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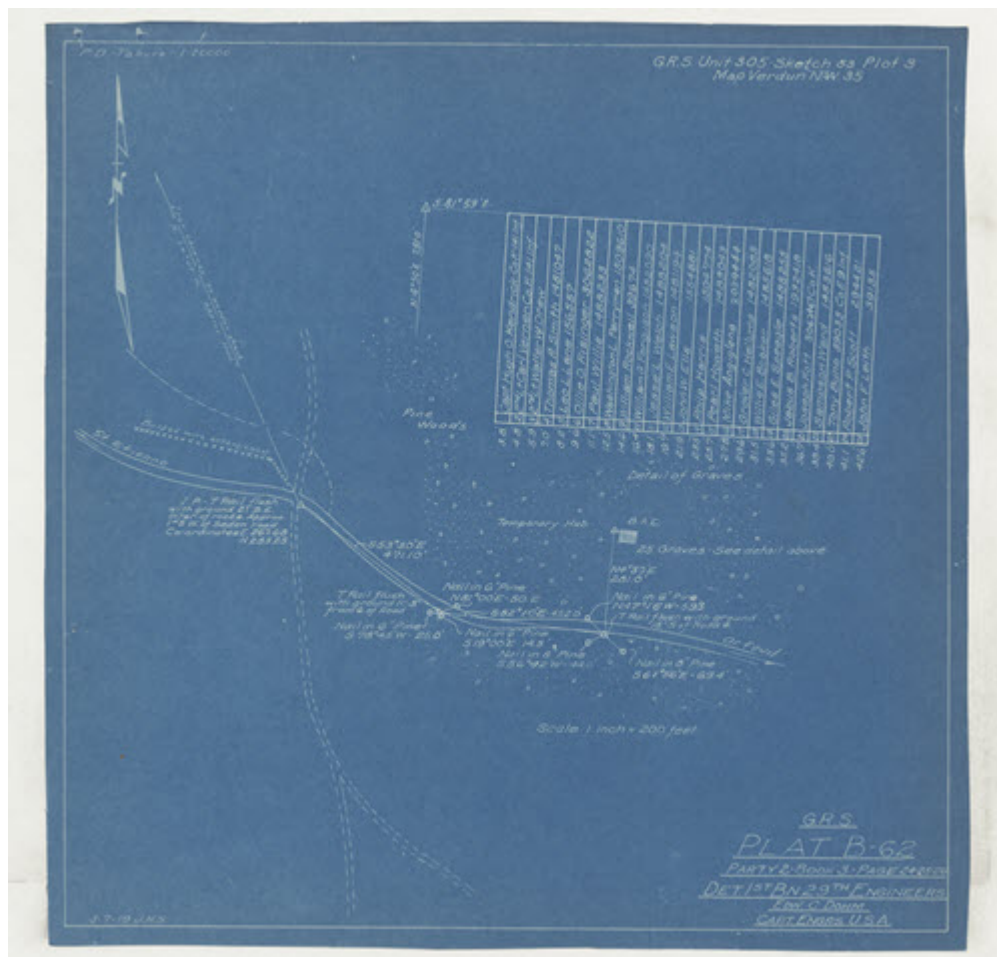
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Commemorating Memorial Day

On May 27, 2019, our nation observes Memorial Day. Initially referred to as Decoration Day, Memorial Day was observed by many communities after the Civil War, when the nation suffered more than 620,000 military deaths, roughly 2 percent of the total population at the time. John A. Logan, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of Republic, chose May 30, 1868, as a day to decorate the graves of Union troops across the nation. From this beginning, Memorial Day is now designated as an annual day of remembrance to honor all those who have died in service to the United States during peace and war.

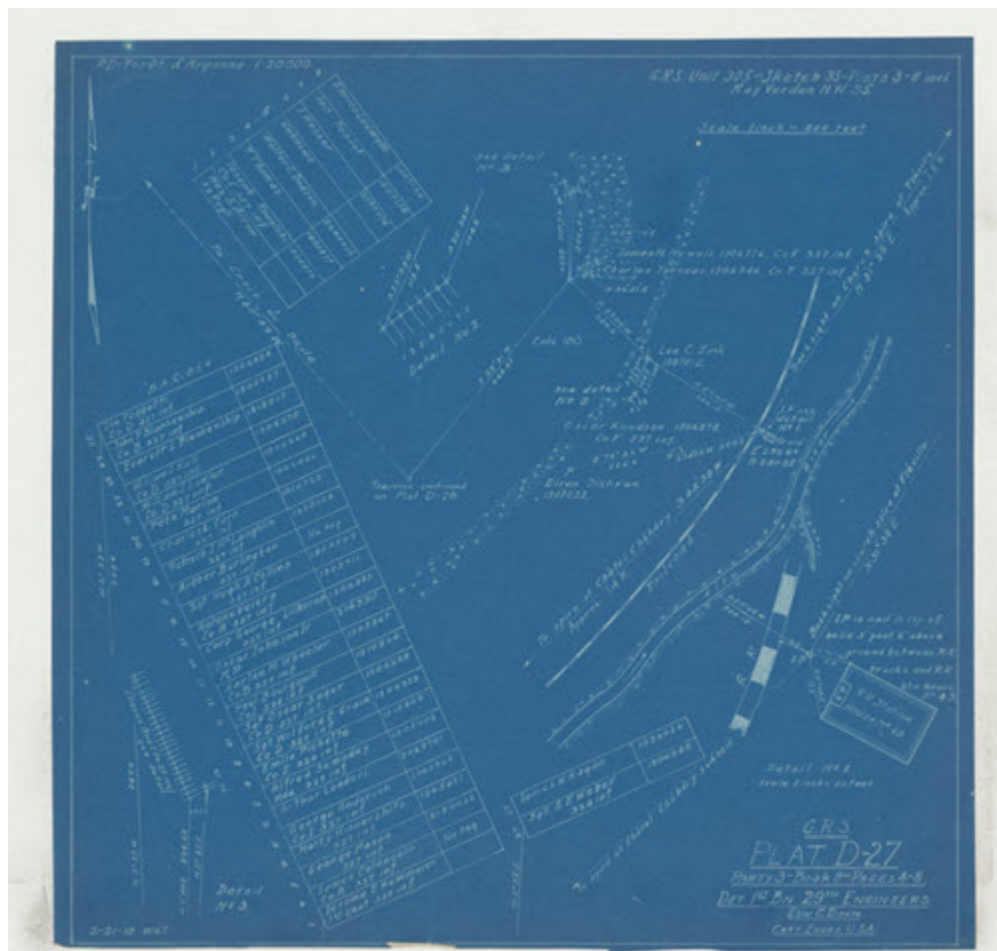
In observance of Memorial Day, we are looking more closely at a newly digitized series of records from the Cartographic Branch at the National Archives: [Initial Burial Plats for World War I American Soldiers](#).



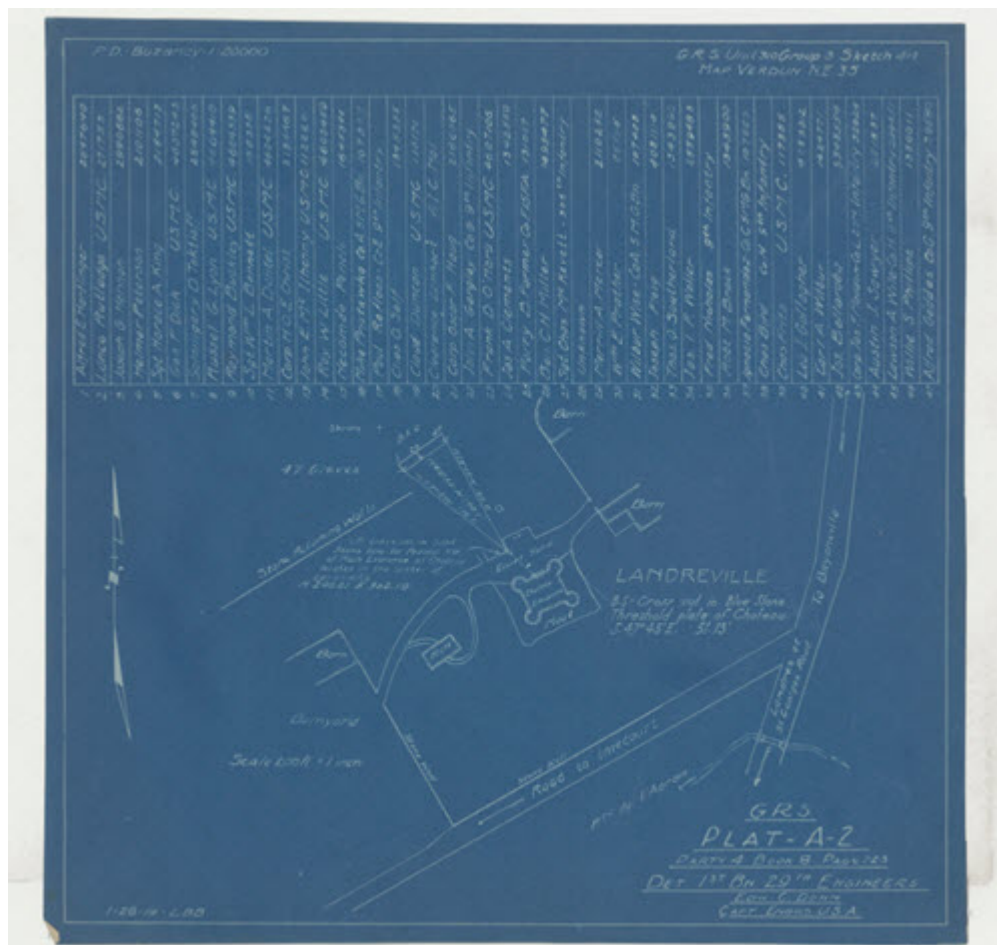
[Plat B-62](#) shows an area with a larger concentration of graves of American soldiers.

This series consists of blueprints of survey maps and field drawings created by the 29th Army Corps of Engineers for the Graves Registration Service during World War I. The maps detail locations of scattered and isolated soldier grave sites. Each grave is identified by the soldier's name, rank, serial number, and unit, if known. The plats also show surrounding landmarks, buildings, and other markers that could be used to identify the location of the burial.

The survey dates to 1919 and is arranged into [four Plat Books labeled A, B, C, and D](#).



[Plat D-27](#), showing a grouping of soldier graves. The soldiers are identified by their name, unit, rank, and serial number, if known.



[Plat A-2](#) shows a grouping of 47 soldier graves that are located near a chateau, barn, and stone retaining wall.

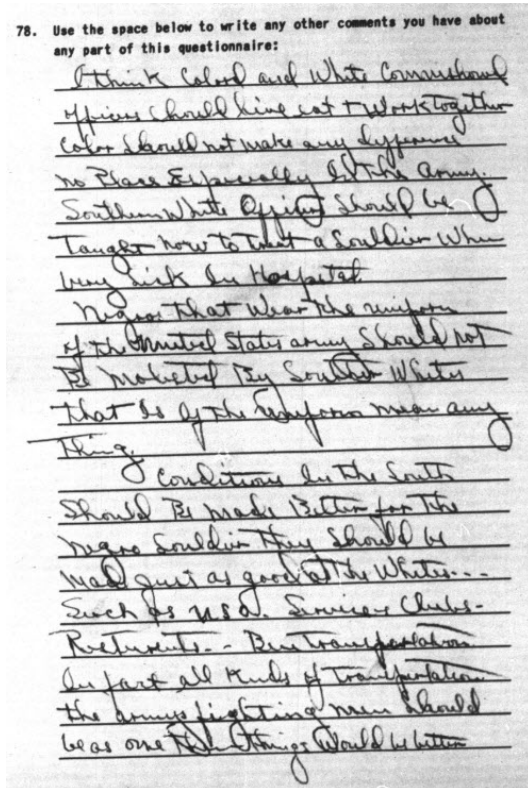
Do you want to help make these records name searchable in our Catalog? Look for names of soldiers within each burial plat, and tag the image with the names you see. Every name you add helps make the record searchable by soldier's name. [Get started now!](#)

These records and more are held by the Cartographic Branch at the National Archives. Learn more about these records and the activities of the Graves Registration Service during World War I on Brandi Oswald's post on the [The Unwritten Record blog](#).

Get started Transcribing and Tagging!

The American Soldier in World War II

[The American Soldier in World War II](#) digital project was launched a year ago in commemoration of V-E, Victory-in-Europe, Day, on May 8, 2018. This joint venture of Virginia Tech, the National Archives, the Social Science Research Council, and the University of Virginia aims to digitize and make freely available a large, unique collection of World War II records, including about 65,000 pages of uncensored commentaries written by soldiers about their military service and wartime experiences, which are held in [RG 165: Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, 1860 - 1952](#).



These anonymous reflections were collected during the war by the US Army Research Branch. Volunteers on the crowdsourcing platform [Zooniverse.org](#) have now transcribed in triplicate over half of the soldiers' reflections—that is just under of 104,000 individual annotations. Consider helping finish the second half. Visit the [American Soldier in World War II on Zooniverse](#).

Oops! Something Went Wrong - Update on Catalog Issues

You may have noticed some ongoing errors and issues searching our Catalog lately. We sincerely apologize for this. We understand that this is more than just an inconvenience as you attempt to conduct research and contribute as a Citizen Archivist.



A top-notch mechanic, Mary Josephine Farley expertly rebuilds airplane engines. Although she is only twenty years old she has a private pilot's license and has made several cross-country flights.

[National Archives Identifier 196353](#)

Our developers are actively working to address issues with our servers and have determined why outages and errors are happening so frequently. They are beginning to implement fixes over the next weeks and months, which will result in fewer outages, more consistent search results, as well as fixes for loading issues and missing images.

In an effort to add 500 million digitized pages to our Catalog by 2024, we've faced challenges along the way in getting the system to perform at scale. However, we're committed to providing access to National Archives records and we hope you will bear with us through these much needed fixes.

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.





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