

# THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER



## + LEARNING RESOURCE



#### THE GRATEFUL HOMELAND

After the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria on June 28, 1914, by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo, the First World War broke out. Despite attempts at appeasement, Austria-Hungary and Serbia declared war, dragging numerous allies into the conflict. In France, general mobilization led nearly 8 million men to take up arms. It was estimated that around 1.5 million of them died during the conflict, while 500 succumbed to their injuries.

Faced with this massacre, the management of bodies became a major issue in public debate. During the first months of the conflict, mass grave burials was the norm for the French army. A single grave could contain up to 100 bodies. It was customary to remove the sole identification tag that soldiers wore around their necks to provide information on their civil status and inform their families.

This had the consequence of rendering the majority of these remains anonymous. At the very beginning of the war, while the battles rage, front-line soldiers defied military authorities by burying their comrades themselves in individual graves located as close as possible to the battlefields. This practice forced the state to take legal measures. In December 1915, it was decided that every soldier fallen at the front had to be buried individually with a perpetual grave maintained by the Republic. In addition to this, the decision was made to attach a second identification tag to each of the fighters. In this way, each body would retained a name in case of exhumation.



**01.** Poster of the general mobilization order of August 2, 1914



**02.** Poster for mobilization on Rue Royale in Paris

#### JULY 14, 1915: TRIBUTE TO ROUGET-DE-LISLE

The Council of Ministers on July 10, 1915, initially considered transferring the composer's ashes to the Pantheon. The decision was ultimately made at the last moment to inter the ashes of the author of the Marseillaise at Les Invalides. As the war prolonged, it seemed important to rekindle the population's spirit through a strong patriotic impulse. So, the government hastily chose Rouget de Lisle. During this ceremony, there were very few able-bodied men present (as they were mostly at the front). The majority of the audience consisted of wounded and mutilated individuals, as well as many women, war widows, nurses, fundraisers for the Journée de Paris, children, and elderly veterans of the 1870 war.

The ceremony was highly ceremonial: it began in front of the Arc de Triomphe with the singing of the Marseillaise performed by Marie Delna, a lyrical artist who, like many performers, contributed to the war effort by singing in front of the troops. The poet's coffin was placed on a cannon carriage, covered with the tricolor flag, and pulled by nine horses. The casket was first symbolically honored in front of the sculpted group by Rude. Subsequently, the procession set off between the Arc de Triomphe and Les Invalides, passing notably through the Champs-Élysées avenue.

#### THE HÔTEL DES INVALIDES

Built from 1670 at the initiative of Louis XIV, the Hôtel des Invalides was constructed in Paris on the plain of Grenelle to accommodate 4,000 war veterans. Its construction spanned five years according to the plans of the architect Libéral Bruant. In 1706, a dome was erected along with a church designed by Jules Hardouin Mansart. The body of Napoleon rests in this church.



03. The Hôtel des Invalides



04. Transfer of the ashes of Rouget-de-Lisle, 1915

Before the Great War, which marked a decisive moment in the struggle for women's emancipation in France, some of them were already wage earners, working at home (on the farm or in sewing) and especially as laborers, office workers, or domestics. From a legal standpoint, however, women still remained perpetual minors under the guardianship of male authority (the father, the husband, the employer).

On August 6, 1914, a call was issued to "French women" by René Viviani (1863-1925). The aim was to mobilize women from rural areas to replace those "on the battlefield immediately at work", to maintain agricultural work, grape harvests, and harvests at the end of summer. Society as a whole had to mobilize, and women were encouraged to participate in the war effort in various sectors such as factories, hospitals, administrations, etc. These new responsibilities imposed by the state were to be coupled with the burdens of daily life. Women heeded this call and mobilized massively in various sectors, both public and private.

#### MORAL SUPPORT FOR SOLDIERS

As the conflict dragged on, letter exchanges between the fighters and their families became crucial for the morale of the troops. From 1915, many works of war godmothers were created to maintain a connection with the soldiers: through regular correspondence, these godmothers provided moral and emotional support to isolated fighters.

During the conflict, war widows emerged. As a consequence of the numerous soldiers who had died on the front, the black-clad figure of the widow symbolized the trauma affecting the entire nation. Many widows, without employment, found themselves in utter destitution, and charitable organizations mobilized to assist them. Some received aid from the state: if the soldier was killed on the front, his wife was officially recognized as a war widow.

Publicly known women were also involved in the conflict, especially in charitable works established at the beginning of the war to assist soldiers on the front. Women from the bourgeoisie engaged in numerous charitable activities and fundraising appeals to collect funds. The money collected was used to send parcels to soldiers, to provide assistance in hospitals, or to support the most deprived individuals affected by misfortune. Wealthy individuals were also involved, and many public figures used their money and fame to develop philanthropic actions for the benefit of the most vulnerable. This was notably the case with Anne Morgan, who founded the CARD (Comité Américain pour les Régions Dévastées, literally "American Committee for Devastated Regions") in 1917.

Educated young women from affluent backgrounds, on the other hand, turned to voluntary aid. After receiving accelerated training, they became nurses and swelled the ranks of the Red Cross certified personnel. With the health emergency, field hospitals multiplied along the front. In these institutions, the "White Angels" cared for the wounded, assisted surgeons during operations, and provided moral support to soldiers by offering the comforting presence that men lack. However, with the lengthening of the war, the emotional and intimate frustrations of the soldiers became a cumbersome reality: female prostitution developed around the front lines and behind the lines during leave. The military hierarchy, which prohibited wives from joining their husbands, tolerated this situation.

The image of the fighting woman was widely used in propaganda: with calls for monetary donations for the war effort, allegories of the protective mother or the resistant young girl were employed in support of various causes. From Marianne to Joan of Arc, historical icons symbolized bravery, mourning, pain, or the heroism of the people in the face of the enemy.

#### WOMEN ON THE HOME FRONT, WOMEN AT WORK

During this period, women significantly entered the workforce.

The war began in late summer, which corresponded to the harvest season; it was necessary to replace the mobilized men who did not return as quickly as expected. Therefore, women had to cultivate the land and manage the farms for four years. The female cultivators were not prepared for such a challenging task, especially considering the harsh conditions: the tools were not suitable, and most draft animals have been requisitioned. The elderly and the invalids who had remained on the home front assisted them in their work.

With the increase in demand for military equipment, an entire war industry called upon women to work in factories. Even before the war, employment was becoming more female-oriented in the textile industry, canneries, etc. In armament factories, women worked as *munitionnettes* to supply the front with shells of various calibers. It was a very demanding job with up to 10 hours of daily work, high toxicity of the products used causing illnesses, and it forced the female workers to lift several thousand kilos per day. By 1918, more than 450,000 women were working to sustain the war effort in sectors that were physically demanding for some.



**05.** Workers' canteen in La Courneuve, a work of Baroness de Gunzbourg. 1916



**06.** High school girls in Arcueil, 1917

The Armistice of November 11, 1918, only suspended the conflict. It was necessary to wait until June 28, 1919, and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles for peace to be declared. The main provisions of the treaty were drafted during the International Conference of Paris organized by the victors. In this ceremony, every detail was symbolic: the choice of the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles as the signing location was not incidental. Indeed, France sought to erase the humiliation it had endured during the signing of the previous Peace Treaty after its defeat in 1871. June 28 also refered to the anniversary of the Sarajevo assassination. The staging and conditions of the signature contributed to the humiliation of the vanquished, who had proclaimed their empire in the same place in 1871.

Immediately after the Armistice, the debate over burial sites resurfaced: Where should the soldiers be interred? At the place where they fell alongside their comrades or on their home soil near their families?

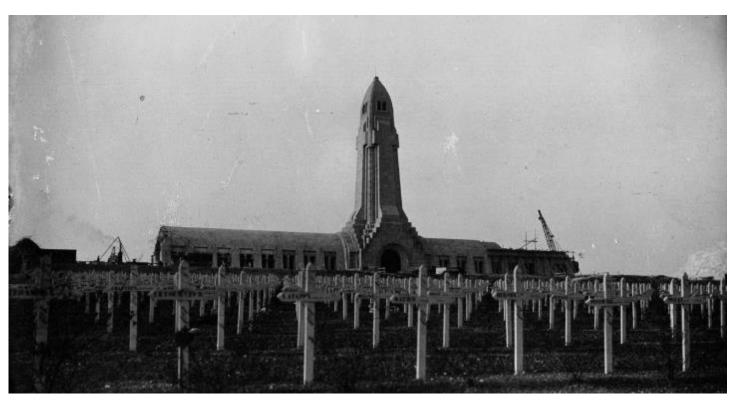
After grouping and identifying the remained of the soldiers, the government gave families the choice to repatriate the bodies of their deceased to the home front or to bury them in large cemeteries. These military sanctuaries were often located as close as possible to the combat zones, as it is the case for soldiers who fell at Verdun and were buried at Douaumont. Between 1920 and 1923, 240,000 bodies were sent back to their families, and 730,000 remains – whether identified or not – were interred in hastily opened ossuaries and necropolises.

#### THE VICTORY PARADE

A few weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles (on June 28, 1919), the celebrations of July 14th had a particular resonance: the choice of the location for the commemorations was symbolic. The axis of the avenues of the Grande Armée and the Champs-Élysées placed the Arc de Triomphe at the center of the event.

The route was lined with decorations referencing the victory. Military trophies were visible, a statue of a French soldier (*Poilu*) located at the Marigny intersection, cannons captured from the Germans piled in a pyramid and topped with a golden rooster, a symbol of France, at the Champs-Élysées roundabout.

The elaborate protocol put in place to organize the Victory Parade stipulated that aviators would not march aboard their aircraft but on foot. Anger risen among some of them, and it was believed to be a provocation. It was from the bar of the Escadrille (at the Fouquet's) that they organize the countermove. A few days later, on August 7, 1919, at 7:20 AM, Charles Godefroy took off in his Nieuport 11 biplane from the Villacoublay airfield. He circled the Arc de Triomphe twice, then flyed through the arch. At the same time, a tramway crossed the square, and it was said that the passengers threw themselves to the ground in panic.



07. O7. Douaumont: Inauguration of the ossuary lighthouse, Meurisse Agency, 1930

Designed by Gustave Jaulmes, Louis Sue, and André Mare, and drawn by Antoine Sartorio, the 30-ton, 18-meter-high cenotaph bore the inscription Aux morts pour la Patrie ("To the Dead for the Homeland"). Made of gilded plaster, the cenotaph was adorned with victories with airplane wings. On the night of July 13-14, a funeral ceremony and a wake were dedicated to the dead near the Arc de Triomphe. On the morning of July 14th, Georges Clemenceau decided at the last moment that the armies would symbolically march under the Arc de Triomphe. Therefore, the cenotaph was urgently moved to the top of the Champs-Élysées avenue.

The military parade was triumphant; all the allied troops were represented. The procession began with the leading march of a thousand disabled veterans. Then, reminiscent of Roman triumphs, the marshals paraded aheaded of their troops on horseback. All soldiers, living or dead, thus entered into glory and were honored by the Homeland. The Arc de Triomphe played, for the last time in its history, the role of a military gate of glory. >>>>>>>>>>



08. Victory Celebration: American Music. Léon Heymann, 1919



09. Victory Celebration, July 14, 1919, the cenotaph at the entrance of the Champs-Élysées. Henri Manuel

At the end of the conflict, a question arose: how could it possible to allow the families of the 240,000 unidentified soldiers and the 253,000 missing to mourn without a body or a place of remembrance? On November 26, 1916, while the fighting was ongoing, Francis Simon delivered a speech at the East Cemetery of Rennes. He himself was the father of a soldier who had died in battle and the local President of the Souvenir français association.



Why wouldn't France open the doors of the Pantheon to one of these overlooked fighters who died bravely for the Fatherland? The burial of a simple soldier under this dome where so many glories and geniuses rest would be like a symbol, and furthermore, a tribute to the entire French army!

Francis Simon

His speech found an echo among the population as well as among the military. The idea resurfaced regularly in public discourse. It was necessary to wait until November 19, 1918, a week after the signing of the Armistice, for Maurice Maunoury, a deputy and war disabled veteran, to pick up this idea and submit a bill in that direction. In December of the same year, the Chamber of Deputies deliberated and selected the Pantheon as the location for the national tribute, preferring, however, a golden book containing the names of all the dead from 1914-1918, rather than opening a vault dedicated to an unknown soldier.

#### THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER AT THE ARC DE TRIOMPHE?

The politician and journalist Henry de Jouvenel launched the idea of a burial under the Arc de Triomphe in the popular newspaper Le Matin dated November 4, 1920:



Let us immediately demand the true place for the mortal remains of the Poilu. It is not the Pantheon, it is the Arc de Triomphe. [...] This son of all the mothers who have not found their sons is much more than a great man: he represents the generation of sacrifice; he is the entire people. Do not confine him in the cold solitude of that monument before which the visitor hesitates; carry him to the top of the triumphant avenue, amidst those four arches open to the sky [...] and let the history of France seem to rise toward him, on festive evenings, with the crowd. Consider it. It is he, the unknown, the anonymous, the simple soldier, who gives full meaning to the Arc de Triomphe. [...] Leave the Pantheon to writers, scholars, and statesmen.

Henry de Jouvenel

It is not excluded that the decision of the British to bury an unknown soldier in Westminster Abbey on November 11, 1920, accelerated the debates in France. However, the Arc de Triomphe had not yet been chosen by the Chamber of Deputies. The debate intensified among different political groups. The burial place became a political issue. Some of the left, including Catholics for some, demanded the entry of an unknown soldier into the Pantheon, while personalities from the center-left, right, and far-right, as well as veterans, took sides for the Arc de Triomphe.

Some deputies rejected the Pantheon due to its ecclesiastical origin. The Unknown Soldier had to represent all the fallen fighters, so a secular and open temple is preferred. It was also considered that the Unknown Soldier was not a "Great Man", as the formula dedicated to those resting in the Pantheon described. He was anonymous. The Unknown Soldier was neither a great writer, nor a scientist, nor even a politician. He was much greater and should be able to rest in an exceptional place reserved for him because the sacrifice he represented was incomparable. Through him, the memory of millions of men was commemorated on this national altar. However, dissenting voices were heard. Some reject the Arc de Triomphe because, according to them, it was an honor reserved for the military. The Unknown Soldier would then be perceived as a "martyr of militarism". But the popular enthusiasm generated by the monument ended up convincing all the deputies.

On November 8, 1920, the deputies devoted the entire day to discuss the burial place. The Blue Horizon majority, under the leadership of Georges Clemenceau, finally convinced the Chamber. The Arc de Triomphe was unanimously chosen.

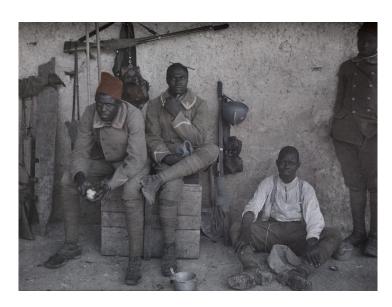
The year 1920 was marked by the celebrations of the Republic's fiftieth anniversary. In reference to the 1870 war against Prussia, Léon Gambetta was chosen as a symbol of patriotism and the founding father of the Third Republic. The government planned for his entry into the Pantheon on November 11, 1920. This marked a revenge for the 1870 defeat and paid tribute to the soldiers, some of whom were still alive in 1920. The ceremony was conceived to glorify the Republic's victory. As a political appearement, the decision was made to commemorate both the sacrifice and the honor of the Fatherland by combining the two tributes on November 11 (to the Unknown Soldier and Gambetta). This day was placed under the sign of national unity.

#### THE CHOICE OF THE SOLDIER

It was André Maginot, Minister of Pensions and himself a war veteran, who was entrusted with the task of presiding over the selection of the Unknown Soldier who would be buried under the Arc de Triomphe. Nine bodies of unknown soldiers were exhumed. They came from the deadliest battlefields of Flanders, Artois, Somme, Marne, Chemin des Dames, Champagne, Meuse, and Lorraine. In the end, only eight of them were placed in the underground citadel of Verdun. The bodies reached Verdun by military truck on the day of November 9. It was to the sound of cheers that each of the eight coffins enters the underground chapel, where the remains were arranged. Authorities took care to move them several times so that no one could identify their origin. Young soldiers were assigned to watch over the bodies. On November 10, 1920, André Maginot asked Auguste Thin, a young soldier from the 132nd infantry regiment, to choose among the bodies the one that would be buried under the Arc de Triomphe. He placed a bouquet of white and red carnations, picked on the battlefield of Verdun, on the 6th coffin, which corresponded to the addition of 1, 3, and 2, symbolic numbers of his regiment.



Even if it was not always obvious at the time, the Unknown Soldier carried with him the memory of these thousands of men who had come to fight for France. It was estimated that 600,000 indigenous soldiers were incorporated into the metropolitan troops, including 175,000 Algerians, 40,000 Moroccans, 80,000 Tunisians, and 180,000 sub-Saharan Africans. They fought both on the French front and in the Balkans. In total, nearly 57,000 of them perished in combat, and 14,000 were listed as missing. Other contingents, including Asian civilians, were mobilized at the rear as workers (around 200,000), making the journey to address the the metropolis to labor shortage.>>>>>>>>>>>



10. Four Senegalese soldiers in Saint-Ulrich, Paul Castelnau, June 6, 1917. Ministry of Culture - Media Library of Architecture and Heritage

11. The soldier Auguste Thin [1899-1982], who has just designated the coffin of the Unknown Soldier: in front of Mr. Maginot, Meurisse Agency, 1920

On November 10, a train from Verdun transported the body of the Unknown Soldier to Paris. The remains were placed at Denfert-Rochereau Square in a chapel near the heart of Gambetta. Throughout the night, the remains were displayed in the square, guarded by soldiers. Parisians could also come to pay their final respects during a wake. It is worth noting that Denfert-Rochereau Square was named after the Colonel who had defended the city of Belfort during the 1870 war. This choice reflected the idea of seeking revenge against Germany. Throughout the ceremony, this parallel between the 1870 war and the victory of 1918 was evident.

#### THE CEREMONY

The next day, at 9 AM, the national ceremony began. Comprising numerous troops, 23 flags returned by the Germans, and a portion of the government, the procession gathered along Boulevard de Port-Royal. Facing the Lion of Belfort statue, the two funeral carriages were arranged: on the left, the carriage holding Gambetta's heart urn, and on the right, the coffin of the Unknown Soldier placed on the carriage of a 155mm cannon drawn by six horses and covered with a tricolor flag.

The procession then set off towards the Pantheon for the first part of the ceremony. Among the attendees, there were also the Legion of Alsace and Lorraine, soldiers dressed in the blue and madder red uniforms of 1914, and veterans from 1870. Passing through Avenue de l'Observatoire and Boulevard Saint-Michel, the procession converged on Rue Soufflot, which had been adorned along its entire length with twelve monumental torches. There, under the peristyle of the former church, President Alexandre Millerand and the rest of the government awaited the coffin of the Unknown Soldier, following the urn of Gambetta. This was followed by a speech by Alexandre Millerand in which he compared the two defenders of the homeland, Léon Gambetta and "the obscure and glorious remains of one of its soldiers".

The ceremony continued, the two funeral carriages, followed by the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, and the marshals Joffre, Pétain, and Foch, were led towards the Place de l'Étoile. The funeral carriage of the Unknown Soldier was followed by a fictional family carrying violets (flowers of remembrance that grown on the battlefields and whose color recalled that of the uniforms of the poilus). The procession traveled along the Champs-Élysées from the Place de la Concorde and reached the Arc de Triomphe, where the two funeral carriages were positioned under the arch.

After the departure of the official authorities, the crowd gathered to pay tribute to the remains until the end of the day. Around 6 PM., the body of the Unknown Soldier was taken up to one of the rooms in the Arc de Triomphe, which was transformed into a chapel of rest for the occasion. At 7 PM, Gambetta's heart was escorted by a regiment of cuirassiers to the Pantheon; a temporary cenotaph was placed under the arch at the location of the future tomb. At the same time, festivities were organized by the City of Paris for the fiftieth anniversary of the Third Republic: 150 projectors illuminated the faces of the Arc de Triomphe during the evening. Throughout the day, festivities took place in various squares of the capital: at the City Hall, Concorde, and Nation, all illuminated for the ceremonies.

This ceremony was entirely part of the legacy of national tributes paid at the Arc de Triomphe since the Retour des cendres (literally "return of the ashes") of Napoleon I in December 1840. With its decidedly popular character, the tribute to the Unknown Soldier also recalled the funeral of Victor Hugo on May 31, 1885.



12. At the Lion of Belfort [Paris, 11-11-20, the coffin of the unknown soldier, Place Denfert-Rochereau], 1920

#### THE BURIAL OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

The ceremony having been somewhat rushed, the vault intended for the Unknown Soldier was not dug when it arrived at the Arc de Triomphe. For nearly three months, it was guarded day and night inside the monument. During this period, numerous tributes were paid to him. Personalities representing France's former allies visited the site. Generals Sackville West and Du Cane of the British Army, for example, went to the Arc de Triomphe to represent King George V, as did Prime Minister David Lloyd George. For Belgium, Baron Gaiffier, Ambassador in France, represented King Albert I. King Christian X of Denmark also participated to the ceremony.

Many of these delegations offered palm branches that still adorn the interior of the Arc de Triomphe. They are found notably in the eponymous room but also on the upper floor, which now constitutes the museum of the Arc de Triomphe. The final tribute was paid by rhetoric students from Parisian high schools.

Although there was once consideration of burying the Unknown Soldier inside the Arc de Triomphe itself, it was ultimately decided to place him under the grand vault, at the exact spot where his comrades marched on July 14, 1919. The final adjustments regarding the form of the burial were decided on January 25, 1920, in a Council of Ministers. As for the burial ceremony, it was kept simple and at an early hour. Seats were reserved for delegations of widows, ancestors, war orphans, as well as for the disabled and veterans.

This ceremony took place in the presence of the three marshals of France, the Military Governor of Paris, and General Gouraud, the future president of the Flamme sous l'Arc de triomphe association. Civil authorities were also represented by various ministers, including André Maginot and Louis Barthou. Any religious blessing was excluded to ensure the secular nature of the ceremony.

On January 28, 1921, at 8 AM, a delegation of noncommissioned officers, all military medal recipients, moved the body of the Unknown Soldier one last time from the upper room of the monument. On the coffin covered with a silk tricolor flag was the Medal of the city of Verdun, the only decoration of the Unknown Soldier at that time. The Minister of War, Louis Barthou, subsequently placed the three highest French military decorations: the Legion of Honor, the Médaille militaire, and the Croix de guerre.



In the name of France, piously grateful and unanimous, I salute the Unknown Soldier who died for her. This Legion of Honor, this Médaille militaire, this Croix de guerre that I have placed on his coffin are more and better than a symbol. They are the supreme tribute of the Homeland to the obscure and anonymous heroes who fell for her. The dead—especially these dead—command the living. Let us obey their voices to make, in the peace they have conquered, a united and industrious France, confident and strong.

Louis Barthou

The Minister of War had also just lost his only son on the battlefield. As the coffin of the Unknown Soldier was placed in the vault, the minister exclaimed in tears, "Long live France!" The tomb was intended to be simple, with a dark granite slab from the Vire region (in Normandy) covering the vault.

#### THE FLAME OF REMEMBRANCE

As time passed and with it the risk of fading memories of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a journalist named Gabriel Boissy proposed an idea for a daily rekindling of the Flame of Remembrance:



The Flame, like a will-o'-the-wisp, will burst from the ground. It will truly be like the soul of Resurgent Death. It will flicker, it will keep vigil.

Gabriel Boissy

This project received support from politicians such as André Maginot, then Minister of War, as well as the Minister of Public Instruction and the Director of the Beaux Arts. The design of the structure was entrusted to the architect Henri Favier, who envisioned the flame nozzle taking the form of a cannon mouth aimed towards the sky, embedded in an inverted shield whose chiseled surface is made up of twenty-five star-shaped blades. The realization of this ensemble was entrusted to the artistic ironworker Edgar

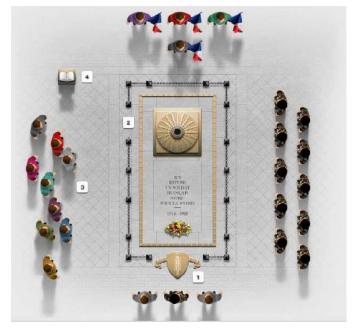
The flame was first lit on November 11, 1923, at 6:00 PM by André Maginot in the presence of the 5<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment, accompanied by Chopin's Funeral March. It had never been extinguished since. The Flame of the Nation is rekindled daily at 6:30 PM. >>>>>>>>>>

In 1925, the association La Flamme sous l'Arc de triomphe was founded. It ensures the daily rekindling alongside 150 associations of veterans who take turns each evening.

The ceremony begins at 6:30 PM and follows an unchanging ritual. Initially, the representatives of the invited association gather at the top of the Champs-Elysées avenue. Then, the wreath bearers proceed towards the Arc de Triomphe. Others take their places on either side of the sacred slab. The flag bearers are arranged in a circle under the monument's grand arch. After the arrival of the Flame flag, the bugler, and the drummer of the Republican Guard, the ringing of the taps entitled La Flamme is heard. Then, the authorities present are invited to lay their wreaths on the tomb and perform the rekindling using the historic sword. The artillery piece is then rotated, reigniting the flame. When the Last Post sounds, the flags are lowered, and a minute of silence is observed, followed by the playing of the Marseillaise. Participants then sign the historical guestbook of the Committee, just like the President of the Republic and visiting heads of states and sovereigns at the Arc de Triomphe. The ceremony concludes with the Hymn to the Unknown Soldier. >>>>>>>>>>>

#### THE MAJOR STAGES

- 1 Laying of wreath at the foot of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
- 2 Reviving the Flame of Remembrance.
- 3 Ceremony guests, typically individuals from civil society. Guests may also include elected officials or sovereigns and heads of state.
- 4 Signing the historical guestbook of the Flame Committee.

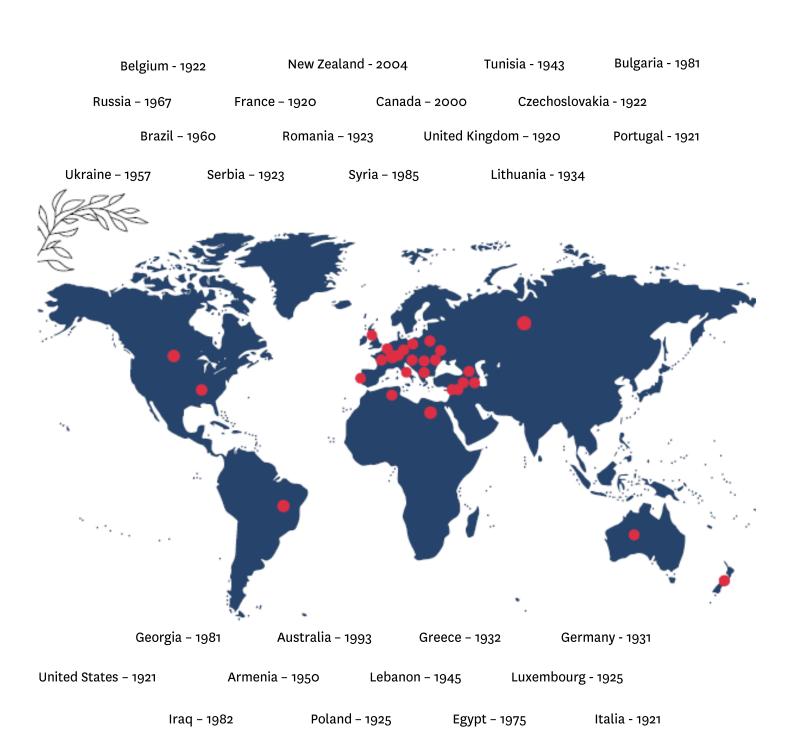


13. Plan created by the association La Flamme sous l'Arc de triomphe

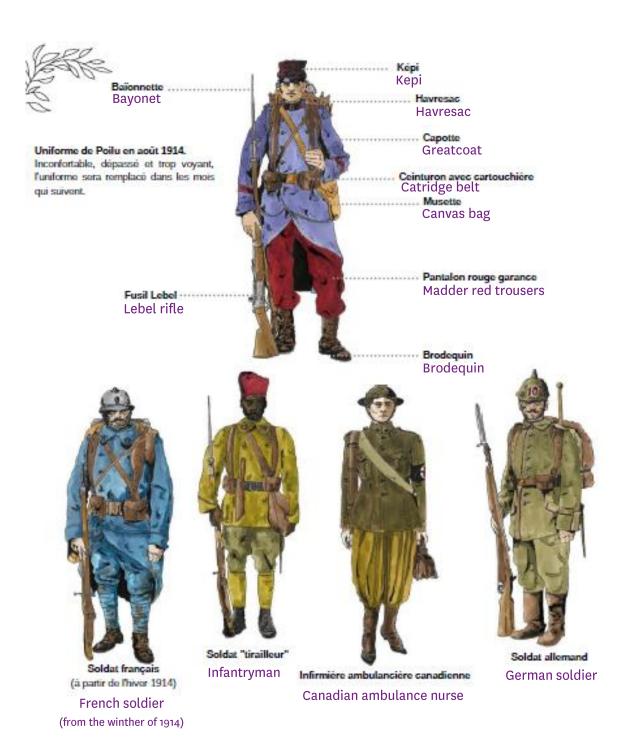
To discover the association La Flamme sous l'Arc de triomphe, or to participate in a ceremony, visit their website by clicking here

#### SOME UNKNOWN SOLDIERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Many countries followed this path by also burying an unknown soldier in highly symbolic places of remembrance.



Uncomfortable, outdated and too noticeable, it was replaced a few month later



## SGeorges Clémenceau (1841-1929)

Radical socialist politician. He distinguished himself in numerous battles against colonial policy and supported Émile Zola in the Dreyfus affair. He was nicknamed "the tiger" for the swipe he dealt to his opponents. While Raymond Poincaré faced many difficulties during World War I, he was called to the position of Prime Minister. Making frequent visits to the front, he was considered the "Father of Victory" after the Armistice and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles.

#### **S**Léon Gambetta (1838-1882)

Leon Gambetta was a lawyer in Paris and became the leader of the Republicans under the Second Empire. Elected as a deputy the following year, his colleagues feared his oratory skills. Opposing the war against Prussia, Gambetta, after the defeat at Sedan, proclaimed the Third Republic on September 4, 1870. Fleeing besieged Paris in a hot air balloon, he organized resistance in Tours. Despite refusing to run for the Presidency of the Republic, Gambetta nevertheless accepted the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies in 1879. He was appointed Prime Minister in 1881. Under pressure from the Radicals, Pacifists, and some Republicans, Gambetta resigned in January 1882 after 72 days in office. He died prematurely on December 31, 1882, from an infection resulting from a wound after handling a revolver. His body rested in the cemetery of Nice, while his heart, by decision of the Government, was buried in the Pantheon in November 1920.

## **S**André Maginot (1877-1932)

Originally from Eastern France, he pursued studies in law and political science. He became the director of the interior in the government of Algeria. When the war breaks out, he was undersecretary of war and enlisted as a simple soldier despite his status. During the conflict, he faced the enemy on several occasions and was wounded in November 1914. His injuries prevented him from returning to the front.

He was then appointed Minister of Colonies in 1917 and later Minister of Pensions in 1920. In the same year, he was tasked with organizing the ceremony for the selection of the Unknown Soldier's remains at the Verdun Citadel. As Minister of War from 1922, he implemented major construction projects for the defense line that would bear his name along the German borders.

#### SRaymond Poincaré (1860-1934)

Man of letters and a political figure belonging to the liberal movement, he was appointed minister on several occasions before being elected Prime Minister and later President of the French Republic between 1913 and 1920. Faced with political divisions prevailing in 1917, he called upon Georges Clemenceau, his rival, whom he appointed as Prime Minister.

## **S**Auguste Thin (1899-1982)

Grocery clerk, Auguste Thin enlisted in the infantry at the age of 19 in January 1918. In 1982, shortly before his death, he was awarded the Legion of Honor by President François Mitterrand. The ceremony took place at the Arc de Triomphe.



#### & DUVRAGES

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#### 04. Agence Rol

Gallica/BNF

#### 05. Agence de presse Meurisse

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#### o6. Agence Rol

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#### 07. Agence Meurisse

Gallica/BNF

#### 08. ECPAD/Défense

#### 09. Patrick Cadet

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#### 10. RMN-Grand Palais

#### 11. Agence Rol

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#### 12. Agence Rol

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#### 13. Comité de la Flamme sous

l'Arc de triomphe

#### Pages 15-14 Thomas Mélandre

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## @ SITE INTERNET

#### Arc de triomphe

### + LEARNING RESSOURCES

#### +1. page 01

Learning resource – The Arc de Triomphe

## Administrator Arnaud Vuille

Head of Cultural and Educational
Department, in charge of Public
Engagement and Programs
Viviana Gobbato
service.educatifarc@monumentsnationaux.fr

Writing Anthony Chenu,
Morgane Le Coadou, Thomas Mélandre,
Jean-Bernard Nutten, Gabriel Rivas
Illustrations Thomas Mélandre
Editing Viviana Gobbato
Graphic Design studio lebleu



