp of Middlemarch, not far from the town of Bisbee.<sup>364</sup> The constable turned him over to the military for a \$50 reward.<sup>365</sup> The problem is that Peter may have never known that he had been drafted.

For Manner this would have dire consequences as he would only have two months of training before departing for France. For Peter, that lack of training placed him in a position to be one of the men killed in action from the Headquarters Company. After his death, the official report from the AEF's 89<sup>th</sup> Division had his name listed under "casualties" followed by a row of empty dots across the page which signified that there was no next of kin.<sup>366</sup> Today, Peter's name appears on a headstone in The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Plot A, Row 26, Grave 28.<sup>367</sup>

### **Alex Joseph Barbier**

Alex Joseph Barbier first entered the service while farming in the Parish Community of Iberville in Louisiana at the age of 22. In looking at his photo, the first thing one notices is the full head of hair that he had. Alex came from a larger family which included four siblings of which he was the oldest. Being from a poor farming family in Louisiana meant that the highest grade he was able to finish was the second grade. While he did not train with the 356<sup>th</sup> in Camp Funston, he would join them right before the Meuse Argonne Offensive in October 1918.

When World War II came about, most of the soldiers from WWI were required to register for the “Old Man’s Draft.” Alex was 46 years old when he registered for the second draft and indicated that he worked at the Weil Department Store in White Castle, Louisiana.<sup>368</sup> It also indicated that he was 5’8”, dark complected, and had the “finger on right hand cut off.”<sup>369</sup> One can’t help but wonder what Alex and the other men of the 356<sup>th</sup> thought when they were required to register for the draft of the Second World War? This is especially true as they were told during WWI that it was the war to end all wars. Barbier would also witness his son Gerald James register for the draft in WWII as well. His son, Gerald, served in the United States Navy aboard the U.S.S. Lexington.<sup>370</sup> On November 5, 1944, the U.S.S. Lexington was attacked by a Japanese Kamikaze plane and his son was killed the day after he turned 19.<sup>371</sup>

For Alex Barbier, he would live a longer life compared to that of a lot of veterans and although his obituary did not mention his deceased son, here is how it read:

BARBIER-At Baton Rouge General Hospital, on Wednesday, January 17, 1968, at 4:15 a. m., ALEX J. BARBIER, husband of Laura Percle; father of Allison, John, Stanford and Richard Barbier of White Castle, and Mrs. Marion Casso of Donaldsonville; brother of A.L. Barbier of Smithfield, Texas, Mrs. A. L, Doiron, Mrs. Alice Amedee and Philip Barbier of White Castle, and Mrs. Aline Percle of Labadieville, La., also survived by 13 grandchildren; age 72 years. Services from Knights of Columbus Home, White Castle, on Thursday, January 18, 1968, at 10:15 a.m. Religious services at Our Lady of Prompt Succor Catholic Church, at 10:30 o'clock a. m. Interment in White Castle Cemetery.

Alex’s bravery in WWI awarded him the American Distinguished Service Cross, which was curiously left out of his obituary.<sup>372</sup> In their own history, the 356<sup>th</sup> explained what occurred in “The Clearing of the Bois De Bantheville” during The Meuse Argonne Offensive:

On the 20<sup>th</sup> [October] the Stokes were attached to the First Battalion which moved into the Bois de Chauvignon. From [these] woods at 9:00 P.M., the battalions with their accompanying weapons advanced without a supporting barrage to clear it of the enemy which they succeeded in doing in spite of a very severe resistance by hostile machine guns and minnenwerfers. Upon reaching their objective the usual fox holes were dug and the Stokes Mortar built emplacements and set up their guns. During the advance in the

night the voices of the Germans were plainly heard jabbering away in excited tones as they withdrew their artillery and evacuated the woods.

At the break of dawn shadows were observed in the clearing ahead and on both flanks, which proved to be German troops who had been busily engaged during the night installing their machine guns in new emplacements. It was then discovered that our outfit was bottled up alone in Bantheville Woods with no means of communication with nor source of supply from the Support. The enemy were not fully aware as to the situation. We dared not fire except in emergency for fear of exposing our positions and exhausting our ammunition supply.

That night the men in [the] Bantheville Woods were subjected to the most severe artillery machine gun, and minenwerfer barrage that they underwent at any other time in the war. For four days they were surrounded and endured hardships such as drinking water out of shell holes, making less than two-days iron rations last the entire period, and suffering continuous shell fire. It was here that Private Peter Manner, was missing in action and Private Alex J. Barbier, wounded, won his Distinguished Service Cross. An allied plane located their position and signaled to our artillery for a barrage which extracted our men from their predicament and made possible their needed relief. The clearing of the Bois de Bantheville has received many army citations.<sup>373</sup>

Their paragraph explains the situation that caused Manner to go missing (as they put it) and Barbier's reasons for receiving his medal. It also gives a very slight hint of the hell that the soldiers went through. The official report of the History of the 89<sup>th</sup> indicates:

Four Medals of Honor were won by members of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry and three by members of the 354<sup>th</sup> Infantry. While official records covering the facts are not available, it is believed that only one regiment in the entire A.E.F., the 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, 33<sup>rd</sup> Division, with five, won more Medals of Honor than did the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry.<sup>374</sup>

In the accounting for their medals, the official report by the 89<sup>th</sup> Division reads like the counting of medals at the end of an Olympic event. What they forgot to count is that out of the four medals awarded for the 356<sup>th</sup>, two of those men that received medals were deceased. It no longer meant anything to them, perhaps it did to their family. It is most unfortunate that the division chose to exclude the "human aspect" of what had occurred in war by deflecting the suffering of

the men from the war into what they had earned through the war. In the final closing of their small booklet containing their history, the soldiers wrote:

Let us not forget our comrades who are no longer with us. They willingly gave all they had to the great cause and met death heroically in the glow of their manhood. They shared with us the pleasures of companionship and also the hardships of war. The glory of our achievements is theirs. Their lives are not wasted for they have helped to make the world a better place in which to live. Their heroism will live forever and a warm spot is permanently reserved in the heart of each surviving soldier for most cherished memories and admiration for those who died. It is indeed regrettable that the returning troop ships to America will not bear all of the human chain they bore a year ago, but these missing links represent supreme sacrifices necessary to show the enemy that he was helpless to stand against democratic peoples who have learned to love freedom. Each reminiscence of these missing links grows more pleasant for it is of the fallen heroes of whom we are so proud. While they peacefully sleep near the spots where they fell on the battlefields of shell torn France far away from their loved ones at home peace again reigns through the earth and their greatness will be realized and appreciated more each day as the betterment of the world advances.<sup>375</sup>

It is through their message that the Headquarters Company of the 356th conveyed an understanding of what the war meant to them and more importantly what the deaths of their friends meant to the war. It is their message that must a part of the historical accounting of WWI.

### **Summary and Outlook**

In Chapter Two, the argument was presented as to the need for more research into the identification and documentation of the soldiers of WWI. Chapter Three summarized the direction that the research should take. The goal of this Chapter was to apply the research and briefly establish the identity of five members of the 356<sup>th</sup> Headquarters Unit. While establishing their identities, the story of Peter Manner was expanded to further demonstrate how more research into the soldiers of the unit could help explain who he was in that moment of history. The next Chapter will bring the paper to a close and offer recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

On May 16, 1919, most of the remaining soldiers of the Headquarters Company in Europe boarded the steamship U.S.S. Huntington in Brest, France, for their return home to the United States.<sup>376</sup> Their 12-day journey would eventually arrive at the port of Hoboken, New Jersey, along with four other ships carrying troops from France that day.<sup>377</sup> They arrived on May 28, 1919, right before Memorial Day.<sup>378</sup> During their return, the soldiers were given an information pamphlet from the Red Cross entitled *When You Get Home*. The booklet begins with “To Returning Soldiers:”

We, your neighbors, speaking through the Red Cross, welcome your return. You have served us and your country well in the greatest war in history. Whether you served in this country or on the battlefields of France, we are proud of you. In your absence we pledged ourselves through the Red Cross that in times of emergency and anxiety your family need want for nothing which friendly interest and ample resources could supply. When you get home, you may be sure that this friendly interest will not cease. Our greatest opportunity to be of service may come while you and your family are getting back to everyday life. We may need only to supply you with information, but that will be given promptly and accurately. Whatever we shall have the opportunity to do, working with you, we shall gladly do through the Home Service Section of the Red Cross.<sup>379</sup>

In the rest of the booklet, the American Red Cross reviews matters of importance for the returning soldiers. They offer advice in keeping up their government insurance, how to get legal advice, and how to handle taxes that have not been paid.<sup>380</sup> The booklet also reviews compensation for injury or disease.<sup>381</sup> For a soldier that qualified, the military service would pay them from \$30 to \$100 a month.<sup>382</sup> This was dependent on the size of their family and the nature of the illness.<sup>383</sup> The Red Cross writes in the booklet that they would assist them in completing the claim paperwork.<sup>384</sup> It was also written that the soldier should not hire an attorney nor a claim agent as, “The law states that ‘no claim agent or attorney shall be recognized in the

presentation of claims for compensation.”<sup>385</sup> For the soldiers returning, this would be the beginning as to how the government would come to treat them and other soldiers after war.

Following the war, when the depression hit, like the rest of the country, many veterans found themselves out of work and they had lost their homes and farms. It wasn't that the government was unable to help them, it was simply that the administration at the time wouldn't. Prior to the depression, in 1924, President Coolidge vetoed the World War Veterans Act.<sup>386</sup> Congress chose to override Coolidge's veto and awarded soldiers compensation based upon their time in the service.<sup>387</sup> The payments were issued in the form of a certificate that could be redeemed after 1945.<sup>388</sup> When the Great Depression occurred under the Hoover administration, many veterans, like the rest of the country, needed money for basic essentials.<sup>389</sup> The House of Representatives moved to release the funds.<sup>390</sup> President Hoover in 1932 did not agree with the legislation as he thought it would create a “welfare system” where people were not self-reliant and voiced his opposition.<sup>391</sup> It was then that over 43,000 veterans and their families descended upon Washington, D.C. to encourage the Senate to approve it.<sup>392</sup>

While in the United States Capital, the veterans set up “shanty towns” in and around the city.<sup>393</sup> The largest of which was in Anacostia, just across the river from the United States Capital.<sup>394</sup> Growing annoyed with the former soldiers “camped out,” Hoover eventually sent in the military to forcefully evict the veterans.<sup>395</sup> The military arrived in tanks and by cavalry to intimidate them.<sup>396</sup> The United States Government then decided to deploy tear gas canisters on the veterans of which many had served in the trenches during the war.<sup>397</sup> The gas, the cavalry, and the tanks worked, as the veterans and their families left.<sup>398</sup> While initially against them, eventually the media and the public moved towards siding with the veterans after the attack and

the bonus was finally paid under the Roosevelt administration.<sup>399</sup> When a soldier entered the military it was with the understanding that the Government would take care of its veterans. It appears the Government's memory on this issue was short lived. It is also unclear if the United States Government has publicly apologized for the incident and if deceased immigrant families were also paid.

A part of that short-lived memory relates to the thought laid out in Chapter One, as to "history seems to repeat itself." Through conducting the research for this paper, a rough review of the headlines of newspapers across America from 1914 to 1919 was conducted. The headlines were reviewed to assist in establishing the climate of the social order in America that was occurring right before, during, and immediately following WWI. In the short review of those headlines from across the country, what was clearly noticed was that the headlines of that era were almost identical to the headlines of today. From then until now, it is almost as though society has been in what was earlier described as a state of "flux," of which time has not moved forward.

For example, on July 24, 1914, the front-page story of *The New York Times* had a headline which read: "Austria Ready to Invade Servia, Sends Ultimatum."<sup>400</sup> In 1915, another headline from *The Independent-Records* newspaper in Helena, Montana in 1915, read "Cotton Shipments Are Being Held Up."<sup>401</sup> Then the year following, a headline from *The Kansas City Sun* appeared on November 25, 1916, was "Die from Police Bullets." This included the story about "Ora Hill," who was African American and "When accosted by Frank M. Hoover, patrolman, she ran with the crowd and was shot in the back." It concluded with, "She died Sunday Morning."<sup>402</sup> There were two other similar stories that day as well.

In 1917, headlines can be found such as *The Wichita Eagle* which read “Roosevelt Attacks Wilson’s Peace Notes and Way They Were Handled.”<sup>403</sup> The story under that headline described the attacks of former President Theodore Roosevelt against then current President Woodrow Wilson.<sup>404</sup> The paper stated that the former President was “Helping the Kaiser.” In the next section of the article was the title “Our Associates,” where the paper ended the article with an op-ed sort of piece. In that op-ed story, it was written that, “The Republican party, as an organization, has not declared against the President’s war aims, but entered this campaign professing to support them more loyally than the Democratic Party.”<sup>405</sup> In 1918, one of the headlines in *The San Francisco Examiner* was, “110 Arrested for Not Wearing Flu Masks,”<sup>406</sup> and in *The Baltimore Sun* there was a story with the caption of “States’ Rights Upheld: Supreme Court Declares Child Labor Law Invalid, Four Justices Dissent.”<sup>407</sup> In 1919, there were headlines appearing such as the “Public Patience is Now at An End: Gas Shortages Causes Great Suffering – Mass Meeting is Called,”<sup>408</sup> “Papers Late Due to Gas Shortage,”<sup>409</sup> and the “Expressmen Quit in New York and City Now Faces a Food Shortage.”<sup>410</sup> It is through these examples of the headlines of a hundred years ago that we can see the similarities in the headlines of today.

Another point to be reviewed stems from the story presented in Chapter Three regarding the identification of the unknown Vietnam Veteran at the “Tomb of the Unknown.” It is known that when the soldier was finally identified, it is that identification that brought closure and peace for his family.<sup>411</sup> For them, they were able to know his final resting place. In addition to providing closure to his family, it is this identification that may have also brought some of the healing for those soldiers that served in the Vietnam War as well. In recommending future

research, a discussion should take place on the identification of the other unknown soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>412</sup> Perhaps the current language of “here’s the tomb of the unknown soldier,” would become, “here was the tomb of the unknown soldier.”

In review, the paper began with Chapter One, where the description of today’s society and the individual were described as being in a state of “flux.” In Chapter Two, through theologians Ernst Bloch and Johann Baptist Metz a review was conducted in relations to the need to remember the past to secure humanity’s hope for the future. Through reviewing Walter Benjamin’s work, the discussion turned to understanding how the perception of war has changed and how the news of war has become “normal” for viewers of today. Then through historians Clark, Keene, and

Meigs, insight was provided as to why the history of the Great War has no significance to Americans. In Chapter Three, a review of the humanities research methods was conducted which included a review of Fenton’s research in working from the present through “upstreaming.” In Chapter Four, the research was provided using the methods discussed in Chapter Three. It was also in this Chapter that the paper accomplished the goal of identifying and documenting a short history of the lives of the five soldiers of the Headquarters Unit of the 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry. By documenting their stories, it removed these men from simply being a name on a collective list to being an identifiable individual human that lived and suffered during the Great War.

For the reader, the significance of the stories of the five soldiers offers many lessons. For some, the lesson of the histories of Manner and Gano may be that their stories are no longer narrated or defined by the past headlines of society. The lesson of Barbier may be that

understanding of the suffering of war for him wasn't just WWI, but that of his son's death in WWII. The lessons learned through Barnett and Brownfield may be that even though they suffered the rest of their lives from the injuries that they sustained in the war, they continued to live their lives and prosper as best as they could. For society, that lesson is that these men were real and not characters in a video game about WWI. Instead, it is their stories that is a part of the search for meaning.

## Notes

1. Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Augustine," in *The Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*, eds. Peter Scott and William T. Cavanaugh (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 45.

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