

Honor & Remembrance

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associates in the
Great Wars ...

American Legion founding leader Hamilton Fish introduced legislation during his first term in Congress to memorialize an unknown fallen U. S. soldier of the Great Wars. The bill, with backing from the newly formed American Legion, passed to entomb at Arlington National Cemetery one unknown soldier buried in France. On Memorial Day 1921, Sgt. Edward F. Younger, a combat veteran, chose one fallen comrade from four caskets lined up in France. The chosen one sent to Washington, where on November 11, 1921, surrounded by the Allied generals of the Great War and members of The American Legion, President Warren G Harding dedicated the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The American Legion has maintained a deep connection with the tomb, calling for and achieving overnight surveillance in 1926 and 24-hour armed guarding in 1937, which continue today by the 3rd U. S. Infantry Regiment, the "Old Guard." The remains of unknown soldiers from World War II and the Korean War were added in 1958, and were presented the Medal of Honor President Eisenhower. In 1969, for its 50th anniversary, the American Legion raised nearly \$200,000 as a gift to the nation to install lighting at the tomb. President Ronald Reagan served as next of kin to the Vietnam War unknown, placing the tomb in 1984, who was later identified through DNA testing removed and returned to his family.

The American Legion Magazine May 2019