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# City at War - Boston During the World War I Years 1914-1918

By Anatole Sykley



Major General Clarence Edwards Leads the Yankee Division in a parade after the war in early 1919, Photo by Leslie Jones

## Introduction

The wartime contributions and accomplishments of Boston, Massachusetts, during the First World War still seem remarkable nearly a century later. The Great War injected new life into the city and stimulated her diverse, patriotic mix of peoples, economically as well as intellectually. Boston led the debate on the nation's response to the hostilities and its later involvement. Despite suffering an economic decline prior to 1914, the Bay City also would find ways to support many important war industries: exporting critical food and supplies to the European nations; manufacturing armaments, plus much of the uniforms, shoes and boots for the American and other Allied armies; and building ships, hosting yards that launched more wartime destroyers for the United States Navy than any other region of the country. Furthermore, once America entered the fighting, Boston would contribute a disproportionate number of her sons to combat and the ensuing casualty lists. This culminating sacrifice needs to be addressed first.

## Boston's Military Effort

On November 11, 1918, news of the Armistice was received at nearby Camp Devens, by the men of the newly formed 12th "Plymouth" Division (\*) drafted in large part from Boston's ethnically mixed communities. The men were disappointed.

Note: When suggestions for a nickname for the 12<sup>th</sup> Division was solicited by the commander General McCain, some men suggested the name "The Dirty Dozen". "Pilgrim" was another name considered. But it was agreed to use the name "Plymouth Division" as acknowledgement of the Pilgrim heritage of the state. As an aside, another division, the 94<sup>th</sup>, was planned to be formed in Puerto Rico, but was never full activated before the war's end. After WWI, the 94<sup>th</sup> was re-activated and re-assigned to the New England area when this unit took the name "Pilgrim Division", gaining fame during World War II.

Though they trained hard and fast, utilizing the training experience of the 76<sup>th</sup> Division who trained at Camp Devens just before them, would not get to fight. General Pershing tried to cheer them up by stating the Germans gave up when they heard the 12<sup>th</sup> was coming. The 12<sup>th</sup> Division was the third and last infantry division Massachusetts and Boston and the other New England States had helped raise for the war effort--a relatively high and expensive effort in manpower for a state with only 3,500,000 people of which 40% were Bostonians. With the Armistice the 12<sup>th</sup> Division's shipment to France became unnecessary, and the division needed to prepare for demobilization.

To keep the men busy, the officers at Camp Devens soon began reorienting them to a lighter military regime, concentrating on another Boston tradition--sports. A passion for sports may not be unique to Bostonians, but apparent to any visitor then and now, Boston's keenness is pronounced. Earlier that fall as the U.S. Army was fighting its principal battles in France, local sports had become intertwined with the action in France. Bostonians would read about the ongoing exploits of their beloved soldier representatives, the 26<sup>th</sup> Division "Yankee" Division, on page one of The Boston Globe then turn to the back page to follow the baseball pennant race and then the World Series between the Boston Red Sox and the Chicago Cubs. Sometimes the war news and sports news in the Boston papers were reversed.

Had the wartime readers of the Globe turned to page 12 in the issue of September 11th, they would have noted the latest casualty reports of the 26th Division, composed of former militia units from the New England states and with a heavy concentration of Bostonians. In August 1917 the War Department in Washington authorized General Edwards to form the "Twenty Sixth Division of the National Guard" (note: its name is NOT the 26th Infantry Division, a common popular mistake!) The unit adopted the name "Yankee Division" and the "YD" shoulder patch designation. The division was formed from various New England National Guard units already in existence by this time, with a heritage descended from older militia units with local roots. Many of the men hailed from the Boston and surrounding area. Massachusetts can rightly trace its militia heritage back to 1636, when military units were first mandated by the Colonial Government. The year is also the official birthday for the National Guard as we know it today.

### Forming the Yankee Division

General Clarence Edwards was tasked to assign the various State NG units to form the regimental units that would make up the 26th Division. This was done via a series of merges and re-arrangements, though he tried to retain the local character of some of the larger units such as the 101st Infantry Regiment under Colonel Logan, whose soldiers hailed mostly from South Boston. The 102nd Infantry Regiment was mostly from Connecticut with men from Massachusetts and Vermont. The 103rd was composed of men from Maine and New Hampshire, while the 104th was formed from the remaining Massachusetts NG infantry units. Each regiment was supplemented by a Machine Gun battalion composed of former cavalry units. The 51st Artillery Brigade was also incorporated into the 26th Division, from various State NG artillery units and New England Coast artillery units.

The divisional units assembled in camps in Framingham, Westfield and Boxford, then went by train to embark from various ports - Hoboken, NJ and from Canada. Camp Devens, the major camp in Massachusetts was not built and ready for service until August 1917. Building would continue there until 1918, a rapid construction story memorialized later in a small book called "Forging the Sword". There was no time for a departure parade. The 26th was the first fully formed division to reach and assemble in France by September 1917, beating the 1st US regular army division by a month. The division had been in the line nearly continuously since February 1918 and had suffered 69 more casualties in recent fighting. More, however, were to come quite soon. At the very time the Red Sox were winning the decisive game of the Series against the Cubs, two runs to one on the afternoon of September 11th, to the delight of Boston fans in Fenway Park, other Boston men were assembling in trenches on the western flank of the St. Mihiel Salient in France awaiting the order to attack in what was to be the largest battle in American history up till then. The St. Mihiel Offensive would also turn out to be the most notable operation for the New Englanders in the Great War. The 26th Division, striking into the heart of the Salient, later joined up with a matching pincer movement by the U.S. 1st Division, cutting off the main German retreat and taking thousands of prisoners. The division--to New England and Boston's pride--had played a key role in a major victory for the AEF. (\*)

(\* Note: Once deployed to France, there were tensions between New England-raised 26th Division and the regular army which affected the unit. General Pershing in fact fired several of the native New England officers. For more, read the book by historian Michael E Shay: *The Yankee Division in the First World War: In the Highest Tradition*)

### The Memorable 1918 World Series

In 1918 the World Series was moved from October to September by special permission of the War Department, which had dictated the baseball season was to end by September 1st. However, it was suggested that the Series would prove good for selling more Liberty Bonds in support of the war effort, and wounded soldiers were allowed to attend for free. An extension was therefore granted for the 1918 Series. Nevertheless, the games proved memorable in their own right. The young Babe Ruth grabbed the nation's attention by starring on the mound, and a labor dispute managed to infuriate fans. On the morning of September 11th, Bostonians learned that prospects for the day's game were marred by the possibility of a players strike over a bigger share of the Series revenues. (Labor strikes during the war were frequent in Boston, but, as we will read below, frequently resolved remarkably quickly.) The strike was averted at the last minute, and the Red Sox wrapped up the Series with their fourth victory. It would be Boston's last World Series victory in the 20th century.

Other Boston-connected units also served in France. The Boston-based 14th Engineer Regiment sent the very first New Englanders to France, arriving at the front in August 1917 and serving with British forces around Arras. The late-arriving 76th National Army Division [men recruited from a draft effort managed locally in part by the Massachusetts Committee of Public Safety] which was able to ship-over only in July 1918, had some of its units, in the words of The Boston Globe, "scattered to the four winds along the Western Front" as replacements during the final push.

### Coast Artillery and Naval Militia Units

Massachusetts National Guardsmen from the eight Coast Artillery batteries from Boston Harbor forts and island installations were formed into the 55th Coast Artillery Regiment. They fired the large-caliber shells supporting the advances of the AEF. Boston's African-Americans served in segregated units, some detailed with the French Army in the Champagne sector. Statistics are not available for Boston alone, but the city was responsible for a large portion of the more than 144,000 men and women of Massachusetts serving in World War I, of whom more than 2,000 were killed. The wholehearted military effort backed by Boston was, however, but the final effort in the community's deep-rooted involvement in the war.

As a region with a strong maritime heritage, many men joined the United States Navy. Massachusetts' Naval Militia founded in 1775 was an active force up to and during WWI which at one time had been assigned or loaned various older US Navy ships as part of its fleet, which included the old battleship *USS Kearsage* and a destroyer. While returning from a training cruise to Florida, the *Kearsage* rescued and brought back to Boston the crew of a Norwegian ship sunk by a U-boat off the Atlantic Coast. Naval Militia men formed two companies of United States Marine complement. The day the United States declared war, they quickly took over several German ships still moored in Boston Harbor. Many of these men later served in 4th Marine Bde, 2d Div. Most men from the Naval Militia were placed into Federal Service, some to serve on ships, others were designated to set up naval air bases at Beverly, Squantum or Chatham. Many citizens of the state joined the US Navy. Some of the very first women recruited into the US Navy served as telephone operators at Charlestown Navy Yard.

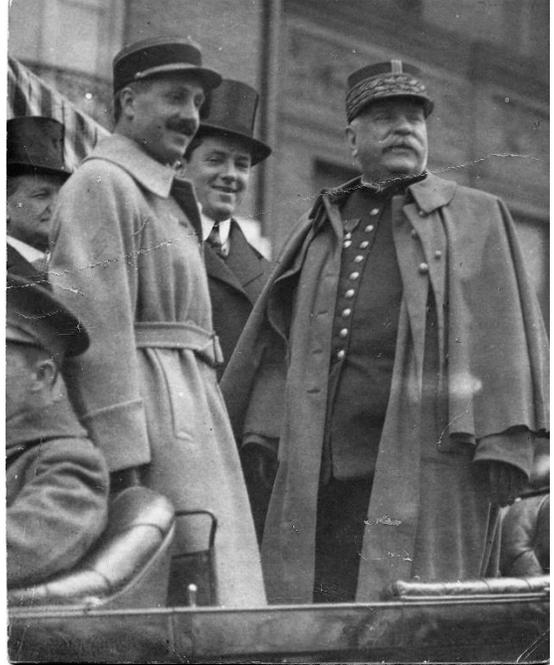
## Boston's Attitude Toward the War in Europe

America's role in the war and the postwar world was hotly debated in Boston as soon as the Europeans went to war in 1914. Some of the city's political and social leaders, such as outspoken Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, with like-minded former President Theodore Roosevelt, sounded the call for war against Germany well before the rest of the country was ready for it. From 1914 to early 1917, though, Bostonians responded differently to the prospects of war. Some of Irish descent called for war against Great Britain. The merchant class, in contrast (savvy descendants of the Yankee traders of old), plotted how to rebuild Boston's economy after years of pre-war neglect and decline by remaining neutral and trading with all sides alike, taking advantage of Boston's new massive port infrastructure, the Commonwealth Pier. Meanwhile, Republican Governor Walsh and his wartime successor, Samuel McCall, expressed concerns whether the state and Boston could afford the disruptions of war. Politicians were also conscious of the socialist-inspired unrest during the 1912 "Bread and Roses" strike at the Lowell textile mills, when the Massachusetts Militia had to be called out to keep order.

Boston's early-war Democratic mayor, James Michael Curley, did much to soothe any war-inspired agitation such as that by his fellow Boston-Irish against the British. At the same time, he encouraged Boston's Germans—who boasted a well-known U.S. Civil War martial heritage—not to be offended by anyone's anti-Kaiser antics. As mayor for all the Great War years but the last, he refrained from inflammatory remarks and urged Boston's citizens to abide by Boston's laws and customs. A short, sharp riot on Commonwealth Pier between Boston's Italian community, who sent off some of their young men back to Italy to fight when their mother country joined the Allies, and the crews of interned German ships in the port of Boston that took place in 1915 was dealt with promptly. Germany's cause didn't gain much sympathy after it was learned the first American citizen to die as a result of German submarine action was a Mr. Leon Thrasher, who drowned when the U-28 sank the British passenger steamer Falaba in March, 1915.

Some groups criticized Curley for not speaking out more in favor of the Irish rebel cause. The Hibernian Order of Irishmen had chosen Boston for its national convention in mid-1916, which by coincidence was very soon after the Easter Rebellion in Dublin, Ireland. A few tense and politically emotional Gaelic days passed in Boston that June, as outspoken criticism of British policy, coupled with attempts to openly declare support for Germany, was reported in the papers among Irish factions.

Forthright radicals dubbed Ireland's situation as "Britain's Belgium," likening British treatment of the Irish people to Germany's harsh occupation of Belgium. But other Boston Irish, who always supported legal ways to achieve Ireland's independence, along with the large number of British and other Allied nationals who were living or visiting Boston at the time, rapidly spread information to show that Germany's atrocities in Belgium and France clearly could not be compared to what happened in Ireland.



Legendary Boston Mayor James Michael Curley  
Hosts Wartime Visit By Former Premier René  
Viviani and Marshal Joffre

The British government, supported by high ranking visitors and the British Consul arranged several showings of specially prepared British wartime newsreels showing their war effort in Boston's theaters. Their premiere included Mayor Curley and Lieutenant Governor Calvin Coolidge as special guests, and the audiences erupted in cheers on several occasions. Boston's powerful Cardinal O'Connell supported Curley and worked to calm down the feelings of Irish sympathizers, emphasizing their duty to be loyal Catholics and remain law-abiding Bostonians and Americans first. He blamed Ireland's trouble on the war, which made beasts of all men. Subsequent British promises of Home Rule, and the fact that British Intelligence did not pursue the few Irish rebels who had taken refuge in Boston, eventually allowed the matter to rest.

Boston's African-American community not only served on the military front but also was active on the political front during the war. William Munroe Trotter, editor of the African-American newspaper *The Guardian*, and friend of W.E.B. DuBois, wrote often to point out the relevancy of the war to Boston's African-Americans. In 1919 William Munroe Trotter travelled to the Versailles Peace Conference to attempt to "represent" African-American interests there (without success). Upon his return to the United States, the issue was noted by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who requested that Trotter submit a report to Lodge's investigation into African-American social issues.

Anti-German feeling was never strong in Boston. The Friends of Irish Freedom meeting in Roxbury, a Boston suburb, passed a resolution sympathizing with German-Americans after war was declared and drew the city's attention to the service of German-Americans in the U.S. Civil War. Overall, however, Boston's people respected German culture and music, which was popular at Symphony Hall, under the baton of German-born conductor Dr. Karl Muck.

At the beginning of the war, a Professor Muensterberg of Harvard University was allowed to stay in his post but later was forced to resign after making too many inflammatory anti-British statements. Other German professors at Harvard either took up a pro-Allied stance or said nothing political that related to the war. Mayor Curley allowed the orchestra of the interned *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* the chance to play music for the Kaiser's birthday in 1915 on Boston Common. And on Memorial Days throughout the neutral years--Civil War veterans were still in abundance--German veterans carried signs declaring themselves "Loyal Then, Still Loyal Now." Even after April 1917, the German community continued publishing their newspaper, the *Neue Engländer Zeitung*, allowed so long as a "true and faithful translation" of each edition was filed at the Boston Post Office.

One sad case, though, was the fate of the Boston Symphony's Dr. Muck. At a small concert in Providence, he refused a request by the audience to play the national anthem. His reason was that it was not proper to play the anthem as part of a classical musical concert, that doing so demeaned both kinds of music. Although Muck's Boston friends, including the symphony's famous founder and Civil War hero, Major Henry Higginson, defended him and despite Muck's enthusiastic rendition of the anthem at subsequent concerts, the mayor of Baltimore threatened a riot should the Boston Symphony continue its planned concert there with Muck as the conductor. He had become a liability and was forced to resign from the Boston Symphony.



Karl Muck, Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra during World War I  
Photo courtesy Wikicommons



World War I Liberty Bond sign on Old South Church  
Photo: Boston Public Library

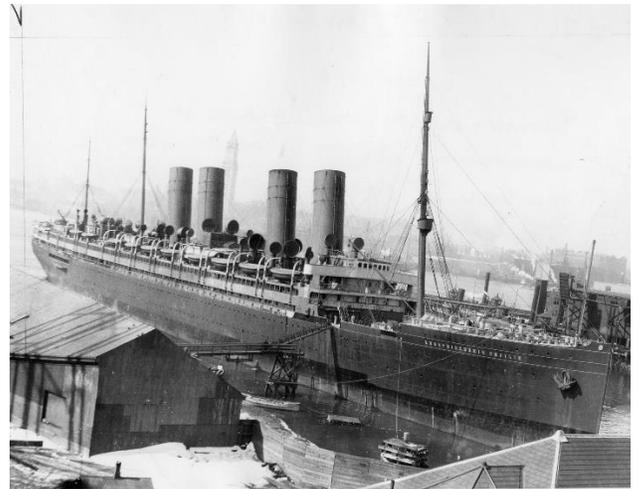
From 1914 to 1917, ethnic Boston—the Irish, Italian, Polish, German, African-American, Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities—evaluated and adapted to the impact the war was having on their hearts, minds and pockets. Despite some misgivings over British treatment of the Irish rebels and confusion over Wilson's neutrality policy, many Bostonians, Yankee or not, began to identify with the Allied cause. Driven by the intellectual and technical leadership of her famous colleges and universities, Boston, with Massachusetts and New England behind it, began to clamor for involvement in the battle for hearts and minds and for the liberation of Europe from the "Teutonic" tyranny of Kaiser Wilhelm II. On April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Imperial Germany. Four days later, with the full support of Massachusetts congressmen and both senators, the war resolution passed. The United States and Boston were at war.

During the war Boston also served as a haven for the politically outspoken of other nations, including Ireland, Armenia, Poland and Greece. A week before the St. Mihiel Offensive, the *Globe* revealed the United States would recognize the new nation of Czechoslovakia, which was breaking away from the disintegrating Austro-Hungarian Empire. While this might have seemed a distant event to Bostonians (or even to those of us in the 21st-century), it was in Boston where Jan Masaryk, the future first president of Czechoslovakia, had scribbled down the country's first constitution. This kind of political and moral activism occurred in a city that was not the biggest in the United States but which had a tradition of thinking bigger and doing things more boldly on the political, cultural and military forefront since Revolutionary times.

### Boston's Maritime Activities During World War I

Boston's port, just starting to benefit from its upgraded facilities, suffered another slowdown when war came in 1914. New England had been a favorite tourist spot for British and German tourists alike arriving by luxury liners. But after August 1914, the wartime tourism was reduced to viewing *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*.

The liner had only just set out from New York in 1914 when war was declared the next day, forcing her hurried return to Boston under U.S. Navy destroyer escort, in fear of British cruisers. Some American businessmen tried to sue the ship's owner for failure to deliver her cargo of gold worth \$10,000,000 to its European destination. She was to sit idle until the U.S. entered the war, along with six other interned German vessels, taking up valuable berthing space at the new Commonwealth Pier, which was generating no new trade revenue to the annoyance of Boston port officials. Later the ships were towed to less glamorous parts of Boston Harbor to free the pier for alternate revenues. By 1915, however, the Boston Chamber of Commerce sensed a re-orientation. The war in Europe, it turned out, was an opportunity to explore new kinds of exports.



Interned German Liner *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*  
Photo by Leslie Jones  
Boston Public Library

Boston, as the closest major U.S. port to Europe, proved an ideal location for the export of horses and cattle needed by the European powers. The U.S. Navy began appreciating Boston's growing strategic importance, assigning the old battleship *USS Kearsage* for the Massachusetts Naval Militia's use and soon improving Boston's Navy Yard to better support destroyer operations. Although the Charlestown Navy Yard was old even by WWI era standards, the US Navy chose Boston as the base where destroyers, both coal-fired and oil-fueled, were fitted out in Boston for the long voyage across the Atlantic. Many outgoing ships were equipped with Boston-made radio sets and crewed with newly minted local radio operators trained by the radio school initiated by the government of Massachusetts and expanded to local colleges.

Repairs were performed on older battleships to modernize them, and the U.S. Navy, perhaps recognizing Boston's leadership in the frozen meat export market, decided to have Boston's Navy Yard build the very first refrigerated naval transports. The first, the *USS Bridge*, was launched in June of 1917. Meanwhile, in Boston's Navy Yard the old wooden warship *USS Constitution*, dating from the war of 1812, sat quietly at her berth. She was not yet the well maintained tourist attraction she is today but was used as a barracks ship. During World War I, she was frequently visited by sailors passing through the Navy Yard, since efforts to authorize her as a museum ship began in 1906. One sailor from Oregon wrote home noting how the ship's history inspired him. Not only Boston's facilities and Boston's people but also Boston's history seemed drafted into the cause. There is evidence the United States Navy forced a temporary (an un-popular) renaming from *USS Constitution* to *USS Old Constitution* when plans were made to build a new warship with the same name – but Old Ironsides got back her original official name when the new battlecruiser was cancelled after the war.

Soon a fleet of destroyers out of Boston regularly patrolled the New England coast. Some were sent on secret missions to the coast of Maine to search for hidden U-boat bases--some people did not yet believe a German submarine could cross the Atlantic and operate off the U.S. coast unassisted. Rumors abounded of motorboats laden with supplies for the U-boats rushing out of New England's many bays and inlets.

In 1916, the United States Navy Department, with a new naval building program authorized by Congress, awarded several destroyer contracts to the Fore River Yards based in Quincy just south of Boston, through which eight new destroyers were quickly built. Early in October 1917 a second shipyard, the Victory Destroyer Plant, was built in record time to construct another 71 destroyers. These Boston shipyards employed over 15,000 people and built more destroyers than any other U.S. shipyard during the war, although most ships were launched too late to be deployed in action. Bath Iron Works in Maine and other yards also contributed to ensure New England yards dominated WWI destroyer output.

When America's declaration of war came in April 1917, naval elements in Boston were among the first organized resources to respond. A detachment from the battleship *USS Nebraska* assisted Boston port officials in seizing the six German vessels in Boston Harbor. Soon to be renamed *USS Mt. Vernon*, she would later have the honor of bringing elements of the Yankee Division back to Boston after the war.

The Navy, at the request of Admiral William Sims, its representative in London, decided to send an immediate surge of destroyers to help the Royal Navy defeat the U-boats. In May, Boston witnessed the departure of the very first of these ships for Queenstown (now Cobh), Ireland for active service. Flotilla Commander Taussig of the destroyer *USS Wadsworth*, upon arriving and being asked by a British admiral when he would be ready to sail, notably responded, "We are ready now, sir." The event was well publicized by the British press and newsreels. A painting by Bernard Gribble depicting the newly arriving destroyers was appropriately titled "*The Return of the Mayflower*" symbolizing that Massachusetts, and the United States, had sent her descendants back to aid the Old World in its trouble.

As the war effort expanded the navy increasingly used Boston's Navy Yard. German ships, including those seized in Boston Harbor itself, were converted for Boston's Industry During World War I. Not all Boston businesses prospered with the onset of war in Europe. Area textile mills depended greatly on imports of wool from the British Empire and initially suffered because not enough wool and leather could be imported to fill European orders for uniforms. The occasional ship arriving with a cargo of wool from Australia or Argentina was hailed in the Boston papers as a news event. But as cotton from the south resumed its northward flow, coupled with an ample supply of leather--an offshoot from the local meat industry-- Boston's factories began churning out coats and boots for the British and French armies. A massive new United Shoe Machinery Company factory, which employed 3,000 workers per shift, was built in Beverly, north of Boston, because the local Boston plant could not meet the demand. In 1916 the company reported record profits.

After the shortage of ammunition that plagued the British Army during the Battle of Loos in 1915, armaments manufacturers from all over New England secretly met in Boston with British officials to discuss contracts. British companies tried to convince factories in Worcester, to the west of Boston, to manufacture additional supplies of shells to British specifications. American Steam Gauge and Valve Company in Roxbury signed a secret contract to manufacture strategic ammunition parts for the British. Canadian factories, unable to meet the demand to supply war goods to Britain, subcontracted New England factories and machine shops to maintain the flow to the United Kingdom. Factories at Marblehead, north of Boston, made seaplanes, while the Fore River Shipyard, under the management of banker Joseph P. Kennedy, founder of the Kennedy political dynasty, began building ships and submarines for the Allies and for neutrals such as Spain and Argentina. Infrastructure changes in Boston's elevated railroad and trolley car companies were demanded to ensure efficient transportation for the workforce. After America declared war, Boston's factories and mills around Boston suffered a labor shortage. A small immigration of French Canadians came south to work in Boston's enterprises.

### **Boston's Unique Radio Contribution**

Massachusetts's proximity to Europe had made the area attractive and useful to radio pioneers such as Guglielmo Marconi and Reginald Fessenden, both of whom established radio towers in Massachusetts to test their rival systems of trans-Atlantic communication. Marconi experimented and demonstrated point-to-point communication using Morse Code in the early 1900s from Wellfleet on Cape Cod, while Fessenden tried broadcasting voice transmissions and a musical concert from Brant Rock starting in 1906. Radio became popular with local hobbyists in Boston and all over New England. This led to some interesting events when war came. An inmate of the leper colony on Penikese Island off Boston, who was also an amateur operator, picked up the very first radio news of the war's outbreak in 1914. He delivered the message immediately to the visiting lieutenant governor of Massachusetts, who learned of the war even before President Wilson or the State Department did. A watchful Boston Edison meter reader noticed an abandoned property in Boston that still registered an electric current. When police raided the building on his report, radio parts were found hidden on the property. But private radio transmissions suddenly were stopped in 1915, on orders of the U.S. Navy, with the fear that their signals would be compromised. Teenagers, who operated radio sets and unintentionally made contact with stations as far away as Panama, had their sets confiscated. During World War I, Fessenden continued experiments in Boston Harbor on underwater communication systems for US Navy submarines. The building which housed his company, the Submarine Signal Building, still stands on the Boston waterfront.

### **The Mexican Crisis and Boston's Increased Preparedness for War**

If local newspaper accounts are any evidence, tales brought by crews of incoming ships of close encounters with German submarines and German warships seemed to have had a distinct effect on Boston's effort to prepare for a possible war. What was advertised as the largest militia armory in the world was dedicated in Boston at great cost in late 1915. Massachusetts's militia regiments of the period (soon to be part of the future National Guard system that was proposed as part of the 1916 National Defense Act) retained traditions descended directly from Civil War and Revolutionary units, and all wished to be first to fight for the nation in the coming war. Their traditions included one of racial integration established in pre-Civil War days. The original Boston-based militia included a company of African-American troops. Wilson's policies proved hostile to integration of military units. The men of former Company L, 6th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment were not permitted to be part of the 26th Division. For a while in early 1917 the African American unit was assigned to guard the Watertown Arsenal – duty on their home ground. Boston's Black troops later had to serve in African-American units (with mostly white officers, though) when deployed to France as part of the "colored" 93rd Infantry Division.

In mid-1916 a diplomatic crisis with Mexico provided an opportunity to test the nation's preparedness for war. The affair demonstrated little about fighting capacity but showed many deficiencies in mobilization procedures. As soon as President Wilson called for states to send their National Guards to assist the regular army facing down the perceived threat from Mexico's Lawless bandits and unstable regime, the Bay State leaders in their enthusiasm booked all available trains to take their regiments and be first to the border. Troops were rushed ahead of their supplies, together with Boston Globe reporters accompanying the Massachusetts contingent, who reported on such military events as the soldier's reaction on first sighting a buffalo or crossing the Mississippi River. State militia units ) from around the nation were rushed southwards to guard the border while General Pershing staged his punitive expedition in pursuit of Pancho Villa. Massachusetts militia units were among the first to reach the area. There really was not much to do in camp, however, except play cards and watch movies. The Catholic and Episcopalian bishops of Boston were aghast at the potential immoral influence of such idleness on their contingent. They subsequently arranged to ship a tent-chapel to the army camp (probably El Paso, TX), which was fitted out with authentic stained glass reproductions of Boston's church windows to remind the troops of home, according to a Boston Globe report at the time.

When the crisis passed in late 1916, the National Guardsmen were sent home and discharged by November 1916. By March 1917 however, several units were recalled to National Service to guard state infrastructure. By August 1917, these existing National Guard units, mostly infantry regiments with some artillery units from all over New England were incorporated into the new 26<sup>th</sup> "Yankee" Division.



Unidentified National Guardsman on Mexican Border

### Contributions of Boston's Colleges and Universities

The volunteer spirit ran high among New Englanders and in Boston especially. This spirit was embraced by the region's many colleges and universities. Boston is one of the most prominent centers for higher education in the U.S. Unfortunately, we have space here to cover the wartime contributions of only two of the most famous Boston universities, Harvard and MIT. In the World War I era, Harvard led Boston and the country in volunteerism and in outright pro-Allied sentiment.

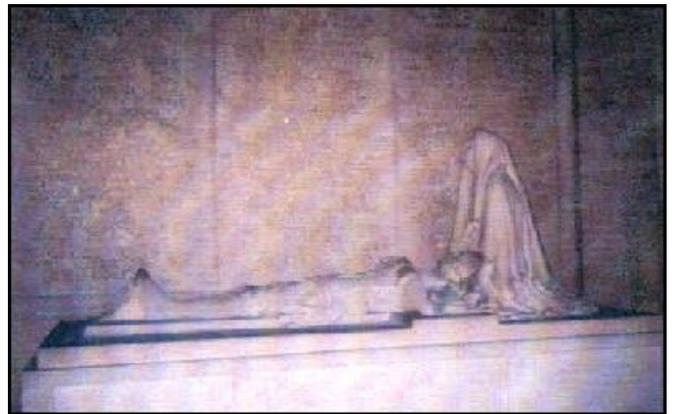
Students, staff and alumni volunteered from the war's outbreak to serve. In 1915 The Boston Globe ran an article from a Harvard graduate wounded at Gallipoli who reported on the abysmal conditions there, while the British Empire censored such reports to its own public. Harvard men served and died in battles at Verdun and on the Somme. A cadet-training program was begun at Harvard. It was later merged with the national Plattsburg Training Camp movement, championed by Theodore Roosevelt, himself an active alumnus of Harvard. French officers visited Harvard University in 1915 and 1916. They apparently supervised, or at least inspected, the Harvard cadet units and helped to design and build a network of realistic war trenches for training at nearby Fresh Pond Reservoir in Cambridge. Later the ROTC system was put into place at Harvard and several other colleges around the country. These men, and others flocked to join the war when they were able. Some as volunteers with French or British units early in the war, some with volunteer American units, and many more joined up when the U.S. declared war in April 1917. Harvard President Lawrence Lowell personally wrote to the family of every Harvard undergraduate who died during the war. In 1920, General Pershing visited Harvard to participate in Memorial Day services there and expressed his personal thanks for Harvard's contribution.

Of the 38 original members of the American volunteer air unit, the Lafayette Escadrille, nine were Harvard alumni, while many others were non-Harvard men from Massachusetts or near the Boston area. A Bostonian, Norman Prince, son of an affluent North Shore family and initially a member of a Harvard-sponsored ambulance unit founded by Richard Norton, was a founding member of the Escadrille.

Boston artist John Singer Sargent, after a stint of his own as field artist with the British Army, designed and painted special murals at Harvard's Widener Library to commemorate Harvard's men who died in the war. Sargent's painting of soldiers wounded by a gas attack, which now hangs in the Imperial War Museum, is considered one of the world's greatest war paintings. Alan Seeger, who was killed while serving in the French Foreign Legion in the Battle of the Somme on July 4, 1916, wrote the most famous war poem penned by an American during the war, "Rendezvous." Harvard's Memorial Church contains a dedicated sanctuary at the side of the church listing the names of 373 Harvard dead in the First World War. So important was Harvard's contribution to the war effort that Joffre and Pershing made special visits to thank Harvard's people for their service.

"I have a rendezvous with death at some disputed barricade. . . and I to my pledged word am true, I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger, Harvard 1910, KIA July 4, 1916"



Interior Scene of Harvard's First World War Memorial Chapel

Victor Chapman, from New York, joined a volunteer squadron in France after graduating from Harvard. Boston-based composer Charles Martin Loeffler composed a musical elegy in Chapman's memory after the young pilot was shot down in 1916. In a similar vein, Boston's King's Chapel honors one of New England's early army aviators with a plaque to Hamilton Coolidge who was assigned to Eddie Rickenbacker's 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron. Coolidge was shot down in October 1918.

## Massachusetts Institute of Technology in WWI

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, under the enthusiastic leadership of New Zealander Richard MacLaurin, moved across the Charles River from Boston to Cambridge in 1916. The Institute delivered its share support in the form of technical and engineering skills as well as volunteers to serve overseas. Some MIT men drove ambulances in France, and later in the war MIT even fielded its own ambulance unit. The Institute's War Record lists 125 alumni who died in action, a number of whom served as volunteers in the British or French armies before America's entry. To complement the "Plattsburg" cadet corps established by Harvard, MIT organized an officer training camp at Lake Machias in Maine, where MIT cadets were put through "European conditions" including realistic reconstructions of wartime trenches and bunkers. MIT students also organized a naval "patrol squadron" of speedboats designed by MIT engineering students based on a design by boat designer Loring Swaney. The little squadron paraded up and down the Charles River in support of Boston's "Preparedness Demonstrations" in 1916. Like Harvard had done earlier, MIT implemented the ROTC system by the end of 1917.

After the United States declared war, MacLaurin and his staff put some thought into how MIT or "Technology" as it was known then, should support the war effort. It was decided to offer technical training to military and civilians alike, to place its new laboratories at the disposal of the U.S. government to perform critical research, but also to continue MIT's ongoing education programs, thus ensuring that existing students would graduate with skills suitable to serve their country's wartime technical needs in either wartime industries or the military. With a sizeable number of MIT graduates serving in the U.S. Navy, MIT continued to expand and enhance its existing course on naval architecture. So important was this course to U.S. Navy interests that the Navy detached its own officers to serve as instructors in MIT's naval-related courses.

The U.S. Army also chose MIT as one its five inaugural ground schools to train Army aviators. Since 1913 MIT had offered the only viable aeronautics course in the country. The ground school taught future pilots the basic theory of flight, how to maintain aircraft and communications technology-telephony and radio engineering. Soon, the Navy also became interested in an MIT-based school to train their aviators.



Norman Prince (far right) and members of the Lafayette Escadrille  
photo credit: Website Escadrille Americaine No 124  
[http://albindenis.free.fr/Site\\_escadrille/escadrille124Lafayette.htm](http://albindenis.free.fr/Site_escadrille/escadrille124Lafayette.htm)

As planes improved and flew higher during the war, the Navy discovered that seaplanes were more adversely affected by weather, a special department to study and teach upper atmospheric was established. By the end of the war, the U.S. Marine Corps and even Canada had sent detachments to have their aviators trained at MIT's aeronautics school. MIT also designed and built a unique simulator to aid in the training of artillery observation. A realistic map of a part of Belgium was constructed and fitted with lights to simulate shell flashes. An internal communications system simulated the transmission of signals between the observer, who used the map to select a target and transmit the firing information, and the instructors, who simulated the gunners. For sailors, swimming and sailing lessons were held in the Charles River. MIT was even asked to establish a special school in Florida for merchant seaman officers. By late 1918 so many MIT graduates were overseas that the college established a bureau in Paris to serve as a meeting place and support facility for MIT servicemen.

## The Massachusetts Committee for Public Safety Secures the Boston Home Front

Just before the United States declared war on Germany, recently elected Governor, Samuel McCall, convened a meeting on February 10, 1917, of 100 prominent men from the state, mostly Bostonians. He requested they form a re-incarnation of the Revolutionary-era "Massachusetts Committee for Public Safety." Like its predecessor, the Committee was tasked to foresee problems that Massachusetts might encounter should a state of war occur. Unlike its Revolutionary predecessor, the WWI era committee was composed of 100 men selected by Governor Samuel McCall, under the chairmanship of James Jackson Storrow, and charged with ensuring an orderly response to the national and local demands of the war effort, and to ameliorate the war's potential effects on Massachusetts society where possible. The committee ensured machinery existed to implement and support national war plans and to ensure that Massachusetts could respond ably without too much disruption. Preparations commenced for home defense and to secure adequate supplies of food for the state.



Two Massachusetts Governors of the Period:  
Samuel McCall and Calvin Coolidge

Foreseeing the absorption of the entire Massachusetts National Guard into the regular army, a State Guard was reestablished. It consisted of retired servicemen and those not fit to fight at the front. Plans were made to guard key infrastructure such as power stations, bridges and the port area.

### Keeping Boston Secure from anarchists and anti-war protests

To secure the port area of Boston, a map of Boston Harbor, published in the newspapers, designated the points beyond which Germans in Boston were forbidden to cross. Indeed, some strange things did happen in Boston during hostilities. Some National Guardsmen were actually shot at while on duty, while another found sticks of dynamite thrown onto rail tracks leading out of Boston. The day war was declared a bomb was mysteriously placed in the State House. The Marine Corps recruiting center on Boston Common received a threatening note from anarchists. In July of 1917 Boston socialists prepared a big anti-war demonstration, planning a march to the State House. But the protesters were ambushed by large numbers of soldiers and sailors "on leave," who mysteriously appeared. The servicemen methodically broke up the meeting and tore up the red banners. After four hours of rioting, reservists and men on leave from Charlestown Navy Yard were called in to clear Boston Common with bayonets according to some sources. Photographs in newspapers show some of these men tearing down an anti-war sign on the bandstand on Boston Common, though to this day, it's not clear from official sources whether these men acted on their own or were given "orders" to clear Boston Common.

Boston's food supply, however, proved to be one of the Committee's continual problems. "Victory Gardens" were established on Boston Common and public golf courses. The exclusive Commonwealth Golf Club, on the other hand, declined to turn over its greens for the sake of a few cabbages. Delivery of both food and coal was threatened in the winter of 1918, when Boston Harbor froze solid. Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Roosevelt pledged to send a battleship from Baltimore to break up the ice in Boston Harbor, should that be needed. Federal government allocations of coal had also left Boston's power stations without enough fuel to last the winter. Banker and Public Safety Committee member James Jackson Storrow successfully lobbied the federal government to release additional rations of coal for Boston. Efforts to secure emergency transportation and to supply coal for critical industry and hospitals were made. Women who had driver's licenses formed an emergency motor corps at the service of the state.

The Committee intervened to resolve a series of labor-related crises in Boston and greater Massachusetts. The fishermen of Gloucester struck to improve their primitive working conditions, which had worsened during the war. The Committee intervened to negotiate a settlement, since Gloucester provided one-fifth of the state's food supply. The teamsters responsible for bringing fruit and vegetables to Boston's markets threatened to strike, but at a special request of the governor, the planned strike was delayed until a settlement was reached for higher wages. Meanwhile Mayor James Curley threatened suppliers who allegedly kept meat locked up in warehouses destined for the lucrative export trade, rather than release it to the local market. Curley personally intervened to ensure trainloads of vegetables from Southern States would direct some of their food output to Boston. Strikes by Boston's dockworkers, railroad munitions ship blew away large parts of the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Sensing communications were not going to be restored, and that the people of Halifax would be in dire need of food and emergency machinists and then the shipyard machinists were resolved after hard negotiations.

The women telephone operators, overworked and assigned to posts far from their homes, struck, causing a communications disaster. Even the U.S. Navy operations in Boston's Charlestown Navy Yard were affected, attracting the attention of federal authorities. The Navy requested the state resolve the matter, thus avoiding federal participation complicating matters. Thirty thousand woolen mill workers in nearby Ayer and Lowell, Massachusetts, struck for higher pay. Secretary of War Newton Baker, seeing that the Massachusetts mills supplied so much of the army's clothing, offered his assistance to resolve the strikes, but the Committee again gently declined federal assistance, and the strike was soon resolved.

### The U-boats Come to New England

The Committee even made arrangements for a small Massachusetts "State Navy" to patrol Boston Harbor and the indented coasts of the state. In October 1916 the appearance of a German submarine U-53, just beyond the three-mile limit off Nantucket Island caused a U-boat scare. Seventeen U.S. Navy destroyers raced out of Newport, Rhode Island, to assist the crews of the stricken vessels, some of which had just left Boston--while no naval assistance had come from Boston's own base.

The effort seemed justified when on July 21, 1918, the German submarine U-156 positioned herself off Orleans on Cape Cod, sinking several coal barges and firing a few shells at the town itself. Massachusetts proved the only part of America to come under enemy fire in World War I. Seaplanes from a local base sortied, but the submarine disappeared beneath the waves as soon as the planes were sighted, although one pilot claims to have hit the U-boat with a hastily thrown fire extinguisher.



Curtiss HS Seaplane similar to the type stationed on Cape Cod , 1918  
*Photo from Wikicommons*

More damage was done to the New England fishing fleets off the Maine coast, where several Massachusetts-based fishing boats were sunk by the same U-156. Kapitänleutnant Richard Feldt talked to the fishermen as they got into their dories before he sank their vessels. He cheerily told them how, before the war, he owned a vacation home in Maine for many years. He evidently knew the coastal waters off New England very well. The U-156 and its skipper, however, did not survive the war, possibly perishing in the North Sea mine barrage laid by U.S. Navy ships.

Massachusetts's Committee of Public Safety model was imitated by other states, especially by Minnesota, but the Massachusetts committee had a unique international aspect. Alerted to Britain's shortage of lumber industry labor, the Committee recruited teams of New England lumberjacks to work at sawmills in the forests of Scotland and Northern England, filling an urgent need and gaining praise from the British government. In December of 1917 a tragic explosion of a munitions ship blew away large parts of the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Sensing communications were not going to be restored, and that the people of Halifax would be in dire need of food and emergency accommodations, the Massachusetts Committee on its own requisitioned a train take a mobile hospital immediately to the city and dispatched another train with food and supplies ahead of the Canadian government's own relief effort. The people of Halifax to this day send a Christmas tree to Boston every year in thanks for the timely aid.

While the Committee was enthusiastic in carrying out its wartime duties, its spirit represented the best of liberty-minded Bostonians. The day the Armistice was declared the Committee did not hesitate to sense its authority was no longer needed and immediately dissolved itself.



Col. Edward Logan,  
Commander of the 101st Infantry Regiment,  
Yankee Division (and Namesake of  
Logan International Airport)  
Boston Common, 1919, Photo by Leslie Jones  
Boston Public Library Collection

## The War Ends Victory Celebrations in Boston

When the war ended on November 11, 1918, thousands celebrated all over Boston, and the next day was deemed an unofficial holiday in the city. The newly elected mayor, Andrew James Peters, presided over celebrations at Symphony Hall, where the orchestra bashed out the national anthems of the Allied countries while Episcopalian Bishop Lawrence waved the French tricolor enthusiastically. Cardinal O'Connell, in full vestments, chanted a special *Te Deum* before a congregation of 3,000 at Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross. Raising funds for soldiers' relief and recovery efforts in Europe continued. On November 12th, New Englanders raised \$3,000,000 in a single day for the United War Work Campaign Fund.

The Boston Globe issued an editorial titled "When It's Over, Over There," warning that wars don't all begin at once and hence don't end at once--the repercussions of the peace were still to be fathomed. Wounded soldiers of the 26th Division began to arrive in late December, but the rest of the unit was not expected back home until early 1919. The accumulated casualties for the Yankee Division totaled 11,955 killed and wounded, and the division was the most decorated of the National Guard formations, with 229 Distinguished Service Crosses awarded to its members, including the first awarded in the AEF. The total killed-in-action list for the division's 101st Infantry, mostly from South Boston, was 560 men for 3,800-man regiment. It was noted that the mascot of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Yankee Division (mostly Connecticut men) had chosen a Boston Terrier, Sargent Stubby as their mascot. The dog virtually became a symbol for the whole Division after generals and politicians took note of it.

Through early 1919 the return of the full division back to Boston kept getting delayed. Finally in April, led by the renamed USS Mt. Vernon, a series of transports began delivering the men. Boston waited to ensure the entire division could be assembled and be able to parade in their city as one unit--a practice that was discouraged by the War Department. When the last men came on the Vedic, the division, or as many as could be assembled at Camp Devens, was paraded there on April 21, with all six New England governors looking on. Honors were awarded by former commander General Clarence Edwards, who had been dismissed before the Armistice by General Pershing in a move unpopular back home. The division "passed in review" out of camp on April 23, before a crowd of 250,000. On April 25, a big parade in Boston with the entire division took place amid a tumultuous welcome by a crowd estimated at 1,000,000. The troops were cheered and cheered as they passed through a victory arch placed at the intersection of Arlington Street and Commonwealth Avenue--Boston's great westward thoroughfare.

### Notes:

A short history, units and statistics for the Yankee Division was published for the Welcome Home event in 1919. It can be found on this link sponsored by the Lane Memorial Library, Hampton, NH:  
<http://www.hampton.lib.nh.us/hampton/history/military/26thDivisionYD/26thDivisionHistory1919.htm>

US Army capsule history of the YD with its history of command changes can be found here:  
<http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/cbtchron/cc/026id.htm>

A list of all the Divisions of the AEF in WWI can be found here. The websites sponsored by New River Notes, provides a list of the Massachusetts and New England militia and NG units that were absorbed into the YD by July 1917:  
[http://www.newrivernotes.com/topical\\_history\\_ww1\\_oob\\_american\\_forces.htm](http://www.newrivernotes.com/topical_history_ww1_oob_american_forces.htm)  
Data on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 76<sup>th</sup> Divisions later formed at Camp Devens is also on this website. Elements from Camp Devens were also transferred to the 77<sup>th</sup> Division.



Influenza Patient at Camp Devens

### The War's Aftermath - Internal Strife in Boston in 1919

After the parades, there were other matters linked to the war that distracted Boston and Massachusetts politicians. The worldwide influenza epidemic had probably entered the United States with early returning troops who passed through Boston en-route to Camp Devens. At first army doctors denied the accusation, but the accumulation of casualties at the camp attested to its truth. The epidemic soon spread from the soldiers. Navy doctors first noticed some patients with the flu in the Navy Hospital overlooking Boston Harbor. Then in September 1918 three civilians died in Boston. By the end of 1918 a thousand Bostonians were dead, and reports of more cases from Rhode Island and other states had started to trickle in. By then it had become clear it was a national epidemic. Approximately 45,000 individuals in Massachusetts--mainly in Boston and in Camp Devens--would die before the disease.

Later in 1919 Boston's police force--its officers unhappy with the rise of wages in private enterprise during the war, while public employees got little or no raises--decided to form a union and affiliate with the socialist American Federation of Labor. That September the Boston Police Force voted 1,100 to 2 to strike. The State Guard was called out to keep order, and Governor Calvin Coolidge dealt with the matter by firing the entire force and hiring replacements--for a higher wage, close to that demanded by the strikers.

Coolidge's comment, "There is no right to strike against the public safety of anybody, anywhere any time," gained national attention for him. He was later nominated for vice president in 1920 and succeeded to the presidency upon the death of Warren Harding in 1923. It is said public perception of his handling of the Boston Police Strike was a major factor in his election success.

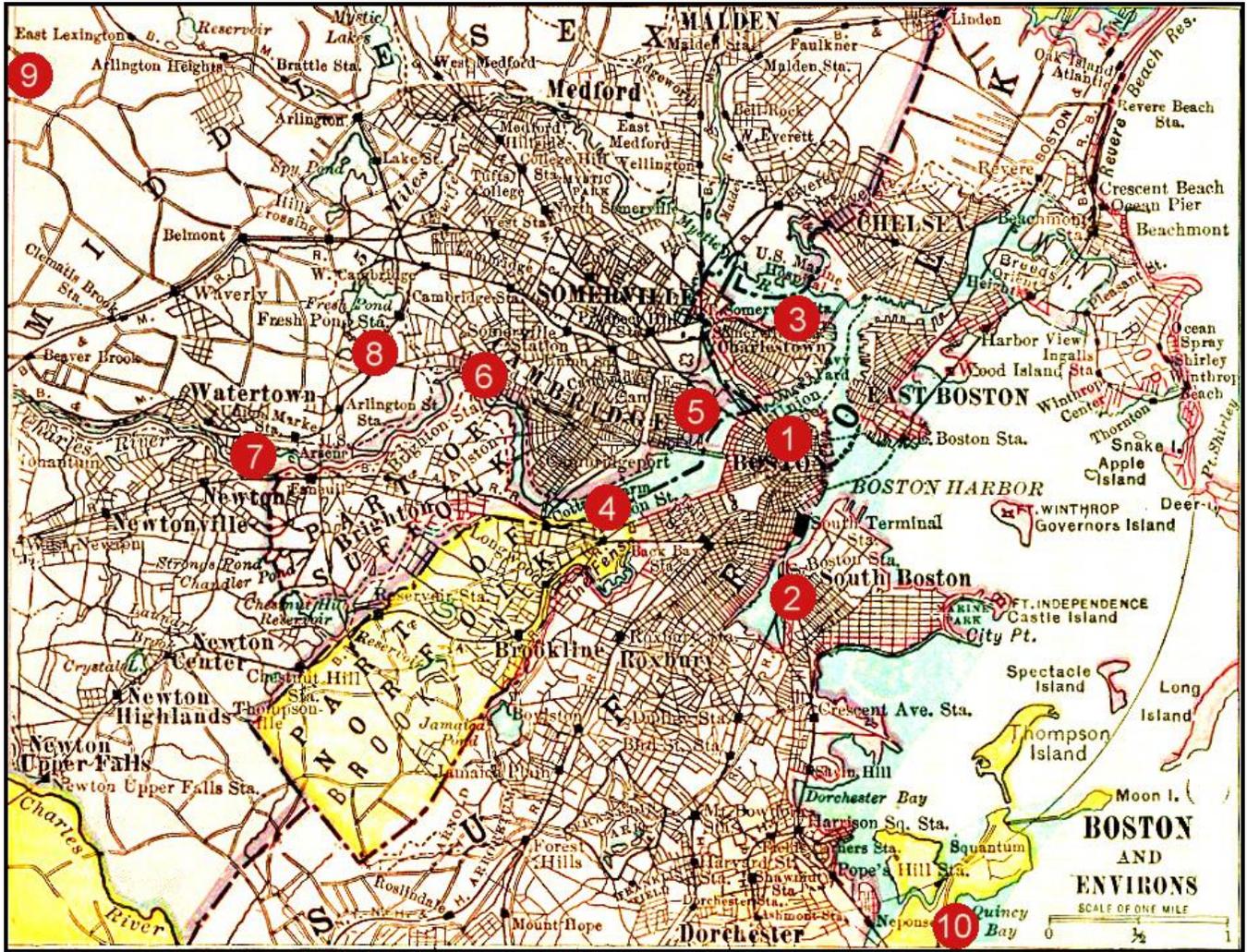
### The Curious Case of Boston's Missing World War I Memorial

Several proposals for a war memorial were contemplated for Boston. During the war itself, a visiting French artist proposed a statue of Washington and Lafayette. The city of Boston, after James Michael Curley was re-elected as mayor in 1922, went to great expense to promote a complex designed by the famous church architect Ralph Adams Cram on an artificial island in the middle of the Charles River. It was to incorporate separate war memorials for the city of Boston and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a Venetian bell tower between them, whose bells would ring out as an "audible memorial". The design is eerily similar to the city hall built in Springfield, MA in 1913, although it is not clear if Boston's city architect, Ralph Adams Cram, (who also designed the chapel at West Point), was consciously inspired by it.



City of Boston's plan for a WWI Memorial on an island in the Charles River, 1922, Ralph Adams Cram, architect.  
Photo credit: Boston Public Library

A debate began as to whether Boston needed a symbolic versus a functional memorial such as an auditorium, social center or even a swimming pool for veterans. Others advocated a memorial on Beacon Hill where it could be seen from any place in the city. A rotunda memorial was planned in the middle of Copley Square. The state later decided it was its responsibility, not Boston's, to devise a World War I memorial. Another scheme led to buying land in France for a Massachusetts memorial among the "Sacred Rocks of St. Mihiel" along the Meuse River near the St. Mihiel Salient, site of the Yankee Division's greatest victory. The plan was never put into effect, and the land was sold or donated back to France. The Yankee Division's most significant monument on their old battlefields remains the restored village church in the village of Belleau near the city of Château Thierry, which was financed by subscriptions from the division's veterans. Debates and proposals for a Boston memorial came and went for over 20 years well into the 1930s. The state eventually built a granite memorial atop Mt. Greylock in the far west of the state, but the idea of a Boston World War I memorial was eventually forgotten. Boston still has no dedicated memorial to its citizens' sacrifices and achievements during World War I, other than an inscription on the steps on Boston Common opposite the State House. The pathway across the Common connecting to the steps was the site of the largest Liberty Bond rally held in Boston during the war.



Locations Mentioned in Article - Boston Area Map

Map Source: 1910 Hammond Atlas from US GenWeb Archives

- 1. Downtown Boston, including Boston Common and State House
- 2. Commonwealth Pier
- 3. Navy Yard
- 4. Site of proposed island memorial
- 5. Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- 6. Harvard College
- 7. Watertown Arsenal
- 8. Fresh Pond, site of practice trenches
- 9. Camp Devens, off of map to northwest
- 10. Quincy, off of map, site of Fore River Shipyards and Victory Destroyer Plant

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**Author:** Anatole Sykley, was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1952, of Ukrainian immigrant parents, and is married to an American with strong Boston connections. They have resided in Cambridge, Massachusetts since 1987. Anatole holds degrees in science, mathematics and computer science from La Trobe University (Melbourne) and currently works as a consultant engineer in the telecommunications industry in the Boston area. He is a member of the Organization of American Historians, has given a tours of World War I battlefields in France and Belgium and has delivered public talks on the subject to Boston-area history groups. He teaches World War I history and related topics at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education.

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### Further Reading on Boston and Massachusetts in World War I (a partial list)

There aren't many books you can read up about Massachusetts and Boston during World War I, though several histories mention a few of the specific issues noted in this article. Many of the books below cover broader subjects, but are noteworthy for mention of Boston or Massachusetts related subjects during the World War I era.

For a general background on the local response of the United States during World War I, the following is a very useful backgrounder:  
*Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, by David M Kennedy.

The following book has some specific write-ups on New England military units and selected State responses to World War I  
*World War I Reader*, edited by Michael S Neiburg.

The following book is also a general history of the American Home Front during World War I, but has a few more mentions of activities and events in Boston:  
*America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*, by Robert H. Zieger

There are several histories of the 26<sup>th</sup> Division (Yankee Division), here are a few references

For official histories of Massachusetts military units and organizations, including the 26<sup>th</sup> "Yankee Division" see the reference list on the World War I Centennial website, compiled by Jim Controvitch:

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/ma-in-wwi-stories.html>

There are some older books, no longer in print, but available in many public libraries or in digital form as follows:

*Report of the Commission on Massachusetts' Part in the World War*. Published by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, edited by George Hinckley Lyman.

The book is available on Google books. The catalog reference is given here, contains links to digitized copies at various libraries:

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000440066>

*The Gold Star record of Massachusetts*, edited by Eben Putnam.

It is being digitized by the Boston Public Library. See link here:

<https://archive.org/details/reportofcommissi002comm>

The building and service of Camp Devens during World War I is immortalized in this short book. It has been long out of print, but is accessible here in digital form:

*Forging the Sword, The story of Camp Devens, New England's army cantonment*, by William J Robinson

<https://archive.org/details/forgingswordstor00robi>

The following book has a section dealing with the Naval Air Stations established near Boston during WWI, though most of the book deals with the history after WWI:

*Navy Wings Over Boston: The History of Naval Air Stations Squantum and South Weymouth, Massachusetts*.

The role of MIT in World War I is recorded in the following book, published in 1920:

*Technology's War Record*, John Hamilton Ruckman, editor.

<https://archive.org/details/technologyswarre01mass>

Harvard University in World War I

A book published soon after the war, lists the students and alumni who served in World War I, can be found in digital form here

*Harvard's Military Record in the World War*

[https://archive.org/stream/harvardsmilitar04meadgoog/harvardsmilitar04meadgoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/harvardsmilitar04meadgoog/harvardsmilitar04meadgoog_djvu.txt)

although to understand other achievements by Harvard, visit this website sponsored by Harvard University

<http://alumni.harvard.edu/harvard-and-world-war-one>

A recent book on the achievements of five young Harvard men during World War I

*Five Lieutenants: The Heartbreaking Story of Five Harvard Men Who Led America to Victory in World War I*, by James Carl Nelson

The following book deals with the problem of divided loyalties among German academics at Harvard and other institutions during World War I:

*States of Belonging: German-American Intellectuals and the First World War*, by Phyllis Keller

Destroyer building in Quincy, MA

A good website can be found here, sponsored by the Thomas Crane Public Library, Quincy, MA

<http://thomascranelibrary.org/shipbuildingheritage/history/historyindex.html>

The Destroyer History Foundation has short histories of all the main destroyer plants in the USA during WWI, see their website here for individual histories of the various Massachusetts and New England plants:

<http://destroyerhistory.org/destroyers/bethsq/>

The following book provides several photos of the destroyer building plants and air stations established south of Boston during WWI:

*Squantum and South Weymouth Naval Air Stations*, by Donald Cann & John J. Galluzzo

A well-researched and well-illustrated book on the establishment of naval air patrol stations on Cape Cod during World War I. The introductory section describes the program for the entire north-east coast of the U.S., and some mention made of nearby Boston and its role in supporting the bases.

*Wings over Cape Cod: The Chatham Naval Air Station*, by Joseph D Buckley

For more on the German submarine attack on Orleans, MA, see this book:

*Attack on Orleans: The World War I Submarine Raid on Cape Cod*, by Jake Klim

There is a book about the history of Boston Harbor Forts and installations, which mentions several World War I related activities as follows with several photographs:

*The Military History of Boston's Harbor Islands (MA) (Images of America Series)* by Gerald Butler

The following book features several photos of Boston's Charlestown Navy Yard during World War I:

*Charlestown Navy Yard*, by Barbara A. Bither

For those interested in memorialization, the following books covers war memorial building after World War I, with several mentions of Massachusetts and Boston based memorials:

*Letters and Photographs from the Battle Country: The World War I Memoir of Margaret Hall*, by Margaret Hall and Margaret R. Higonnet

### **Yankee Division & National Guard during World War I**

For a history of the Massachusetts National Guard, see this website, from the Massachusetts National Guard:

<http://www.thenationsfirst.org/army-national-guard-history.html>

For a general overview of National Guard preparations and movements in response to the Border Crisis with Mexico in 1916, see this article on the US Army website:

<https://www.army.mil/article/162413>

Massachusetts and the 1916 Mexico Crisis. There aren't many books on this subject, but the following is a personal experience of a Boston journalist who went with the Massachusetts military units to the Mexican border in 1916. It's out of print, but available at some book stores:

*Watching and Waiting on the Border, by Roger Batchelder*

The book *The Great Call-Up: The Guard, the Border, and the Mexican Revolution*, by Charles H. Harris III & Louis R. Sadler, provides a comprehensive overview of the National Guard response to the Mexican Border Crisis in 1916. The role of Massachusetts is mentioned in several places along with many other States.

The Massachusetts State Library has a link to a digital history of the 26<sup>th</sup> Yankee Division in WWI, see here <http://mastatelibrary.blogspot.com/2015/01/wwi-26th-yankee-division-photograph.html>

For the official US Army history and documents related to every unit organized as part of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) during World War I, see the US Army Center of Military History website. Books and documents about each and every division. Sixteen pages describe in detail the Yankee Division's organization and deployment. Additional sections deal with the lesser known 76<sup>th</sup> Division (the first unit out of newly built Camp Devens). These are a series of large PDF files and can take a while to download, but these are the official sources for where and when each unit was organized and where they fought, for those who are interested in learning more about these specifics:

<http://www.history.army.mil/html/bookshelves/collect/usaww.html>

(for organization data and capsule histories on every division of the US Army, see the volume "American Expeditionary Forces: Divisions" in "Order of Battle"; for a history of operations, see "The United States Army in the World War 1917 - 1919").

Material on the history of the 12<sup>th</sup> "Plymouth Division" is harder to find. A chapter in the book "Forging the Sword" provides a capsule history of the division's formation and training late in the war. Although they completed their training faster than the previous 76<sup>th</sup>'s schedule, the war ended before the unit could be deployed.

#### **Massachusetts leaders and politicians who were active during the World War I era:**

The following book though not specifically about World War I, has several sections which deal with the Massachusetts political and voting scene and ethnic groups in Boston during and around the World War I era. It is a useful and important backgrounder:

*The Triumph of Ethnic Progressivism: Urban Political Culture in Boston, 1900-1925* by James J. Connolly

A period biography of Governor Samuel McCall:  
*Samuel W. McCall, governor of Massachusetts, 1916*, by Lawrence B Evans

The following is considered a classic biography of Mayor Michael Curley, though only a few pages are devoted to his leadership during World War I.  
*The Rascal King: The Life And Times Of James Michael Curley (1874-1958)*, by Jack Beatty

The following book deals with several American WWI era leaders and politicians, including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge from Massachusetts  
*First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power*, by Warren Zimmermann

There are several biographies of Calvin Coolidge, but few provide any details of his term as Lt. Governor of Massachusetts during WWI. The following book does throw more light on the subject, and provides background on Massachusetts political and economic issues during the war:  
*Coolidge*, by Amity Shlaes

A highly interesting book on the near-forgotten legacy of Boston's African-American activist William Monroe Trotter and his Boston newspaper, *The Guardian*. He saw World War I as an opportunity to send out the message of African-American's situation and potential future empowerment.  
*The Guardian of Boston, William Monroe Trotter*, by Stephen R. Fox

#### **Personal accounts of Massachusetts individuals and their experiences of World War I. Here is a short selection:**

*Letters and Photographs from the Battle Country: The World War I Memoir of Margaret Hall*, by Margaret Hall and Margaret R. Higonnet

*The Edith Cavell Nurse from Massachusetts - The War Letters of Alice Fitzgerald, an American Nurse Serving in the British Expeditionary Force*, by Alice L F Fitzgerald (Author), E Lyman Cabot (Editor)

The following books on the American Volunteer Squadron, mentions several personalities from Massachusetts who served in this unit. The unit itself was conceived by a meeting in Marblehead, MA between two Massachusetts born airmen in 1915. It should be noted the term Lafayette Escadrille, refers to

the 38 or so American volunteer pilots who served together in one squadron. The term Lafayette Flying Corps refers to many other American volunteer airmen (more than 200 by some accounts) who enlisted with the French air forces during World War I.

*First to Fly: The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille, the American Heroes Who Flew For France in World War I*, by Charles Bracelen Flood

*The Story of the Lafayette Escadrille: a Famous Fighter Squadron in the First World War by its Commander*, by Georges Thenault

If you want to know exactly how many pilots flew with the French Air Force and the Lafayette Escadrille were from Massachusetts, see this link.

<http://www.americansatwarinforeignforces.com/named-american-members-of-the-lafayette-escadrille-and-lafayette-flying-corps-world-war-i.html>

The volunteer American Ambulance Service was established by Richard Norton, the son of a Harvard professor. Several Boston individuals volunteered for the service. There are several books, selected here is a period edition of reminiscences by its members, and a more recent book:

*Friends of France: the Field Service of the American Ambulance Described by Its Members*, by Abram Piatt Andrew

*Gentlemen Volunteers: The Story of the American Ambulance Drivers in the First World War*, by Arlen J. Hansen and George Plimpton

### **Other Miscellaneous**

Baseball went on in Boston during World War I, and most histories of the Boston Red Sox acknowledge it. The following book is a biography of Babe Ruth in Boston during World War I. The reader can understand how the war affected baseball and vice versa through the many background facts and events mentioned in this book.

*Babe Ruth and the 1918 Red Sox*, by Allan Wood

The Boston Marathon also went on throughout World War I. See the BAA website for a synopsis of the race results 1916 – 1920:

<http://www.baa.org/races/boston-marathon/boston-marathon-history/race-summaries/1916-1920.aspx>

There is also an interesting article about Boston's Marathon race during the difficult transition year 1917. Read the article entitled

*Through history, the Boston Marathon as a race against fear*, *Boston Globe*, 23 March 2014 (accessible online), by Patrick L Kennedy