



Newsletter Issue 5, October 2009

Featured Isolated Burial: Dennis Dowd, WWI Infantryman and Pilot



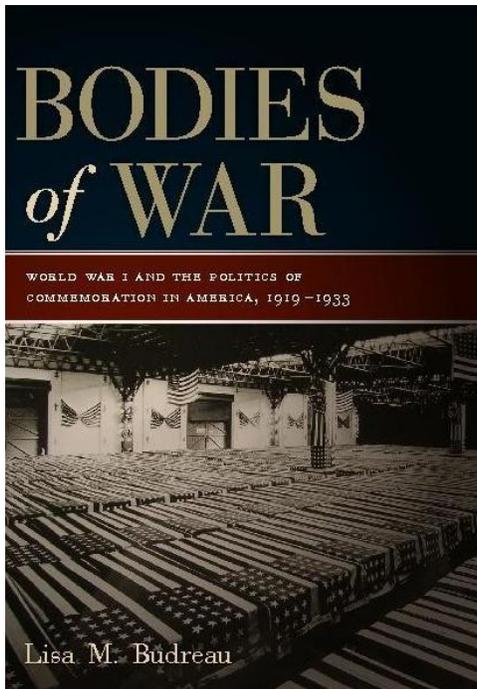
AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS LEAVING FOR ROUEN, AUGUST 25, 1914
CROSSING THE PLACE DE L'OPÉRA, PARIS

The four men in line just behind the flag (right) are (left to right): Elov Nilson, Alan Seeger, Dennis Dowd, Ferdinand Capdevielle. René Phélizot is carrying the large flag; he was relieved from time to time by Seeger

Dennis Dowd graduated from Georgetown University in 1908 and later attended law school at Columbia University. He was in Paris on legal business when World War I started, and immediately joined the French Foreign Legion. After passing a year in the trenches he was severely wounded in the Champagne region on 19 October 1915. During his many months in the hospital, he met and got engaged to Paulette de St Glin of Neuilly, France, daughter of a professor at the Sorbonne. They were to be married as soon as the proper paperwork could be processed. Back on active duty, Dowd joined the Lafayette Flying Corps and was in flight training at the Buc Aerodrome when he was killed in an airplane crash on 11 August 1916 at the age of 30. He is buried in an unmarked grave in the communal cemetery of St Germain en Laye, west of Paris. In the photo at left, he can be seen next to poet Alan Seeger, marching through Paris with a group of American volunteers. They later signed the flag, which is now in the French Army Museum at Les Invalides in Paris.

Recommended Book

Bodies of War (by Lisa Budreau, NYU Press, 2009, 336 pp) is being published in November 2009. The book relates the fascinating history of US memorialization after the First World War. Ms. Budreau explores the politics and processes of the competing interest groups involved in the three core components of commemoration: repatriation, remembrance, and return. She also talks about the American Legion and Gold Star Mother's pilgrimages. This book helps explain how we got to where we are today regarding overseas burials.



Update on American War Memorials Overseas

American War Memorials Overseas has a feature article appearing in the November issue of ARMY Magazine. Read it on our website at www.uswarmemorials.org. We attended the US Air Force SHAPE ball in October. The theme was the Lafayette Escadrille and we displayed pictures of memorials honoring those pilots. The current commander of the French Escadrille Lafayette made a donation to our organization on behalf of his unit.

Please consider a year end donation to help us continue our important work. Visit uswarmemorials.org/html/donate/php to donate online.