

# SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

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PRIMARY SOURCES

Monuments and Memory: Fort Worth's  
World War I "Tribute to Our Boys"

by

Hollace Ava Weiner\* and Lynna Kay Shuffield

**"Tribute to Our Boys," Congregation Ahavath Sholom,  
Fort Worth, Texas, 1920, restored 2017**

The massive marble montage, etched with the names of eighty-one Jewish doughboys, imparts lessons about monuments, memory, and changing perceptions of the Great War waged a century ago. Unveiled in Fort Worth with fanfare and news coverage on Armistice Day 1920, the towering "TRIBUTE TO OUR BOYS ❖ WORLD WAR ❖ 1914-1918" was embedded in a lobby wall at the Hebrew Institute, a recreation and education building on the grounds of Congregation Ahavath Sholom.<sup>1</sup> With two Stars of David and a pair of American flags, the ten-foot-tall tableau echoed with cultural pluralism, expressing ethnic pride in a patriotic context and adding layers of meaning to the three-story downtown structure.<sup>2</sup>

Yet in 1951 when the Hebrew Institute closed, there was no designated space for the monument in the building that replaced it. The marble honor roll was dismantled, separated into several vertical tablets, and stacked in a storage room. Forgotten for the next three decades, the war memorial was rediscovered in the autumn of 1980 as the congregation readied to move into a midcentury-modern building. Overjoyed at the discovery, the building chairman, whose father's name was on the monument, opted to frame the four marble tablets and hang them in a landscaped courtyard at the entrance to the new house of worship.<sup>3</sup>

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Amid the excitement, no one realized that part of the original montage was missing—a fifth slab of marble inscribed with the monument’s date of origin and its sponsor, the Ladies Auxiliary to the Hebrew Institute. “If we had found any other pieces, we would have framed them,” insisted former congregation secretary Ethel Schectman, who was present the day the tablets resurfaced. “There was plenty of room to hang more pieces if we had found any.”<sup>4</sup> Inexplicably, an element of community history acknowledging efforts of women on the home front had disappeared. Nonetheless, the newly framed and arranged marble roster looked artistic and dignified in its outdoor setting. The veterans’ names, etched in black, were visible from afar: *Adelberg, Burling, Cohn, Gernsbacher, Jacobs, Katz, Rosenthal, Sturman, Veit*. Descendants of these soldiers still lived in the city. The monument conveyed continuity, *l’dor vador*.

With exposure to the sun and rain, however, the dark ink highlighting each veteran’s name faded. The colors on the American flags chipped away until the monument appeared virtually white-on-white. Only upon close examination could onlookers discern the deeply etched letters on the roster. Pedestrians walked by without noticing. Few members of Jewish War Veterans Post 755—the local men and women who had served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and Afghanistan—realized that a World War I memorial was in their midst.<sup>5</sup>

“Although monuments are built and dedicated with great enthusiasm,” observed G. Kurt Piehler, director of the Institute of World War II and the Human Experience, “interest in them frequently diminishes rapidly. In many places, monuments are not adequately maintained, and they deteriorate from the continual assault of pigeons and acid rain. . . . To most Americans the First World War—the war to end all wars—is not even a distant memory.”<sup>6</sup>

**Opposite:** *On Armistice Day 1942, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram ran this photograph of Rabbi Philip Graubart standing beside the original World War I Jewish honor roll, a marble montage embedded in a wall at the Hebrew Institute in Fort Worth. To the left was an easel with the names of local Jewish men and women then serving in World War II. (Courtesy of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Arlington, Texas.)*

In 2016, as the nation readied to mark the centennial of America's entry into World War I, three Texas historians began researching the names, biographies, and wartime experiences of the eighty-one soldiers listed on the tablets.<sup>7</sup> A call for World War I memorabilia reaped vintage photographs, mess kits, helmets, bayonets, and keepsakes that had belonged to grandfathers and great-uncles. These were displayed in curated exhibits at the city's two synagogues, for the doughboys had ties to both congregations—Ahavath Sholom (known as “the Shul”), a Conservative synagogue founded as Orthodox in 1892, and Beth-El (called “the temple”), a Reform congregation that dated to 1902. Among Fort Worth Jews, there had always been a degree of intermingling and intramarriage among families from the temple and the shul. During the World War I centennial year, Sunday school students from both congregations toured the exhibits. The United States World War One Centennial Commission added Fort Worth's Jewish monument to a map of First World War sites. A photo of the honor roll, along with a soldier's pocket-size siddur, was included in the multicultural section of a citywide World War I exhibit.<sup>8</sup> Ahavath Sholom's cemetery caretaker, a Catholic Air Force veteran, volunteered to darken the eighty-one names, install lighting, and return the monument to visibility.

During the centenary celebration, the Tribute to Our Boys reemerged as a cherished shrine and valuable primary source that provided facts about the Fort Worth Jewish community in the late 1910s, insight into the psychology of ethnic immigrant groups, and perspective on the Great War during the decades since. It became a hallowed place where descendants, veterans, and history buffs observed the mitzvah of honoring those who preceded them. The renewed interest demonstrates how anniversaries and commemorations can turn into highly reflexive moments, occasions to reframe and collectively analyze the past. As sociologist James W. Loewen writes in *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*, a monument is a “tale of two eras,” reflecting the present as well as the year when it was unveiled.<sup>9</sup> Thus this is the story of the monument and its multiple meanings.

#### *Wartime Roots*

On its face, Fort Worth's Tribute to Our Boys relayed the pride and optimism of its originator, the Ladies Auxiliary to the Hebrew Institute.



Jewish women on the home front were deeply connected to the war. At the downtown Hebrew Institute they wrapped bandages for the Red Cross, knit foot warmers for troops in the trenches, chaperoned Saturday night socials for soldiers, and invited Jewish personnel stationed in the region to Purim balls, Passover seders, and Hanukkah parties. In the educational sphere, the auxiliary supervised the Sabbath school at the Hebrew Institute, paid teacher salaries, upgraded kitchen equipment, and filled its treasury with profits from an annual New Year's Eve dinner for up to 250 guests.<sup>10</sup>

The Ladies Auxiliary dated to November 1915, the year the Hebrew Institute opened its doors. The auxiliary's forerunner, the Ladies Hebrew Relief Society (LHRS), boasted a membership of over two hundred women who organized in 1903 to help resettle destitute immigrants fleeing the Kishinev pogroms. According to its president, Texas-born Sarah Levy (Mrs. L. F.) Shanblum, whose spouse was a Polish immigrant, the relief society provided refugee families with food, coal, clothing, "friendship and sociability," and raised "many hundreds of dollars . . . for hospital fees and doctors."<sup>11</sup> In 1909, when Ahavath Sholom bought land for an Orthodox Jewish cemetery, an offshoot of the LHRS organized the Ladies Cemetery Society. This group's perennial president, Rebecca Goldstein, was an unmarried woman addressed as "Aunt Becky." Under her domineering leadership, the Ladies Cemetery Society stitched burial shrouds, paid a sexton, and raised money for concrete curbs around children's graves, walkways, fence repairs, topsoil, fertilizer, and shrubs.<sup>12</sup>

These assertive women combined forces in 1915 to form the Ladies Auxiliary to the Hebrew Institute. Although women held no seat on the board of the Hebrew Institute and had no vote at synagogue meetings, they had clout. They had developed the means and the moxie to steer projects through to completion. After the World War, their goal was to research, create, and underwrite the massive soldier honor roll that would become the focal point in the lobby of the Hebrew Institute. This project fit into their history of fostering unity and pride among the diverse elements within the Jewish community.

The auxiliary's charter president was Betty Gordon (Mrs. Sam) Rosen, a Beaumont native married to a Russian immigrant who was a leading builder in Fort Worth. Betty Rosen, along with auxiliary vice president Rebecca Goldstein, Sarah Shanblum, and others, initially gathered

local soldiers' names through word of mouth. They then publicized the project in the November 21, 1919, edition of the *Jewish Monitor*, a weekly ethnic newspaper published in Fort Worth. In the paper's widely read social column, "Mrs. Sam Rosen" announced the auxiliary's intention "to put up a tablet in the lobby of the Hebrew Institute upon which will be engraved the names of all Jewish boys who participated in the world war." The article listed sixty-eight soldiers, asked if any names were misspelled, and gave readers a four-day deadline to notify Rosen of additional sons, brothers, husbands, and fathers who merited inclusion on the tableau.<sup>13</sup> She received thirteen additional names.

Not surprisingly, the auxiliary missed several soldiers—among them 2nd Lt. David Carb, who enlisted at the war's outbreak and fought with the French Foreign Legion.<sup>14</sup> One soldier's name is misspelled—Private Sam Sheinberg, a Russian immigrant whose last name is incorrectly etched in stone as "Shoinberg," likely the way he pronounced it. The eighty-one soldiers ultimately listed on the tablet are grouped by rank, yet ten of their military grades are incorrect.<sup>15</sup> The tablet demoted one soldier from lieutenant to private. Nine soldiers, among them Betty Rosen's son, got promotions for posterity. In the early decades of the century, there was no feasible way for a volunteer association to comb through War Department records to verify names, ranks, and hometowns of soldiers.<sup>16</sup> Despite these omissions and flaws, Fort Worth's Tribute to Our Boys demonstrates the optimism and determination typical of grassroots groups that believed the conflict in Europe was the "war to end all wars."<sup>17</sup>

The United States entered the war in Europe on April 6, 1917. Less than six weeks later, Congress enacted the Selective Service Act requiring that males between ages twenty-one and thirty register for the National Army.<sup>18</sup> The war had begun during the summer of 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, triggered a chain reaction that pulled Russia, France, Germany, Belgium, and Great Britain into the conflict. Entangling alliances led to the involvement of more than one hundred countries and a conflagration soon characterized as the Great War. Meanwhile, Fort Worth, a southwestern city nicknamed Cowtown and home to more than eighty thousand residents, was keenly connected to wartime events. During summer 1916, the city's stockyards shipped 13,950 horses and mules to Allied cavalry troops overseas.<sup>19</sup>

*Camp Bowie from the air, taken from a page of the photograph album compiled by Sergeant C. P. Devos while the Royal Flying Corps was training in its winter quarters near Fort Worth, Texas, c. 1918.*  
(Wikimedia Commons.)

Following Congress's declaration of war, Fort Worth lobbied the War Department to construct a military post on the city's west side to train recruits from Texas and Oklahoma. The result was Camp Bowie, a 2,285-acre base with cavalry stables, barracks, trenches, a hospital, and a preexisting trolley line extending downtown. All local clergy, including the city's two rabbis, Ahavath Sholom's Charles Blumenthal and Beth-El's G. George Fox, became part-time chaplains.<sup>20</sup> The army camp brought the war into everyone's home. More than one hundred thousand soldiers passed through the facility for basic training. Three airfields opened around the city's periphery, drawing experienced Canadian fliers and American aviators in training. Air combat was in its infancy, and the Texas prairie, with its mild winters, was deemed ideal for flying runs.<sup>21</sup>

A fatal crash on January 15, 1918, killed Cadet James Jacob Joffe, a Jewish pilot from Manhattan. His "machine," an Airco de Havilland bomber, "crashed to the ground," according to news reports.<sup>22</sup> The local Jewish community responded with Orthodox rituals carried out by the

men's *chevra kadisha*, a white linen shroud sewn by the Ladies Cemetery Society, a funeral service conducted by Rabbi Blumenthal, and interment in a plain pine casket at Hebrew Cemetery. The aviator's name is not etched on the Hebrew Institute's marble honor roll. Technically, he was not one of "our boys" — not a local youth. Yet the local Jewish community tended to his burial and months later unveiled a granite tombstone inscribed in Hebrew and English with the epitaph: "Died in Service of His Country."<sup>23</sup>

*Gravestone of James Jacob Joffe, the Jewish pilot from Immigrant who died in a training flight near Fort Worth and is buried at Ahavath Sholom's Hebrew Cemetery. A Hebrew inscription reads: Here lies Yaakov Yokol, a Volunteer in the Army Pilot Unit, Son of Father Joffe, Born 5th of Elul 5655. (Courtesy of the Fort Worth Jewish Archives at Beth-El Congregation.)*

#### *Statistical Analysis of Honor Roll and Motivations to Fight*

The eighty-one soldiers listed on the Fort Worth tablets represented 3.6 percent of the local Jewish population of 2,250. (Citywide, the percentage of men in uniform was comparable.)<sup>24</sup> The Jewish roster includes twenty-two immigrants — all but one born in lands under imperial Russia. Twenty-three of the Fort Worth doughboys served in France. Family ties were common among these servicemen. The marble roster lists thirteen sets of brothers, four sets of brothers-in-law, and five clusters of cousins.

The interrelationships among these soldiers illustrate the tight-knit nature of the Jewish community. These connections also explain Betty Rosen's confidence that an item published in the social columns of the *Jewish Monitor* would adequately spread word of the Ladies Auxiliary's plans for an honor roll set in stone.

One soldier listed on the honor roll has a star by his name, indicating death in combat. He was twenty-seven-year-old Private Samuel Elly Raiz. Raiz, a naturalized American from Lithuania who had come to the United States eleven years earlier and moved in with an aunt and uncle, was reported missing in action September 19, 1918, during the bloody battle of Saint-Mihiel. His remains were never recovered. Thus his name is among 284 inscribed on the Tablet of the Missing at Saint-Mihiel American Cemetery and Memorial in Thiaucourt-Regniéville, Lorraine, France. In Texas, he had managed an office in Wichita Falls for his extended family's pipe and supply business. Although working 115 miles away from Fort Worth, he was registered with a local draft board. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reported that Raiz was Tarrant County's fourteenth overseas casualty.<sup>25</sup>

Another immigrant on the honor roll, Polish-born Private Tony Bergman, a naturalized American, survived the battle of Saint-Mihiel. He returned to Texas still carrying a flame for his childhood sweetheart, Rosa Oberhaut, a Warsaw girl he yearned to bring to America and marry. After the war, she was still in Poland, contending with bureaucracies on both sides of the ocean. She finally reached Ellis Island in January 1921, only to be blocked by skeptical U.S. immigration officials who doubted her story of a fiancé in Fort Worth, a shoemaker with his own shop. Authorities detained Rosa several days until Tony arrived in New York, armed with a marriage license issued from the Tarrant County Courthouse.<sup>26</sup>

Also named on the monument is Sergeant Byron Gernsbacher, a second-generation Texan assigned to the Army's Graves Registration Service. His gruesome task had been to oversee "seventy-five men, looking everywhere for the bodies of the Americans, through thickets, bushes and briars, with deep snow on the ground." In a letter to his hometown newspaper, he wrote, "The majority of the men that the battalion has buried are men of the Ninetieth Division, who were killed in the great Saint-Mihiel drive." The sergeant, whose father was among the founders of Beth-

*Items related to Private Samuel Raiz, a Texas soldier missing in action, are part of Fort Worth's exhibit "Our Jewish Soldiers in 'The Great War.'" Raiz, who fought with the 360th Infantry, died September 19, 1918, during the Battle of Saint-Mihiel. The helmet, on loan from the Military Museum of Fort Worth, is identical to equipment issued to Raiz. On the underside of the rim, the soldier who wore the helmet printed the names of the battles in which he fought. Raiz's picture and World War I service card are included in the exhibit, as is text from the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reporting his death.*

*(Courtesy of the Fort Worth Jewish Archives at Beth-El Congregation.)*

El Congregation, returned to Fort Worth and his family's kitchen supply business in 1919.<sup>27</sup> The names of two of his brothers, Roy and Laurence Gernsbacher, are also etched on the honor roll.

Although no draft dodging was reported among Jews from Fort Worth, a twenty-two-year-old recruit listed on the Hebrew Institute's monument took his own life in a central Texas hotel room near his training base and was buried in Ahavath Sholom's Hebrew Cemetery.<sup>28</sup> His death is not alluded to on the tablets.

*The Melting-Pot Army*

During and even after the wartime era, questions of dual loyalty plagued Jews and other ethnic immigrant communities across the United States. Would German immigrants fight the Kaiser? Would Irish loyalists rally behind Great Britain and champion the Allies? Could Italian Americans be loyal to both the United States and the Pope? Irish and German coalitions that lobbied for U.S. neutrality provided reason for suspicion.<sup>29</sup> Advertisers boycotted German-language newspapers, forcing many out of business; high schools dropped German-language classes; "volunteer watchdog societies" spied on previously popular and jocular German-American gatherings and reported afterwards to federal officials. "Any phrases that sounded German were changed."<sup>30</sup>

In Fort Worth, Ella Behrens, an Army nurse at the Camp Bowie hospital, was overheard conversing in German with a colleague and singing a German lullaby to a patient. Although born in Texas, Behrens was of German descent. She was jailed for eight days on suspicion of being an enemy agent and contaminating soldiers' food with influenza germs. Upon her release, she received a dishonorable discharge for being AWOL during her stay in the city jail. "For years, she lived with the stigma of being 'the German spy,'" and she could not find employment. She fought to clear her name. In 1949, when Behrens turned sixty-seven, an army review board exonerated her, describing the nurse as a victim of "war time rumors." The review board changed her military discharge to "honorable" and ordered her reimbursement for back pay.<sup>31</sup>

The stigma against Germans even affected the British-born rabbi at Houston's Congregation Beth Israel. In 1920 he legally changed the spelling of his surname from *Barnstein* to *Barnston* after New York customs officials, suspecting he was German, rudely detained him when he reentered the U.S. after a visit to England.<sup>32</sup>

Wild xenophobia seeped into every corner of American life, and Jews also faced concerns about possible dual loyalties. Would Jews who had fled conscription in the Czar's army fight under the Stars and Stripes? Was Zionism in sync with the Allied cause? For Jews, the answer was "yes" to both questions. American Jews, similar to Slavic Americans, had multiple motives for fighting, mainly the relief of relatives stranded in

war-torn eastern Europe and the hope for self-determination and nationhood for their people. The Great War gave Jews reason to believe that “the early Zionist vision” might be “transformed from fantasy to reality.” When the Ottoman Empire entered the Great War on the side of the Central Powers, Jews took heart. Among the Allies’ goals was ousting the Turks from Jerusalem. Great Britain, moreover, issued the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, favoring “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”<sup>33</sup>

When Jerusalem fell to the British in December 1917, Jews in Fort Worth rejoiced with a celebration at the Hebrew Institute. Rabbis delivered speeches. Children from Beth-El and Ahavath Sholom performed a “historical sketch, portraying the principal events in the history of Palestine for centuries past . . . and show[ed] the capture of Jerusalem and the return of the Jews to the Holy Land.” At the pageant’s conclusion, adults elected delegates to the Texas Zionist Association’s upcoming convention. The evening ended with musical renditions of *Hatikvah* and *The Star Spangled Banner*. Several soldiers whose names are etched on the World War I honor roll came from families active in the Fort Worth Zionist chapter. These included Sol Wolffson, who worked with the Jewish Welfare Board before being drafted, and the Jacobs brothers: Sam, who served in an infantry unit, and Harry, who trained for the cavalry. In Fort Worth, many young Jewish men of their generation grew up observing Judaic traditions and embracing their dual identity, the same sentiment broadcast on the marble honor roll with its images of American flags and Stars of David.<sup>34</sup>

War memorials elsewhere across America reflect similar pride and ethnic pluralism among minority communities. For example, a bronze honor roll attached to two vertical standards in Ossining, New York, is dedicated to Swedish Methodist soldiers. In Richmond, Virginia, a bronze honor roll and a stained-glass window honoring Jewish participation in the war are in the vestibule and sanctuary at Congregation Beth Ahabah.<sup>35</sup> An honor roll unveiled in 1919 at the Jewish Hospital in Philadelphia listed eighty-four staff physicians and nurses who took part in the war, among them three with gold stars next to their names. In other locales, memorials to Russian, Slavic, and Polish doughboys are part of the landscape. Native Americans, too, drew attention to their American patriotism with monuments in Arizona, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin that highlight



wartime service of Choctaw, Osage, Pima, and Winnebago soldiers. African Americans erected at least nineteen memorials, a dozen located in southern and border states.<sup>36</sup> Blacks touted their service even though the War Department assigned African Americans to segregated platoons with white commanding officers. The military, nonetheless, worked hard to “forge a new relationship between new immigrant[s] . . . and their adopted country.”<sup>37</sup>

The armed forces had little choice but to foster pride in America’s ethnic pluralism. Eighteen percent of United States troops were foreign-born. The army counted among its ranks soldiers of forty-six nationalities and sixty-seven different religions.<sup>38</sup> To mold soldiers of such diverse backgrounds into fighting units, the War Department consulted sociologists and ethnic organizations. Where needed, bilingual soldiers fluent in Italian, Polish, Russian, Yiddish, and an array of Slavic languages were assigned to platoons with a multitude of immigrants. Regulations forbade officers from using ethnic slurs. In concert with the YMCA, Knights of Columbus, and Jewish Welfare Board, the War Department adopted measures to help soldiers maintain “pride in ethnicity” and “instill American patriotism and loyalty.” Chaplains (among them twelve rabbis assigned to the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe) learned to administer rituals of many faiths. Soldiers received furloughs for cultural holidays. Greek soldiers, for example, received furloughs for the Feast of St. Nicholas.<sup>39</sup> Jews were allowed days off to attend observances for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover. Historian Christopher Sterba, who examined Jewish and Italian American enclaves in New York City and New Haven, Connecticut, concluded that those who served in uniform were no longer “as culturally and politically isolated as they were before 1917.”<sup>40</sup>

Fort Worth’s Jews, comprising a mere 0.3 percent of the local population, were already deeply entwined in their local civic community because there were not enough Jews to remain isolated or ghettoized. In Fort Worth, for example, as early as 1896, the mayor attended the Jewish community’s annual Purim Ball.<sup>41</sup> At the groundbreaking for the Hebrew Institute in 1914, according to the *Star-Telegram*, children sang “both patriotic melodies and the sacred songs of Zion.”<sup>42</sup> The mayor presciently spoke of the “patriotism” of American Jews, noting that two months earlier, when President Woodrow Wilson had ordered Marines to intervene

in Mexico, “one of the first soldiers to die for the flag at Vera Cruz” was Jewish.<sup>43</sup> Six years later, when the Tribute to Our Boys was unveiled, similar speeches and music were an integral part of the occasion.

*Postwar Letdown*

Following the armistice and pronouncements of pluralism surrounding the Allied victory, recession and unemployment gradually gripped the nation. Unemployment fed nativism, antisemitism, and the Ku Klux Klan. “The anti-foreign animus of the native white stock” grew vocal.<sup>44</sup> Pressure to be “100% American” increased. Optimistic, altruistic words mouthed during Victory Day celebrations and etched on marble monuments no longer rang true. In the early 1920s, Congress enacted restrictive immigration laws. In Fort Worth, veterans of the Great War aged as they weathered the Great Depression. In the wake of the disastrous treaty ending the war, the threat of another war could not be denied. Cynicism and disenchantment developed toward the Great War.<sup>45</sup> Americans realized how naïve they had been to believe in a war to end all wars. With Hitler’s Nazi army on the march in 1939, the Great War became the “First” World War. Monuments that “legitimise[d] the war” seemed obsolete.<sup>46</sup>

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Fort Worth Jewish community began posting an alphabetical list of local men and women who joined the armed forces. This time no grassroots movement arose to etch names in stone. Rather, the Ladies Auxiliary’s long-range plan was to engage a scribe to write each soldier’s name in calligraphy on a paper scroll, a less permanent, less costly endeavor. Finances had little to do with this decision. Both congregations were booming, as was Fort Worth’s aeronautics industry, which recruited hundreds of out-of-town engineers and assembly-line workers. “After World War II ended, communities were not about to rush out to commemorate it,” sociologist Loewen observed. “[T]heir experience with World War I memorials had soured them on the enterprise. . . . Moreover, the Cold War began immediately, so no one could be sure that the fruits of victory included peace.”<sup>47</sup>

In 1951, Fort Worth’s Jewish World War I memorial was disassembled and put into storage when the Hebrew Institute’s doors were shuttered. At that time, twenty-four of the veterans whose names were

*Pvt. Samuel Sheinberg, a Russian immigrant and western-wear salesman, applied for citizenship while in uniform. On the honor roll, his name is misspelled as "Shoinberg," likely the way he pronounced it.  
(Courtesy of Nancy Sheinberg.)*

*Pvt. Shady Sankary, a Syrian immigrant, was the father of Al Sankary, the building committee chairman who in 1980 rediscovered the marble honor roll.  
(Courtesy of the Fort Worth Jewish Archives at Ahavath Sholom.)*

*2nd Lt. David Greines, a quartermaster during World War I and an attorney in civilian life, was Ahavath Sholom's building committee chairman in 1950 when the marble honor roll was dismantled and placed in storage.  
(Courtesy of the Fort Worth Jewish Archives at Beth-El Congregation.)*

inscribed on the honor roll still lived in the city. Many of those men were active in Jewish and civic affairs. Surprisingly, no space was reserved in the next house of worship to display the honor roll. This was likely a conscious decision, because the building committee's general chairman was David Greines, a veteran whose name was among the eighty-one inscribed on the war monument.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, the Ladies Auxiliary was still active; its existing minutes from the early 1950s make no mention of the marble tablets. Americans were experiencing war fatigue. With World War II in the past and the Korean War under way, the Great War had lost its relevance and luster.

Elsewhere, many World War I memorials fell to neglect. In the Baltimore suburbs, a granite monument to Jewish veterans erected during the 1920s on the grounds of the Mt. Pleasant Sanatorium Jewish Home for Consumptives was abandoned to weeds when the hospital closed in the 1960s.<sup>49</sup> On monuments at Stevenson Park in Oak Park, Illinois, and Forest Hills in Boston, metal memorial plaques disappeared. At Saratoga Park in Brooklyn, New York, thieves stole a doughboy sculpture. In Omaha, Nebraska, a statue lost its left hand in 1941 and vanished altogether in 1974. Art historian Mark Levitch, who in 2009 embarked on a quest to inventory World War I monuments across the U.S., documented damaged, vandalized, and crumbling statuary nationwide. "In our country, we give most attention to World War II and the Civil War," he said in a 2014 interview. "World War I is very much overlooked."<sup>50</sup>

In Fort Worth, what was stowed away and forgotten in the 1950s resurfaced as a treasure in 1980. "I remember how excited we were when we found it," said Ethel Schectman, former congregational secretary. "It was in a storage room behind the main sanctuary. We didn't even know it was there. It shows we still remembered our roots."<sup>51</sup> Among those who shared her excitement was building chairman Al Sankary, whose father's name is inscribed on the monument. Another familiar name on the monument was eighty-four-year-old philanthropist Leo Potishman, one of the Jewish community's few surviving World War I veterans. Fittingly, Potishman was honorary building chairman. Sankary made the decision to frame each of the four tablets and mount them outdoors, where their colors faded as the war once again receded into the past.<sup>52</sup>

*Centennial Observations*

The World War I centenary has led to reexamination of the Great War from its origins to its battles, its scope, its peace treaty, and its relevance. The Great War ushered in an era of potential mass destruction. Its outcome shaped events as well as the map of the world for the next century. The United States emerged as a world policeman. Ethnic hostilities in the Balkans, which touched off the war, simmer still. War turned into a "continuum," and Armistice Day became Veterans Day.<sup>53</sup>

If, as the sociologist James Loewen observed, a war memorial is a "tale of two eras," what sort of stories emerge from Fort Worth's Tribute to Our Boys and from the myriad stone, metal, and glass monuments across the nation that pay homage to the war? One trend is honor rolls.<sup>54</sup> World War I, which introduced aerial bombs, mustard gas, and indiscriminate carnage, minimized the individual. The database of the World War I Memorial Inventory Project reveals a nationwide movement to produce honor rolls that listed not only those who perished, but all soldiers regardless of their role. High school and college alumni groups, fraternities, railroad employee unions, postal workers, and churches produced soldier honor rolls. These countless community honor rolls served to elevate the "status of the common soldier" and "democratize the memory of modern war."<sup>55</sup> Thus, Fort Worth's Tribute to Our Boys was part of a national trend.

In 1921 the numbing machinery of modern war and the post-World War I grassroots emphasis on the individual led Congress to follow the lead of Britain and France to create the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. The ritual caught on. Acknowledging that in every war many battlefield dead go unidentified, more than forty nations from Argentina to Zimbabwe today commemorate with honor and pageantry an unknown soldier. Despite rising body counts, honor rolls and homages to unknown soldiers remind people that wars are waged by solitary soldiers, each with a poignant story.

The stories told in 1920 when the Fort Worth monument was unveiled were of youths ready to conquer the world and celebrate their hyphenated, bicultural identities. Biographies of these same men, researched over the past year, reveal that "our boys" went into retailing, real estate, medicine, law, philanthropy, politics, electronics, engineering, and

international business. One soldier, Ephriam Rosen, is the namesake of a Fort Worth city street. Another, Ben Rosenthal, has a small park named in his honor. A third, Leo Potishman, set up an eponymous foundation that contributes to the arts and social causes. A fourth, Abe Greines (whose brother David is also listed on the monument) became president of the school board and was honored with his name on an athletic complex. Most of "our boys" married, had children and grandchildren, and moved far afield. Twenty of the eighty-one doughboys named on the monument have relatives who remain part of the Fort Worth Jewish community. The honor roll has echoes of past and present as well as meaning for the future.

To some analysts, a war memorial is a comforting way to see the past "through a veil of nostalgia."<sup>56</sup> To others, a memorial is never "stable and objective" but rather a place for an "interpretation of history."<sup>57</sup> "Perceptions of irony prevail," declared cultural historian Paul Fussell in *The Great War and Modern Memory*. Referring to World War I as a "terrible and apparently pointless war of attrition," he conceded that monuments offer the "comfort of remembering."<sup>58</sup> His views resonate in the works of Viet Thanh Nguyen, a Vietnamese American who links America's victories in the world wars with its continuing military involvement in third-world nations. With echoes of cultural pluralism and ambivalence, Nguyen writes, "America promises hybridity to its newcomers, the dream of becoming something different on American soil." As he wrestles with the validity of war monuments, particularly those that record names, he concludes that a wall is "a site of memory [and] it is better to have a memorial that can be ignored than no memorial at all."<sup>59</sup>

Although Fort Worth's Tribute to Our Boys was unveiled in 1920 in a small Jewish enclave in a far corner of the diaspora, those who created the monument were neither small-minded nor myopic. The war monument demonstrates deep religious roots and continuity of tradition stretching to biblical times and the Book of Joshua. After Joshua led forty thousand soldiers across the Jordan River, his warriors constructed a monument of twelve heavy stones, each representing a tribe of Israel. While consecrating the monument, Joshua said, "When your children shall ask . . . in time to come. . . What mean these stones? . . . let your children know."<sup>60</sup> Biblical liturgy also provides precedent for rosters of remembrance. The prophet Isaiah declared that even those who have no

descendants shall have “within my walls a monument . . . an everlasting memorial.”<sup>61</sup> The words Isaiah used were *yad vashem*, implying a towering monument to memorialize names and deeds. The prophet’s enduring phrase became the name of Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Center, which seeks to record the honor roll of individuals who perished in the Shoah. War monuments, from ancient days to the present, stand as primary sources that bring a search for meaning, remembrance, and identity to their surroundings.

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**“Tribute to Our Boys,” Congregation Ahavath Sholom,  
Fort Worth, Texas, 1920, restored 2017**

*(Photograph by Ellen Appel. Courtesy of the Fort Worth Jewish Archives  
at Congregation Ahavath Sholom.)*

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 NOTES

Special thanks to Bob Sumien, owner of Professional Irrigation landscapers, for volunteering to restore the World War I memorial. Kudos to Joann English, secretary at Ahavath Sholom, who formatted the earliest drafts of this article for an eight-page, fold-over booklet, "Our Jewish Soldiers in 'The Great War': Commemorating the Centennial of WWI." The booklet, which accompanies the exhibits at Beth-El and Ahavath Sholom, provides a chronology of the tablets' whereabouts and names the sets of brothers, brothers-in-law, and cousins among the local veterans, as well as the doughboys who were immigrants and those who served overseas. An article published in the *Texas Jewish Post* on March 30, 2017, commemorating the World War I centenary and publicizing a service at Ahavath Sholom, summarizes the history of the tablets and includes eight paragraphs from this essay.

<sup>1</sup> "Tablets in Honor of Jewish Veterans to be Unveiled," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 13, 1920; "Jewish War Memorial Slab to be Unveiled," *Dallas Morning News*, November 14, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> James M. Mayo, *War Memorials as Political Landscape: The American Experience and Beyond* (New York, 1988), 4; John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1992), 59.

<sup>3</sup> The building chairman was Abraham "Al" Sankary, whose father, Sh'Hade "Shady" Sankary, was a Syrian immigrant whose World War I photo in uniform is in the Ahavath Sholom anniversary book. *Congregation Ahavath Sholom, 5741-1980* (Fort Worth, 1980), 77, 81.

<sup>4</sup> "I think whatever they found they used. It's possible one of the pieces got broken in the earlier move, or been damaged for all we know when they were taking it off the wall. What we found is what was put out there. If we had found any other pieces, it would have all been together in that place. There was plenty of room in the storage room to have more pieces." Ethel Schechtman, interviews conducted by Hollace Weiner, November 16, 2016, and March 2, 2017. Schechtman was secretary of the congregation in the early 1950s and president of the Ladies Auxiliary from 1970 to 1971. Existing Ladies Auxiliary records from the early 1950s do not mention the war monument. Ladies Auxiliary Collection, Fort Worth Jewish Archives, Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Fort Worth, TX (hereafter cited as Ladies Auxiliary Collection and FWJAAS).

<sup>5</sup> Fort Worth's Jewish War Veterans Martin Hochster Post 755 was started in 1994, when the monument had already faded to white-on-white.

<sup>6</sup> G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC, 2014), 5.

<sup>7</sup> In addition to the coauthors of this article, the third historian is Julian Haber, who wrote biographical vignettes of more than twenty soldiers and their military roles. Julian Stuart Haber, *The Yanks are Coming, Over There, Over There: Stories of Fort Worth Jewish American Soldiers in World War One* (Fort Worth, TX, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> *Abridged Prayer Book for Jews in the Army and Navy of the United States* (Philadelphia, 1917); *From Cowboy to Doughboy; North Texas in World War I: Mobilizing for The Great War*, Fort Worth Central Library, July 9, 2017–October 20, 2017.



<sup>9</sup> James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York, 1999), 21, 23.

<sup>10</sup> Information gleaned from auxiliary minutes (1925–1927), president reports, and anniversary summaries. Ladies Auxiliary Collection. Similarly, in Charlotte, NC, the local section of the National Council of Jewish Women “turned the temple basement into a rec room for soldiers at [nearby] Camp Greene.” Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 2010), 187.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs. L. F. [Sarah Levy] Shanblum, “Ladies Hebrew Relief Society,” in “Sketch of Jewish Institutions of Fort Worth,” *Jewish Monitor*, September 10, 1915.

<sup>12</sup> “Minutes of the Ladies Cemetary [sic] Society of Ahavath Sholom,” 1915–1934, FWJAAS. These delightfully written minutes are in English, while the men’s *chevra kadisha* minutes were in Yiddish until 1939 with only a few pages translated into English. The Ladies Cemetery Society minutes describe how diligently they collected dues, observed Jewish burial rituals, and upgraded the cemetery. They bought yards of linen when it went on sale at L. G. Gilbert’s department store and sewed shrouds—a major source of income. After years battling the city to extend water mains within reach of the cemetery, the Ladies Cemetery Society supervised the installation of pipes to connect to the municipal water supply. The pipes were donated by the Ginsburg family, which operated Missouri Iron and Metal, a pipe-and-supply business.

<sup>13</sup> “Fort Worth News,” *Jewish Monitor*, November 21, 1919. “The Ladies’ Auxiliary to the Hebrew Institute is prepared to put up a tablet in the lobby of the Hebrew Institute upon which will be engraved the names of all Jewish boys who participated in the world war. The names on the tablet will be arranged alphabetically and in accordance with their ranks. The following names were recorded with the committee for this purpose and the committee requests that if there is any omission or name or rank or misspelling, same should be reported at the Hebrew Institute not later than Monday morning, 12 a.m., either by calling personally or through the phone, Lamar 6872.” The names of sixty-eight men followed. Many misspellings—such as *Cohen* for *Cohn*, *Greinis* for *Greines* and *Grensbacher* for *Gernsbacher*—were corrected on the tablet.

<sup>14</sup> David Carb, a Harvard graduate, poet, critic, and playwright, was among the idealists who romanticized the Great War. In June 1915 he volunteered for the American Red Cross Ambulance Service and ultimately became a soldier with the French Artillery, 29th Battery, 244th Regimente Colonial Artillerie and saw action at the 2nd Battle of Ypres, Champagne-Marne Defensive, and Meuse-Argonne. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre with a silver star. The citation reads: “David Carb, Cadet, an American citizen having already served France as a stretcher-bearer in 1915, volunteered in the French Artillery in 1918, and was during his stay in the battery a constant example for the personnel by his enthusiasm, his courage and his high morale.” War Records Committee, MIT Alumni Association, *Technology’s War Record: An Interpretation of the Contribution Made by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Its Staff, Its Former Students, and Its Undergraduates to the Cause of the United States and the Allied Powers in the Great War, 1914–1919* (Cambridge, MA, 1920), accessed August 23, 2016, <https://www.classicbooksandephemera.com/pages/books/002883/technologys-war-record-an-interpretation-of-the-contribution-made-by-the-massachusetts>. Another American Jewish soldier who volunteered for the ambulance service and the French

Foreign Legion was North Carolina's Arthur "Bluey" Bluethenthal, a Princeton University graduate and an aviator shot down and killed during a German attack over France in June 1918. Twice awarded the Croix de Guerre, Bluethenthal became the namesake of Bluethenthal Field, the forerunner of Wilmington International Airport. His portrait, which for decades hung in the airport lobby, was removed during recent renovations and is to be replaced with a wall panel and photos describing his service and the airfield's 1928 dedication. Heather Yenco, curator Cape Fear Museum, New Hanover County, NC, telephone conversation with Hollace Ava Weiner, April 19, 2015. See also, Rogoff, *Down Home*, 185.

<sup>15</sup> Lynna Kay Shuffield and Hollace Ava Goldberg Weiner, "Tablet of World War I Veterans Dedicated on 11 Nov. 1920 by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Hebrew Institute, Fort Worth, Tarrant Co., TX, As Well As Additional [Jewish] WWI Veterans of Tarrant Co., TX: A Biographical Collection" (Fort Worth, 2016). The tablet of World War I veterans consists of 118 typewritten pages, one or two for each local Jewish soldier. The complete collection is in a three-ring binder at each synagogue exhibit and is available from the authors as a pdf file. Conclusions about discrepancies in rank are based on county courthouse discharge documents and records at the Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry, Austin, TX. Among local soldiers omitted from the final tableaux but included in this biographical collection are Sgt. Lee Gernsbacher (whose three nephews made the roster), Isaac Sturman (whose brother Joseph is on the list), Robert Katz, whose brother Irving is named, and Abe Greines, whose two younger brothers made the honor roll.

<sup>16</sup> Lynna Kay Shuffield has found discrepancies in ranks on numerous county honor rolls erected by local Texas groups dating back to the Civil War. Some errors reflect veterans' boasts, while others reflect civilians' unfamiliarity with ranks within each branch of service.

<sup>17</sup> During August 1914, H. G. Wells wrote articles in London newspapers, later published in a book titled *The War That Will End War*. The title morphed into "war to end all wars," an idealistic catch phrase that turned sardonic with the outbreak of World War II. Wells wrote: "The way will open at last for all these Western Powers to organise peace. . . . Every sword that is drawn against Germany is now a sword drawn for peace. . . . The creation of this opportunity [is] the great ends for which we are so gladly waging this war." H. G. Wells, *The War That Will End War* (London, 1914), 11, 14, 19, 37, 38, 43–44. President Woodrow Wilson used the phrase once, yet it became cynically associated with him. Joyce Goldberg, e-mail exchange with Hollace A. Weiner, August 18, 2016. See also Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (Louisville, KY, 1998); Adam Hochschild, *To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914–1918* (Boston, 2011).

<sup>18</sup> "The greatest number of deferments, 43 per cent . . . , went to married men with dependents to support." Rather than drafting married men, Congress expanded the age range of recruits from eighteen to forty-five. Jennifer D. Keene, *Doughboys, The Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore, 2001): 18–19.

<sup>19</sup> *Fort Worth Record*, July 5, 1916, cited in Dawn Youngblood, "Tarrant County Archives World War I Timeline," accessed May 18, 2017, <https://www.northtexasworldwar1centennial.org/resources>. "In 1917, at the height of World War I, Fort Worth was the largest horse and mule market in the world," according to "Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District," accessed April 2, 2017, <http://www.fortworthstockyards.org/history>; *Texas Almanac*,

"City Population History from 1850-2000," accessed February 14, 2017, <https://texasalmanac.com/sites/default/files/images/CityPopHist%20web.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Blumenthal, who received *semicha* in Europe, had a son, Sam, in uniform during the war. Sam Blumenthal's name appears on the Fort Worth honor roll. G. George Fox, a Reform rabbi raised in Chicago, took a seven-month leave of absence in 1917 to become interim secretary of the B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League office in Chicago, where he worked with that organization's Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare League. The league competed with the Jewish Welfare Board to become the "prime Jewish war agency," working with the War Department to provide services to Jewish soldiers. G. George Fox, "The End of an Era," in *Lives and Voices: A Collection of American Jewish Memoirs*, ed. Stanley Chyet (Philadelphia, 1972), 283-84. For details on the turf war between the Jewish Welfare Board and B'nai B'rith, see Jessica Cooperman, "The Jewish Welfare Board and Religious Pluralism in the American Military of World War I," *American Jewish Archives* 98 (October 2014): 237-61.

<sup>21</sup> Hollace Ava Weiner, *River Crest Country Club: The First Hundred Years* (Fort Worth, 2011), 78-84; The only hardback book on Camp Bowie's history is the pastiche of news articles, recollections, and photographs compiled by Bernice B. Maxfield and William Jary, Jr., *Camp Bowie, Fort Worth, 1917-1918, An Illustrated History of the 36th Division in the First World War* (Fort Worth, 1975).

<sup>22</sup> "Hicks Field Airman Falls to His Death," *Houston Post*, January 16, 1918; "Fort Worth Deaths and Funerals," *Dallas Morning News*, January 18, 1918, and January 19, 1918. Airman Joffe's tombstone at Ahavath Sholom's Hebrew Cemetery, 415 N. University Drive, Fort Worth, TX, refers to his rank as lieutenant, but while in training airmen remained cadets.

<sup>23</sup> Translated, the Hebrew inscription reads: "Here lies Yaakov Yokol, a volunteer in the Army pilot unit, son of father Joffe, born on 5th of Elul in 5655," which was September 5, 1895, on the western calendar, a three-week discrepancy from the August 14, 1895, birth date on his military records. The use of his Yiddish nickname, "Yokol," is an indication that Rabbi Blumenthal was acquainted with the aviator. Apparently, no one knew the name of the pilot's father, who is simply identified in Hebrew as "father Joffe." According to the 1910 U.S. Census, the pilot's father was Abraham Joffe, who emigrated in 1903 from Russia with his wife and six children. The 1910 census lists the aviator's first name as Jake, but military records identify him as James J. Joffe. He apparently anglicized his name. Joffe's draft registration cites his birthplace as "Asia Minor." Military death records cite his birthplace as "Baku, Asia Minor, Russia," in present-day Azerbaijan. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, New York County, New York. Joffe served in the Aviation Section Signal Reserve Corps, according to his death certificate. Texas State Board of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death, Reg. Dis. No. 4307, Tarrant County, January 15, 1918.

<sup>24</sup> "Statistics of the Jews," *American Jewish Year Book, 1919-1920* (Philadelphia, 1919), 608. More than 4.7 million men and women served in the American armed forces during World War I. The U.S. Census recorded the nation's population at around 103 million. "Historical National Population Estimates: July 1, 1900 to July 1, 1999," Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed March 30, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/popclockest.txt>.

<sup>25</sup> "Tarrant County Wounded List Contains 36 Names Now; Slain Soldier Left Parents in Russia," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 24, 1918; Find a Grave Memorial No. 56341782,

accessed March 25, 2017, <https://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSvcid=665499&GRid=56341782&>.

<sup>26</sup> Tony Bergman served with the 111th Engineers, 36th Division. He received a Victory Medal with Major Operation Clasps for participation at Saint-Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne. "Will Fulfil Marriage Vow of Childhood," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 28, 1921; Shuffield and Weiner, "Tablet of WWI Veterans."

<sup>27</sup> Byron Gernsbacher served overseas from August 22, 1918, to July 18, 1919. "Sergeant Describes First Real American Cemetery in France," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 25, 1919; Shuffield and Weiner, "Tablet of WWI Veterans."

<sup>28</sup> Private Isadore Persky, twenty-two, died December 23, 1917, in a Belton, TX, hotel room. A military inquest ruled his death "self-inflicted by carbolic acid." Persky had entered the Army ten weeks earlier and was assigned to the Thirty-Third Company, Ninth Battalion, 165th Depot Brigade, Ninetieth Division. "Young Soldier Ends Life Here, Isadore Persky of Belton Found Dead in Local Hotel Yesterday Afternoon," *Temple Daily Telegram*, December 24, 1917; Shuffield and Weiner, "Tablet of WWI Veterans"; Gertrude M. Teter and Donald L. Teter, *Texas Jewish Burials: Alphabetically by Name* (Austin, 1997), 297.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher M. Sterba, *Good Americans: Italian and Jewish Immigrants during the First World War* (Oxford, 2003), 31–33; "World War I Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience," exhibit brochure, National Library of Ireland, Dublin, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Mary J. Manning, "Being German, Being American: In World War I They Faced Suspicion, Discrimination, Here at Home," *Prologue Magazine, Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* (Summer 2014): 15–22.

<sup>31</sup> *Investigative Case Files of the Bureau of Investigation, 1908–1922. Series: Old German Files, 1909–1921, Case No. 8000-140042, Base Hospital Investigation; Suspect: Ella Behrens*, National Archives & Records Administration, microfilm: M-1085, roll 530; "After 25 Years She Got Honorable Discharge," *The Caldwell (TX) News and The Burselson (TX) County Ledger*, February 18, 1949.

<sup>32</sup> *Texas Jewish Herald*, March 25, 1920, quoted in Ninetieth Anniversary Issue, *Jewish Herald-Voice*, April 11, 1998, 10; "Barnston Family, Barnstein/Barnstijn, Barnston," Genealogies File, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati.

<sup>33</sup> Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880–1920* (Baltimore, 1992), 210. Nancy Gentile Ford observes that Serbs and Croats were fighting to free the Balkans. In addition to the Jews, World War I gave Poles, Slavs, Czechs, Syrians, Arabs, and Armenians the opportunity to fight for the independence of their homelands from the bondage of the Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires. "They learned to redefine the patriotic culture of the US as they honored their adopted country and fought for their homelands." Nancy Gentile Ford, *Americans All! Foreign-born Soldiers in World War I* (College Station, TX, 2001), 44. Referring to the 1918 money-raising effort for the Jewish War Sufferers campaign, Rogoff comments that "fitting in did not require loss of Jewish difference. . . . Jews asserted their difference even as they universalized their cause." In North Carolina, Jews were high-profile participants in drives for Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, and the Red Cross. Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Life in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa, 2001), 187–88.

<sup>34</sup> “Local Jews Plan Celebration Over Fall of Jerusalem; A Fulfillment of Scripture Which Foretells of Restoration of Palestine to the Jewish People,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 11, 1917; “Jews to Celebrate Capture of Jerusalem Next Sunday,” *Dallas Morning News*, December 12, 1917. Stuart Rockoff observes that Fort Worth had one of the most active Zionist chapters in Texas. One of the city’s early Reform rabbis, Joseph Jasin, was elected president of the Texas Zionist Association in 1907 and coedited a Zionist newspaper, *The Jewish Hope*. Stuart Rockoff, “Deep in the Heart of Palestine: Zionism in Early Texas,” in *Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas*, ed. Hollace Ava Weiner and Kenneth D. Roseman (Waltham, MA, 2007), 93–107. Rabbi Fox, who called himself a “stubborn anti-nationalist and anti-Zionist,” apparently was not at the celebration. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* article reported that Reform Rabbi Jacob Turner was to speak. It is unclear why Jacob Turner, a rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College, was in Fort Worth. Fox was once invited to a Fort Worth Zionist meeting to introduce a local minister who had returned from Palestine extolling Zionism. Rather than challenge the minister’s endorsement of a Jewish national homeland, Fox writes that he held his tongue. When he wrote about the gathering for the *Jewish Monitor*, Fox reported that the Hebrew Institute band played *Hatikvah*, the Zionist anthem, *Dixie*, and *The Star Spangled Banner*. *Jewish Monitor*, November 26, 1920; Shuffield and Weiner, “Tablet of WWI Veterans.”

<sup>35</sup> Richmond’s brass plaque, located in the sanctuary vestibule at Congregation Beth Ahabah, has an honor roll with ninety-four names, a Jewish star, and reliefs of a battle ship, biplane, and soldiers loading cannon. “Honor Roll of The Sons of Beth Ahabah who answered their Country’s Call in the Great World War, 1914–1918.” The congregation also has a stained-glass window that reads: “Commemorative of Peace Resulting from the World War.” The window pictures the Ten Commandment tablets with Hebrew writing, English quotes from the Book of Isaiah, two pillars representing King Solomon’s temple, a Jewish star, crossed American flags, and two American emblems. Thanks to Bonnie Eisenman, administrator and researcher at the Beth Ahabah Museum and Archives, who relayed photos and information on these memorials. Bonnie Eisenman, e-mail to Hollace Weiner, December 12, 2016. “Ossining Group Seeks Info about ‘Virtually Unknown’ WWI Memorial,” *Ossining (NY) Daily Voice*, January 29, 2017. A World War Memorial building to African American soldiers was erected in Kendall, WV, in 1928. These memorials are among more than a thousand documented in the World War I Memorial Inventory Project, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/the-world-war-one-memorial-inventory-project.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Mark Levitch, “Ethnic Memorials,” memo listing ethnic monuments documented to date, e-mailed to Hollace Weiner, February 20, 2017. The survey identifies similar memorials to African American soldiers in Georgia, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. It is unclear what became of the plaque at Jews Hospital in Philadelphia because the facility merged with other health institutions, changed its name, and moved into a larger building complex. See also the World War I Memorial Inventory Project website and Facebook page. The survey, which is still under way, shows that Texas has at least eighty-eight such monuments, including the University of Texas football stadium which has a plaque listing more than five thousand soldiers, a number of doughboy statues, and two memorials to African American men in uniform. Besides the Fort Worth Tribute to

Our Boys, the only other known memorial in Texas to a Jewish doughboy is a plaque beneath a stained-glass window at Beaumont's Temple Emanuel. Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work* (College Station, TX, 1997), 35.

<sup>37</sup> The efforts to create a melting-pot army "helped diminish the importance of European local and regional ties." Sterba, *Good Americans*, 7.

<sup>38</sup> While expecting loyalty from the soldiers in the American army, the military brass remained "mindful of the traditions" of the foreign born. War Department policies resulted from a "complex alliance" with leaders from immigrant communities and activists in ethnic organizations who pressured the military to meet soldiers' cultural needs. Resulting military policies created "an atmosphere that made dual identity and dual pride acceptable and the nonnative soldiers' duty personally easier." Ford, *Americans All*, 3, 9, 11-12, 107, 119, 136-37, 143. See also Lee J. Levinger's moving memoir, *A Jewish Chaplain in France* (New York, 1921). Levinger was among the twelve Jewish chaplains assigned to the American Expeditionary Forces.

<sup>39</sup> Keene, *Doughboys*, 21.

<sup>40</sup> Sterba, *Good Americans*, 4, 7, 212.

<sup>41</sup> "Purim Masquerade Ball, A Splendid Affair," *Fort Worth Gazette*, February 28, 1896. Photos from a World War I-era Purim ball show partygoers masquerading as Catholic nuns and geisha girls, rather than Queen Esther or King Ahasueros. Purim folder, Oversized Photos Box, Fort Worth Jewish Archives at Beth-El Congregation.

<sup>42</sup> At the cornerstone ceremony for the Hebrew Institute, speakers said the building was for "all Hebrews, regardless of distinctions . . . [a building] where all can meet on common ground . . . whether rich or poor, conservative or radical." "Jews Praised at Ceremony of Starting New Institute," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 8, 1914.

<sup>43</sup> The incursion into Mexico was in retaliation for the arrest of a party of American sailors in Tampico as well as Wilson's attempt to influence Mexican president Victoriano Huerta, who was cozy with Germany. American troops occupied the port city for five months. Marine Private Samuel Meisenberg, an immigrant living in Chicago, was the first American soldier killed at Veracruz in April 1914. Lee Stacy, *Mexico and the United States*, vol. 1 (Tarrytown, NY, 2003), 846; "Expect 100,000 at Sammy's Funeral: Boy Scouts, Marines, Militia, Regular Army to be Represented in March; Vera Cruz Hero Will Lie in State in City Hall," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 29, 1914.

<sup>44</sup> Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 58.

<sup>45</sup> Piehler, *Remembering War*, 116.

<sup>46</sup> Mayo, *War Memorials as Political Landscape*, 78.

<sup>47</sup> Loewen, *Lies Across America*, 44. Fort Worth's scroll, titled "Honor Roll—They Fought for Freedom—World War II," lists 225 men and one woman who served in uniform. Four have gold stars next to their names. Three of those casualties are buried at Ahavath Sholom's Hebrew Cemetery, with their tombstones side-by-side at the front of the cemetery. The original framed scroll hangs in the library at Beth-El Congregation, and a duplicate hangs in a corridor at Congregation Ahavath Sholom.

<sup>48</sup> *Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Fort Worth, Texas 5653-5728, 1892-1967* (Fort Worth, 1967), 16, 19.

<sup>49</sup> In 1997, a Baltimore-area Jewish War Veterans post rediscovered the forgotten monument amid weeds and brush. Newspaper publicity and a rededication ceremony led to the monument's relocation in 1999 at Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery in Owings Mills. It is listed on the Maryland Historical Trust inventory of monuments as the Mount Pleasant (Jewish Hospital for Consumptives) Memorial. "Maryland World War I Military Monuments," accessed December 15, 2016, <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/monuments/MMM-Inventory-WWI.pdf>. "New Site sought for old memorial; Veterans: A more visible home is sought for the World War I memorial which was once lost amid brush and trees," *Baltimore Sun*, June 15, 1997, accessed February 18, 2017, [http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1997-06-15/news/1997166092\\_1\\_jewish-veterans-war-i-jewish-war](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1997-06-15/news/1997166092_1_jewish-veterans-war-i-jewish-war); "Monuments & Memorials," 13, notes by researcher Earl Pruce attached to type-script, received via e-mail from Joanna Church, collections manager, Jewish Museum of Maryland, December 15, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> "A D.C. historian is hunting down forgotten monuments in memory of 'the Great War,'" *Washington Post*, February 7, 2014, accessed February 19, 2017, [http://wwi-inventory.org/In\\_the\\_News.html](http://wwi-inventory.org/In_the_News.html).

<sup>51</sup> Ethel Schectman, interview conducted by Hollace Weiner, March 2, 2017.

<sup>52</sup> Leo Potishman, through his charitable Leo Potishman Foundation, was a major donor to the new synagogue. *Congregation Ahavath Sholom*, 77, 81; Shuffield and Weiner, "Tablet of WWI Veterans."

<sup>53</sup> Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (Cambridge, MA, 2016); Piehler, *Remembering War*, 117.

<sup>54</sup> Art historian Mark Levitch, who in 2009 launched the World War I Memorial Inventory Project, says honor rolls that list not just those who died but "those who served as well" came into vogue among municipalities, religious groups, businesses, high schools, and colleges. Christopher Klein, "The Hunt for Forgotten World War I Monuments," May 23, 2014, accessed February 16, 2017, <http://www.history.com/news/the-hunt-for-forgotten-world-war-i-monuments>.

<sup>55</sup> Piehler, *Remembering War*, 117; Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Michele H. Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago, 1989), 2.

<sup>57</sup> Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, ed., *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape Design* (Washington, DC, 2001), 2.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford, 1975), 2. See also Hochschild, *To End All Wars*, xi-xx, which focuses on Great Britain and conscientious objectors to the war.

<sup>59</sup> Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*, 200.

<sup>60</sup> Joshua 4:21-22 (JPS).

<sup>61</sup> Isaiah, 56:5 (JPS).