The Meaning of Madingley: Anglo-American Commemorative Culture at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery*

Abstract

On completion in 1956, the design of the Cambridge American Military Cemetery at Madingley intentionally downplayed individual sacrifice in favour of an emphasis on government-led collective endeavour to uphold national ideals. The design commemorated the defeat of the Axis but in the Cold War also reaffirmed these ideals to allies and ideological enemies alike. Yet from the beginning, the meaning of Madingley has been fluid, negotiated and transcendent of the original fixed design. This article explores the impact of major social and cultural change, the rhetorical activity of politicians, institutional imperatives and the desires of local host communities on the meaning of this major node of Anglo-American commemorative culture. In doing so, it traces the growth of an emphasis on individual service and sacrifice that has replaced the original focus on government-led national enterprise with a more portable meaning able to support the desires of different commemorative constituencies. American politicians have used this to garner support for their policies, institutions have used it as a survival strategy and the host nation has used it as a comforting mask to obscure awkward disparities in national power. Although the commemorative meaning of the site has changed radically, it remains a window on the wider conservative dynamics of Anglo-American commemorative culture.

Keywords

Commemorative culture, memory, World War II, good war, greatest generation, Cold War, American foreign policy, American military, Anglo-American relationship, presidential rhetoric.

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There has been an American military cemetery at Madingley near Cambridge since 1943, but it was not until 16 July 1956 that officials dedicated the final redesigned memorial site to the dead of World War II. Completed almost exactly three years after the signing of the Korean War armistice, the physical form of the cemetery reflects a clear desire to commemorate the government-led American national collective endeavour that achieved victory. In the context of the Cold War, the meaning of the site was clear, the foundations of American global power were democracy, freedom, capitalism, technological superiority, Christianity and a republican system of government. The designers had permanence in mind, conceiving an unchanging eulogy to the unifying American values of the mid-twentieth century as consolation to the families of the fallen, inspiration to the patriotic and reassurance to the host nation. From the beginning, this was a manufactured ideal founded on many contemporary compromises and exclusions. For this reason, the commemorative meaning of Madingley remains fluid, negotiated and receptive to the interpretative desires of politicians, institutions and the host nation. As such, it provides a window on the dynamics of commemorative culture situated within wider Anglo-American relations.

Studies covering American commemorative sites in Britain inevitably encounter its peripheral location as a small island off the coast of Europe. Given that American participation in the war eventually involved the landing of significant numbers of troops on the continent followed by a major land campaign, the 'main event' for many Americans, and their political leaders, has often been the cemeteries in Normandy and other significant locations on the route across Europe. This wider European context is seemingly unavoidable and has limited the time and space given to analysing a small cemetery in East Anglia, even though it is now the sole American repository of American war dead from World War II in Britain.[1]

Historians of the American memory of World War II and the commemorative culture surrounding it have addressed the impact of the significant changes in wider society since the 1960s. In particular, they have traced the development of a revived notion of World War II as a 'good war' founded on a reconciliation between baby boomers and their parents that addresses the divisions of the cultural revolution of the 1960s and the discord surrounding the Vietnam War. Late and post-Cold war American triumphalism has also entered the mix via the efforts of politicians and the media, particularly Hollywood, celebrating the so-called 'greatest generation' of the Great Depression and World War II era.[2] Of particular importance to this phenomenon, and in contrast to the unified government-led national endeavour of the past, has been an emphasis on individual wartime American service personnel as reluctant warriors who, nevertheless, were prepared to offer patriotic service and sacrifice to secure American national ideals. John Bodnar has traced how this focus on individual veterans and the dead from World War II facilitates engagement with the past for Americans without any direct connection to the conflict. He has also set out how it has contributed to a new consensus on traditional national ideals that is at the same time both inclusive (in its ability to encompass previously excluded groups such as African Americans and women) and restrictive (in its shutting down of debate on the righteousness of American participation and conduct during the war).[3]

As a major site of exchange in Anglo-American commemorative culture, it is important to examine how these cultural developments have played out at Madingley. Although study of this area has not been extensive, the work of Sam Edwards rightly locates Madingley (and the American Memorial Chapel constructed in St Paul's Cathedral in 1958) within an Anglo-American commemorative scheme of meaning linked to the desires of military and political elites during the early Cold War. As such, it was an important starting point for the development of later privately organised sites of commemoration for the American wartime

presence throughout East Anglia. Similarly, Ron Robin has examined the conservative meaning of the American Battle Monument Commission (ABMC) World War II cemeteries, including Madingley, at their creation, but neither work has focussed on how that meaning has interacted with the significant cultural change the US has undergone since.[4]

This paper explores the conservative roots of Madingley's original design and then places its intended 'fixed' meaning within the context of the broader cultural change that has seen the rise of a celebration of individual service and sacrifice in World War II over government-led collective national endeavour. It then examines the rationale of three constituencies that have each, for their own reasons, applied the implications of that change to the meaning they draw from Madingley differently. The first group are American politicians, from across the spectrum, who have foregrounded the individual as a strategy to garner support for their foreign policies. The second is the ABMC, the institution responsible for the construction and maintenance of Madingley. Although a government body, they have embraced the individual as a survival strategy and potential guarantor of their continued existence in uncertain commemorative times. Finally, the host nation, Britain, has so far had a mixed response to this American-led change. While British politicians on the right have, in recent years, enthusiastically embraced the commemoration of individual service and sacrifice as a way to promote domestic policy agendas, they are only just showing the early signs of applying the approach directly to Anglo-American relations. They still view sites like Madingley as a physical representation of shared values and the continuing American commitment to British security despite any immediate difficulties the 'special relationship' might encounter. The British public, however, seems more immediately receptive to the change in meaning, embracing the American focus on individual service and sacrifice. Although often innovative in form, it nevertheless provides a nostalgic, backward looking vision that avoids asking difficult questions over American actions during World War II or since. The cultural changes

from the 1960s onwards, mediated by these three constituencies, have had a dramatic and transformative effect on the commemorative meaning of Madingley. Although the original meaning remains cast in stone, the foregrounding of individual service and sacrifice over government-led collective endeavour is nothing less than a rhetorical and interpretive reversal of the original intended meaning of the site.

National Collective Endeavour at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery

In November 1944, Fiske Kimball, the Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, turned his thoughts to the future memorialisation of the war. In an article for the *New York Times*, he noted that 'hitherto it had been the leader…who had been commemorated. Now…the common soldier and sailor also deserved to be remembered.' 'But,' he went on identifying a problem 'this time there are ten million men in the armed forces, ten million names.' The democratic nature of the American effort in World War II and its sheer scale posed a commemorative dilemma for national leaders. As Kimball neatly asked, 'is there justification…for inscribing the names of an entire generation?' As a solution, he suggested it would be 'wiser, in the end, to have fewer memorials and to make them more generic, more symbolic.'[5] Fiske's suggestion was prophetic. In the years after World War II, the ABMC built fourteen cemeteries around the world designed to commemorate the collective national endeavour of World War II rather than draw attention to the service and sacrifice of the individuals interred.

From its very beginning in 1923, the ABMC's purpose was the conservative control of commemoration and memorialisation. With the agreement of host countries in Europe, the organisation was able to block a good deal of private commemoration and 'erase' much of the individual expression and idiosyncrasy relating to American participation in World War I. By 1937, the ABMC had completed and dedicated eight new cemeteries in France to house

the 30,000 of the approximately 117,000 American war dead who did not return to their native land.[6] Yet, as Ron Robin has noted, these cemeteries displayed a 'certain tactfulness' in blending into the 'general landscape' of the military cemeteries of both Allies and former enemies.[7] The design of these sites was an elite cultural product that drew on a European heritage rather than being confidently American. The ABMC's consulting architect, Paul Philippe Cret, was very much of the *Beaux-Arts* tradition in the United States that drew on the design of the classical world mediated by Europe for inspiration.[8]

Some 16 million Americans in total served in the armed forces during World War II with over 400,000 making the ultimate sacrifice.[9] Although on a much greater scale, many of the issues faced by the ABMC were similar to those they faced with the first generation of overseas cemetery construction. The policy toward post-war repatriation of the dead, as with the casualties of World War I, was a highly contested issue. Some favoured the maintenance of cemeteries in foreign fields as per the policy of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). There was a strong diplomatic argument for interring Americans in the countries in which they fell. There they might produce 'a psychological effect upon alien people of the sacrifices made by Americans' and could become 'pieces of our land on foreign soil' and an 'American foothold in Europe and other continents.'[10] In the context of the early Cold War, the US clearly had its eye focussed on Europe, locating twelve of the fourteen new cemeteries there. As with World War I, however, the idea of the dead remaining in a foreign field was not universally accepted. Many of the families and their political supporters argued for return, but so too did some commercial organisations with a vested business interest such as the American Funeral Directors Association. In the event, the US Government gave families of the deceased personnel the choice and eventually repatriated all but 94,000 of the dead during 1947-48.[11]

The US maintained three temporary cemeteries in the United Kingdom during World War II to receive service personnel killed while serving in the European theatre.[12] With the reduction in numbers of overseas burials during 1947-48, the American cemetery at Lisnabreeny, Northern Ireland closed while that at Brookwood, Surrey returned to its role as a World War I cemetery.[13] The Americans retained the cemetery at Madingley as the sole burial location in Britain for their World War II dead. Today, the cemetery contains the remains of 3,812 casualties from World War II with a further 5,127 commemorated on the Tablets of the Missing. Those casualties come largely from the Battle of the Atlantic, the ground fighting in Europe and the Strategic Air Campaign. With some forty-six percent of burials from the US Army Air Force from the beginning locals have referred to it unofficially as the Eighth Air Force Cemetery.[14]

The architectural style used for the construction and remodelling of Madingley, and the other American World War II cemeteries during the 1950s, was distinct. It was the result of a conservative reaction by the ABMC to changing tastes in the architectural and artistic worlds, but was also an accommodation with the political forces of the early Cold War era. The Great Depression and World War II undermined the elitist foundations of the *Beaux-Arts* style with classical flourishes now associated with needless waste or the architecture of the totalitarian despots. American stripped, streamlined and 'machinelike' forms now replaced the European classical heritage. This 'Depression Modern,' 'American Modern' or 'Machine Age Design' rejected 'useless' decoration while celebrating the curves and flowing lines of modernism.[15]

As a body largely comprised of political and military retirees appointed directly by the presidents, the ABMC also reflected the political climate of the 1950s in its response to the emerging modernism.[16] A conservative hostility grew in Congress against 'purposeless' and 'self-indulgent' modern art with Representative George Dondero (Rep – Michigan) accusing modernists of a communist conspiracy to undermine the nation. In addition to winning the

presidency in 1953, the Republicans gained majority control of the House and Senate enabling them to place government cultural institutions under political scrutiny.[17] Congressional conservatives and anti-communists sought to restrict authentic American art in favour of uplifting creations that reinforced national ideals.[18] In the prevailing political climate of the Cold War, the ABMC therefore sought to avoid controversial political scrutiny of its designs.[19] Caught between pressure from the changing architectural and artistic worlds and the politics of anti-communism, the ABMC sought a compromise between the traditional and modern for its next generation of military cemeteries.

Americans in the Great Depression and World War II had allowed the Federal Government much further into their lives than ever before and its importance continued in the burgeoning Cold War.[20] It therefore seemed axiomatic to the ABMC that the design of its cemeteries should retain something more than mere function, that they should still convey 'power and durability' in American institutions. Although it appeared that institutional need and architectural fashion were at odds, from the late 1920s, Paul Cret had developed a compromise style. In a series of public buildings, such as the Folger Shakespeare Library (1932) and the Federal Reserve Building (1940), Cret's style of 'stripped classicism' retained an adherence to classical symmetry and proportion to indicate something more than function, but erased the now 'superfluous' and 'anachronistic' decorative flourishes.[21]

Cret died in 1945 and his Philadelphia architectural partner, John Harbeson, took over the role of consulting architect to the ABMC. He had followed a similar path through the *Beaux-Arts* compromise with modernism and oversaw the construction of the entire second generation of cemeteries ensuring they were styled in the 'stripped classical' design. This new approach is visible in the chapel at Madingley designed by Perry, Shaw and Hepburn from Boston using plain modernist rectangular posts in contrast to the more traditional columns and capitals of the chapel for the American World War I cemetery at Brookwood,

Surrey.[22] Contemporary critics did not fail to notice the ABMC's compromise with conservative forces so at odds with contemporary architectural trends. Aline B. Louchheim writing for the *New York Times* described the style as 'dictatorship modern' and 'an aenemic [sic] style…characterless and lifeless.'[23]

The conservative elements of design continued in the statuary at Madingley. In the post-war era, the conservative National Sculpture Society (NSS) fought to retain a near monopoly on government art projects that could be extremely lucrative for its members with typical ABMC commissions paying between $12,000 to $45,000 per statue or frieze. One critic even claimed the NSS were 'widely reputed to have one of the most effective lobbies in Washington.'[24] The NSS viewed modern art as a 'foreign import' and a 'serious cancer in the culture of the nation.'[25] The ABMC reflected this view with Harbeson making it clear that 'the Commission does not feel its purpose is to foster the evolution of art forms.'[26] They also indicated their view with the choice of Wheeler Williams as the sculptor for Madingley. Williams was the President of the NSS in the early 1950s and was very active in Republican Party circles with many of his commissions, such as the Robert A. Taft Memorial, in Washington D.C. reflecting his political position. He was also an active supporter of the House Un-American Affairs Committee's search for 'reds' in the arts and had even protested the Congressional censure of Joseph McCarthy in 1954.[27]

Williams produced the four nine foot statues (a soldier, sailor, airman and coastguard) to stand guard over the 'Tablets of the Missing' that line the reflecting pool at Madingley. These clearly embody the post-World War II stylistic emphasis on 'intra-American' rather than the 'intra-ally' cooperation evident in much of the statuary of the American cemeteries of World War I. The figures are not European knights in armour on a crusade to save western civilisation. Instead, they are clearly contemporary American figures, larger than life, and comfortable with the technological military equipment and weapons they hold.[28] Again, the

critics were unimpressed with the conservative approach adopted by the ABMC that did not seem to reflect the vibrancy of contemporary American art. John Canaday, writing in 1965, felt the sculptures were 'offensive when its stale, trite and altogether specious idealism is compared to the bloody tragedy it supposedly commemorates' and went on to describe 'hidebound and reactionary stone-hackers' like Williams and his 'inane effigies on one of the earliest, and still most offensive memorials, in Cambridge, England.'[29]

In addition to being artistically conservative, William's male Caucasian figures were also a gendered and racially exclusive endeavour. They obscured female participation in the European war (Madingley contains the burials or commemoration of eighteen women) and that of Americans of non-white ancestry (there are approximately 130 African Americans and three Native Americans buried or commemorated at Madingley in non-segregated plots).[30] In contrast to contemporary practice at Arlington Cemetery in the US that segregated repatriated dead, the ABMC decided not to distinguish them by heritage in all its overseas cemeteries.[31] While the cemetery does not provide an honest picture of the segregation in American society and US armed forces in Britain at the time, its lack of statuary representing non-white service personnel among the dead serves to smother this egalitarian burial ideal.

The exclusionary elements inherent in the design at Madingley are not limited to aspects of gender or race. Prevailing attitudes toward class are also evident. In the best traditions of the citizens' war and the egalitarian ideals of US society, the dead rest side by side, whether they were officer or enlisted man. The examples often quoted by cemetery guides are Lieutenant Joseph P. Kennedy, brother of the president, and the famous Major Alton 'Glenn' Miller commemorated alongside non-commissioned GIs on the wall of the missing. The class of burial at Madingley, and all American overseas cemeteries, however, is a construct that excludes undesirables who do not fit the uniform ideal. During the war, American service personnel in Britain were subject to US military law under the provisions of the United States

(Visiting Forces) Act of 1942. This mandated capital crimes including rape that had not been a capital offence in the UK since 1861. Some nineteen service personnel were executed by the Americans at Shepton Mallet prison during the war (including eight convicted of rape) and their bodies were buried in plot X or the 'dirty plot' in Brookwood, Surrey. When Brookwood reverted to being a World War I cemetery, the bodies went to a dishonoured plot at the Oisne Aisne American World War I cemetery in France. Madingley, it would seem, has no place for the unpleasant reality of the US presence in Britain during World War II.[32]

While the form of architecture and sculpture at Madingley was the product of conservative compromise and omission, so too was the nature of the actual commemoration of the dead within a design that was the very antithesis of individual service and sacrifice. The horror of war and the individuality of those who died disappeared behind a broader heroic conception of the conflict. In the words of Ron Robin, the new cemeteries aimed to 'evoke a common national cause rather than mourn the death of young soldiers.'[33] This came directly from John Harbeson, who felt that the cemeteries should give 'coherent form to that interdependence of the individual and the social group, which is the very nature of [American] democracy.'[34]

These powerful symbols of the social group are prominent at Madingley. Upon entering the site, an enormous central flagpole for the Stars and Stripes capped with an American eagle confronts the visitor. Canadian poet John McCrae's words 'To you from falling hands we throw the torch – be yours to hold it high' encircle the base and draw the eyes of visitors as they enter through the main gate. Co-opted to the cause, the words entreat visitors to hold dear the ideals consecrated within.[35] The nationalist theme continues with the reflecting pool, reminiscent of the Mall in Washington DC, and the chapel as a paean the United States motto '*E Pluribus Unum*' displaying the seal of each state prominently in stain glass to suggest a united national effort. None of the complexities and disagreements that existed in America during the war or the debates about its prosecution or righteousness afterward that John

Bodnar has traced so carefully are evident here.[36] From the start, the ABMC portrayed World War II as a 'good war' against anti-democratic authoritarian fascists that received universal approval from both Americans and their allies.[37]

The burial plots themselves at Madingley may appear to give precedence to the individual but as Ron Robin has observed about American cemeteries in Europe more generally, the overall setting and standardisation acts to remove the sense of individual tragedy in favour of collective endeavour. Whereas the American cemeteries of World War I were geometric in layout, those of World War II were of complex shapes and patterns. Harbeson claimed he wanted to evoke 'admiration for the great collaborative design that had produced these complex artefacts of American presence in foreign lands.'[38] At Madingley, the plots spread out in fan-like curved rows from the flagpole while personal messages of individual loss from grieving families do not 'mar' the graves of the American dead that only show name, rank, unit and home state.[39]

The well-ordered graves at Madingley also present American participation in World War II as an almost solely Christian undertaking by one nation under God. The rows of Latin crosses for the 3,811 graves of the dead with a few scattered Stars of David (80 in total) intentionally project a false picture of religious uniformity that undermines the decision not to segregate the war dead on basis of creed.[40] Clearly, there were those of other faiths or non-believers among those commemorated, but this or close attention to the First Amendment for that matter is not accommodated within the design.[41]

Historians have noted the growth in importance of religion to Americans during the 1940s and 1950s. A new 'Great Awakening' saw church membership rise from 49% in 1940 to 69% in 1960.[42] American politicians were not slow in responding to this with Congress adding the words 'under God' to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954 and making 'In God We Trust' the

official national motto two years later.[43] Both Presidents Truman and Eisenhower understood the importance of religion for US foreign policy. For them it became a key distinguishing feature between the US and the atheist Soviet Union.[44]

Although the intentional presentation of a spiritual consensus seems very much in tune with domestic American sensibilities of the time, it also served a diplomatic purpose. Both the Latin crosses and chapel at Madingley symbolise a Cold War spiritual union between the US and Britain. The cemetery guidebook notes that the University of Cambridge donated the land and that it is free from rent or tax though, contrary to popular myth, the thirty acres are not US soil or exempt from UK jurisdiction in any way.[45] It also draws comparisons between the Portland stone of the cemetery and 'St. Paul's Cathedral and many other monumental buildings in London.'[46] The chapel itself, in a local concession to the distaste of decoration in 'stripped classical' design, has a huge seal and map of the UK dominating one exterior wall to evoke British approval of and participation in the great American collective endeavour commemorated within.

This symbolism of Anglo-American spiritual union at Madingley is problematic at a number of levels and serves to obscure significant policy differences with the host nation. In the early Cold War, Western European nations largely welcomed fervent American religiosity as a further guarantee of US commitment to their security and as strategy for underpinning domestic policy goals.[47] In the Anglo-American context, Dianne Kirby has explored how the Attlee government were prepared to endorse Truman's Christianisation of the Cold War to secure American financial and diplomatic support in the face of Britain's unappealing post-war socialist political direction of travel.[48] Growing anti-Americanism on the political left and in wider society could easily have made the confidently American aspects of Madingley's design seem out of place to British public opinion. Religion therefore became an

area to reconcile the differences between American capitalism and British socialism and placed 'Christian ideals and values' at the core of Anglo-American anti-communism.[49]

This image of spiritual union at Madingley functioned across the political spectrum and did not just serve to obscure American difficulties with Britain's political left. The chapel's historical presentation ignores at times the very serious American differences with Churchill's wartime strategy. Neither does it give any acknowledgement that Britain was still an imperial power, a fact clearly anathema to the American ideals represented throughout the cemetery. Indeed, in 1956, the year of Madingley's dedication, serious tensions developed between the two nations over Britain's highhanded intervention in Suez. The imagery and symbolism of a deeper spiritual union at Madingley clearly aided both nations to circumvent any immediate difficulties in Anglo-American diplomacy.

Collective Endeavour and Social Change

The design of the Cambridge American Military Cemetery stresses a government-led collective national endeavour. As a site of remembrance, it gives little room for discussion or debate about the prosecution or outcome of the war. Similarly, it restricts the symbols of individual sacrifice through its ordered uniformity and exclusions. Since the 1960s, however, social and cultural developments have significantly challenged the cohesive national ideals underpinning the consensus allowing an emphasis on the (now more inclusive) individual to assert itself in American commemorative culture. Greater awareness of the individual victims of exclusion and of those who suffered in some of the great tragedies of the twentieth century has combined with intergenerational reconciliation and post-Cold War triumphalism to change fundamentally the American commemorative terrain.

The social and cultural tumult of the1960s weakened existing commemorative tropes for many Americans. In the era of Vietnam, Watergate and the Civil Rights struggle, many of the

younger generation no longer felt able to trust their government to tell the truth or to do the right thing. Powerful unifying national ideals of freedom, equality, democracy and capitalism (and the belief that others wanted the same things) remained in place for their parents, but for many baby boomers they rang hollow and crumbled in the face of the massacres at My Lai, the growing casualties from an unpopular foreign war, presidential dissimulation and domestic political and racial tensions.[50]

In time, the Civil Rights and Equality movements undermined many of the exclusions previously practiced by ABMC architects and later national war memorials have acknowledged the dramatic cultural changes and assertive diversity within American society and the military. American national commemoration has become more sensitive to the individual and more representative of the diversity of the US. The multi-ethnic faces engraved in the wall of the 1995 Korean War memorial in Washington and the statuary added to the Vietnam memorial depicting a white, black and Hispanic soldier supporting each other are in stark contrast to William's four Caucasians at Madingley.[51] Women too, have challenged many of the conventions that excluded them from official national commemoration. A Women's Vietnam Memorial (1993) and a Women in Military Service for America Memorial (1997) are both now located in the nation's capital while the National World War II Memorial (2004) on the Mall in Washington self-consciously includes a quotation from head of the Women's Army Corp, Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby.

At the same time, growing national awareness of the Holocaust from the 1960s foregrounded the experience of the victims of the war. The Holocaust Memorial in Washington opened in 1993 and developed this theme by tackling head-on the fact that visitors often had no tangible connection to the events described. By putting faces and names to the victims, the memorial attempted to educate people in the reality of the terrible events.[52] Where the focus of individual suffering has extended to the national experience of the AIDS epidemic,

recognition of the experience of slavery and the Civil Rights struggle or even the victims of US actions in the world, controversy has arisen attracting the ire of conservative critics who talk of 'virus of victimization.' Nevertheless, as John Bodnar notes, it was now harder to suppress individual subjectivities at the expense of collective ones. Society now had more interest in and 'more to say about victims' and 'sorrowful tales that require redress rather than self-denial and collective ideals.'[53]

The powerful cultural image of World War II as a 'good war' began to change as sensitivities to the individual increased. The idea of a 'Good War' had never been universally accepted and from the beginning there was a raft of works, such as Norman Mailer's *Naked and the Dead* (1948) and William Wyler's film *Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), portraying the darker side of the war and its aftermath. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, however, the idea of a 'bad war' lost power as that of a 'good war' grew in strength. By the 1970s, World War II veterans were retiring and increasingly turning their thoughts to their youthful wartime service. Veteran's organisations flourished and their emphasis on patriotism and American values chimed with a rise of wider conservatism as a reaction to the social tumult and disturbance of the 1960s.[54] For veterans, personal moral behaviour was now often more important in explaining the war than the old collective visions of the 1940s. Individual patriotic service and sacrifice increasingly came to overlay trauma and violence in a 'common man heroism' that served to restrict discussion of the wider controversies of the war. In this respect, it actually performed a similar function to the older collective ideals.[55]

This subtle transformation of the 'good war' narrative in turn became important for the families of veterans and wider society. As veterans of World War II inevitably began dying off it prompted a degree of nostalgia for what was being lost. Their rebellious 'baby boomer' children felt an increasing need to heal the rift and honour their parents before it was too late. Veterans and their children were prepared to put past disagreements from the 1960s behind

them and celebrate individual service in an increasingly 'sanitized and self-congratulatory myth' of the 'good war' that provided a patriotic narrative of individual heroism in defence of freedom and democracy without any of the complicating wider debates.[56]

The end of the Cold War and victory in the first Gulf War also reminded Americans that they could win armed conflicts. As well as serving to heal the trauma of defeat in Vietnam, it introduced a degree of triumphalism into public life. The phenomenon of patriotic suffering of individual soldiers and sacrifice of the wider wartime generation as aspirational American virtues increasingly obscured dissension in the final decade of the century. These ideas found popular expression in Tom Brokaw's book *The Greatest Generation* (1998) that developed the idea that the Great Depression and World War II forged Americans of the wartime generation into toughened steel making them uniquely able to build the success of the post-war years. Their individual sacrifice and work ethic born of the challenging times of depression and war, Brokaw argued, had made America great.[57] Hollywood reinforced the hagiography with films such as Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and subsequent HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers* (2001) based on the 1992 book of that title by Stephen Ambrose. All of these cultural outputs emphasised the noble individual effort during the war rather than dwelling on awkward or difficult questions surrounding American conduct. In doing so, they helped forge a consensus around ideas of individual patriotic service and sacrifice that increasingly obscured alternative viewpoints and served to undermine the old government-led collective endeavour represented at Madingley.

The Political Utility of the Individual

American, and more latterly British, politicians have attempted to negotiate the tricky social and cultural transformations of the second half of the twentieth century by emphasising the inclusive individual and rhetorically linking them to their policies to gain support and as a

means of avoiding or mitigating divisive topics. Beginning with Reagan, presidents have realised the benefits of directly focussing on the men and women who fought the war rather than emphasising a government-led collective endeavour. In recent years, Conservative Prime Ministers have done the same. By drawing on the wider cultural themes of individual service and sacrifice, they have used commemorative activity, particularly that surrounding the centenary of World War I, to support contemporary domestic and international policies. In doing so they have contributed to a radical change of meaning at Madingley and other ABMC overseas cemeteries.

Irrespective of the vast effort and resource put into US overseas cemeteries, most received few presidential visits in the Cold War era. Eisenhower, despite being the Supreme Commander in Europe during World War II, did not visit any European cemetery while serving as president. Neither did Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon or Ford. The reluctance of Presidents Johnson and Nixon to draw attention to combat deaths in foreign wars is understandable in the era of the Vietnam War. Indeed, this is a question that all presidents, as Commander in Chief of the US military, potentially face and perhaps explains the reluctance to visit such sites.

The other significant commemorative site to US participation in World War II in Britain, the American Memorial Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral, has received even less presidential attention. No president has formally visited the chapel and even President Eisenhower, the former theatre commander in World War II, sent his Vice President, Richard Nixon, to the dedication ceremony in 1958, choosing to make a personal visit the following year.[58] The reasons for this are due to Britain's peripheral location, but are also likely due to St. Paul's being a British national church replete with the awkward symbols of empire and military victories. Fiske Kimball identified the problem for American political leaders as early as 1944 when he observed the US had 'no single cult, as in many European countries, which

would render the cathedral a suitable place of commemoration…our regiments today are drawn from far and wide.'[59]As Sam Edwards has further explained, the chapel, although replete with many references to the US, was a British funded project at the heart of the nation's 'symbolic landscape.' Although it incorporates a host of American design features the accent and 'theology' on the Anglo-American alliance is British.[60]

The lack of demonstrable presidential interest in visiting cemeteries only began to change after the conclusion of the Vietnam War with President Carter visiting Normandy with President Giscard d'Estaing in January 1978.[61] Carter famously saw a 'crisis in confidence' that struck at the 'very heart and soul and spirit of our national will' emanating from Vietnam.[62] When it came to visiting Normandy, however, Carter's speech was conventional in its referencing of the commanders and units that participated.[63]

President Reagan was the first to fully appreciate the importance of meaning in overseas cemeteries and adapt to the changing commemorative world. His term of office coincided with the fortieth anniversary of D-Day in 1984 and was an ideal opportunity to advance his policies of boosting defence budgets, slashing the non-military government programmes and healing the wounds of Vietnam via a 'nostalgic' return to World War II.[64] At the Point du Hoc memorial in France, Reagan portrayed American troops in ideological terms that would have been familiar to the designers of Madingley. For the President, democracy was the 'most deeply honourable form of government ever devised by man' and 'God [was] an ally in this great cause.'[65] Drawing on wider cultural precedents, the 'Great Communicator's' famous 'Boys of Point du Hoc' speech with its focus on an American Ranger unit captured the national mood. The only individuals Reagan mentioned in the speech were Lord Lovat and his famous piper on D-Day, Bill Millin from the 51st Highland Division, but the speech set the direction of travel in presidential rhetoric. Individual service and sacrifice would increasingly replace the government-led national endeavour of the war years in presidential

rhetoric. One historian has even suggested that without the speech and Reagan's public validation of a nostalgic return to the past, there may never have been the later manifestation of the 'Good War.'[66]

Reagan rhetorically stressed the continuity of purpose in World War II and the Cold War at commemorative sites but under his successor, George H. W. Bush, the chronological limits and physical nature of commemoration at Madingley expanded beyond World War II. In the early 1990s, Bush envisioned American leadership of a 'New World Order' underpinned by democracy, the rule of law and international cooperation like that seen amongst allied nations during the Cold War. For Bush, the ultimate demonstration of this was the coalition formed to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait during 1990-1991. Like Reagan, Bush linked current day military service and sacrifice to that of World War II to garner support for his foreign policy.[67] In a speech on 11 September 1990 outlining his 'New World Order,' Bush highlighted current 'valiant Americans' providing the patriotic service as a new generation that 'have stepped forward to share a tearful goodbye before leaving for a strange and distant shore.'[68]

The implications of this linkage in war quickly became apparent. A month later, on 10 October 1990 USAF Capt. Thomas R. Caldwell, an F-111 aircraft weapons operator from the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing based at Lakenheath, Suffolk, deployed to Saudi Arabia was killed during a training mission as part of Operation Desert Shield. In an unprecedented move, the ABMC gave permission for the interment of Capt. Caldwell at Madingley alongside those from World War II on 26 October 1990. Opening foreign ABMC cemeteries to new burials from later wars was significant because it gave membership of an exclusive club previously only open to the hallowed dead from World War II. Doing so gave both physical and ideological equivalence, as President Bush had done in his speech, to the dead from subsequent potentially controversial conflicts.

While the 'New World Order' language of Bush certainly provided the context of this significant change, it was actually the result of British commemorative need and pressure on the ABMC via the American political system. Capt. Caldwell's British wife argued her husband had 'died for his country' and 'deserved to be buried' at Madingley. After encountering some initial resistance from the ABMC, Mrs Caldwell exerted political pressure via the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) to gain compliance.[69] Just over a year later, the ABMC agreed to a further addition to the cemetery, after a similar request from a British widow, commemorating Major Dennis G. Wise who had died in an accident over the North Sea on 14 August 1990.[70]

Madingley, and the service men and women buried there, continued briefly to be an active symbol of common purpose in the post-Cold War world. Indeed, in 1994 John Major used Capt. Caldwell to bolster ideas of present day Anglo-American unity. Visiting Madingley with President Bill Clinton for the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day, he noted 'We have had to make further sacrifices, some very recently. In the Gulf War, for example, among those buried here is an American Serviceman from that combined action.'[71] Yet Capt. Caldwell and Major Wise remain the only two post-World War II service personnel commemorated at Madingley. With the possibility of a great many more families of American war dead requesting burial at Madingley, in more recent times, an ABMC guide confirmed, off the record, that there have been instances where requests for burial have been politely, but firmly, declined.[72] After some initial post-Cold War Anglo-American diplomatic utility, it seems that if the individual dead from World War II are to retain their symbolic power for both nations then the cemeteries had to remain sacrosanct and inviolable in the face of subsequent conflicts. Rhetorical links to other wars and sacrifice are possible, but the opening of cemeteries to new burials would directly expose them to the controversies surrounding later conflicts and undermine the social consensus surrounding American actions in World War II.

The risk of potentially becoming a point of tension rather than unity in the Anglo-American alliance has in this instance reasserted its precedence over the need to commemorate individual service personnel from later wars.

Madingley's one moment in the presidential limelight came during the Clinton administration and witnessed a significant further development in presidential rhetoric. Clinton had a less than straightforward relationship with the American military and its supporters. He had avoided the draft for the Vietnam War and opposed American participation in that conflict. His predecessor George H. W. Bush had served in World War II as a Navy pilot while Reagan had spent his war making propaganda films in Hollywood for the War Department. Clinton had also courted controversy with his implementation his 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' directive of February 1994 that allowed 'closeted' personnel to serve in the military, but barred the openly gay. The suspicions surrounding Clinton's position on the military clearly had the potential to create ugly publicity.[73]

The 1994 celebrations surrounding D-Day were therefore an opportunity to repair public perception of President Clinton's relationship with the military. Riding a tide of media fascination with the veterans of World War II, Clinton attended a ceremony at Madingley just before the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day in 1994 as part of a tour of cemeteries that included three speeches at three different locations in Normandy itself. Much like Reagan at Normandy, Clinton in his speech at Madingley, stressed the themes of peace, justice and freedom.[74] Even in the post-Cold War world, he was keen to stress the continuity and unity of purpose in common decent human values. Importantly, Clinton rhetorically linked for the first time the achievement of these goals to specific individual American sacrifice in World War II. In his Madingley speech, he named Joseph Kennedy Jr. and Glenn Miller, but also referenced those with 'names like Carillo, Kaufman, and Wood.'[75] When he moved on to the cemeteries in France for the D-Day commemorations, he developed the approach and the

individual names came thick and fast. At Point du Hoc, he mentioned Lt Col. James Earl Rudder and Corporal Ken Bayman noting 'human miracles begin with personal choices, millions of them gathered together as one, like the stars of a majestic galaxy.' At Utah Beach it was Russell 'Red' Reeder and at Colleville-sur-Mer, he talked of Capt. Joe Dawson and his wife Pauline.[76] President Clinton's referencing of American ideals and values was conventional, but his linking directly to specific American individuals was an innovative combination of Reagan's romantic view of the World War II soldier and Bush's focus on individual present day service personnel continuing that noble work. His Vice-President, Al Gore similarly celebrated the individual when he visited Madingley the following year to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. Completely reversing the intended meaning of the site's designers, he now noted 'those simple common stones in their orderly rows remind us that – though whole nations do fight – it is individuals who die.'[77]

Reagan, Bush and Clinton all anchored their rhetoric to the constructed values of World War II and the sacrifice of the veterans themselves, symbolically stressing the continuity of purpose between World War II and the present. Such a focus clearly had a life span limited to that of the veterans and, as the developments during the presidency of George H. W. Bush demonstrated, it was difficult to extend the values and meaning of the commemorative sites beyond the World War II generation. Since the 1990s a series of serious conflicts have erupted around the globe that no longer experienced the bi-polar stability of the Cold War and the US has on occasion been unable to avoid the temptation of intervention. With involvement in major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the twenty-first century, the utility of a focus on individual sacrifice has become even more apparent to politicians.

President George W. Bush recognised the potential benefits of focussing on the individual sacrifice of World War II early in his administration. On his visit to the ABMC cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer only a few short months after 9/11, he emphasised individual sacrifice

noting that 'behind every grave of a fallen soldier is a story of grief that came to a wife, a mother, a child, a family, or a town.' He then referenced 'Private Jimmy Hall' who 'was seen carrying the body of his brother' and the 'thirty-eight pairs of brothers [that] died, including Bedford and Raymond Hoback of Virginia.'[78] Bush felt comfortable rhetorically linking the war dead from World War II directly to his policies in Afghanistan, stating 'For some military families in America and in Europe, the grief is recent, with the losses we have suffered in Afghanistan. They can know, however, that the cause is just, and like other generations, these sacrifices have spared many others from tyranny and sorrow.'[79]

As Bush's Global War on Terror expanded to encompass Iraq, a focus on individual service and sacrifice in commemorative activity became even more important to garnering support for his foreign policy. In his speech at the Netherlands American Cemetery at Margraten on the sixtieth anniversary of V-E Day in May 2005, Bush drew attention to the individual sacrifice of Willy F. James, Raymond Kelly, Maurice Rose and Robert Lee Routledge. With many European powers finding it difficult to offer overt support to the US foreign policy of the burgeoning Global War on Terror, Bush's clear purpose was to use these individuals to remind them that 'the free Europe where many of them lie buried was built on their sacrifice.' He then directly linked the hallowed dead from World War II to those currently serving and his administration's policy goals:

As the 21st century unfolds before us…[we] are bringing hope to places where it has long been denied, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Lebanon, and across the broader Middle East. Freedom is a permanent hope of mankind, and when that hope is made real for all people, it will be because of the sacrifices of a new generation of men and women as selfless and dedicated to liberty as those we honor today.'[80]

Clearly, the emphasis on individual service and sacrifice had both rhetorical power and diplomatic utility, but not only Republican presidents deployed such strategies. Barack Obama on his first visit to Normandy in 2009 made full use of the now well-established technique listing no less than seven individuals including his own grandfather and great uncle. The latter, Charles Payne, Obama noted underlining the notion of a 'good war,' was involved in the liberation of concentration camps.

The individuals Obama referenced were for him examples 'as we face down the hardships and struggles of our own time.' He argued that the 'story of Normandy' was also 'the story of America, of the Minutemen…of the Union boys from Maine…at Gettysburg, of the men who gave their last full measure of devotion at Inchon and Khe Sanh, of all the young men and women whose valor and goodness still carry forward this legacy and sacrifice.'[81] That Obama could mention Vietnam in the same breath as World War II is surely an indication of both how far the US had come in healing the deep national wounds from that conflict, but also the power of a focus on individual sacrifice to circumvent difficult issues.

Obama, of course, had his own domestic agenda and foreign policy troubles as a legacy from the Bush administration and there was some question whether he would even attend the commemorations of the seventieth anniversary of the landings in 2014.[82] When he did, he was not shy in connecting the individual sacrifice of World War II to his administration's goals and current military operations. Listing three veterans as exemplars of patriotic service, he then concentrated on their activities post-war and the power of government noting 'our country made sure millions earned a college education, opening up opportunity at an unprecedented scale.' Warming to the theme of the 'greatest generation' he also noted the veterans 'married those sweethearts and bought new homes and raised families and built businesses, lifting up the greatest middle class the world has ever known.'

Interestingly, Obama recognised his change in emphasis noting it was a 'time when it has been more tempting to pursue narrow self-interest, to slough off common endeavour,' but he did not suggest a return to New Deal government activism. Instead, he listed off four individual modern day service members, some with severe injuries acquired in tours of Iraq, as members of 'this 9/11 generation of servicemembers…[who] felt something. They answered the same call. They said, "I will go." They too chose to serve a cause that's greater than self.' Linking the present day military to those of D-Day, Obama described how 'this generation of service men and women will step out of uniform, and they, too, will build families and lives of their own. They, too, will become leaders in their communities – in commerce, in industry, and perhaps politics – the leaders we need for the beachhead of our time.' This was a dismissal of the Democratic Party heritage of the Great Depression and World War II for President Obama. Individuals not government would guide the continued prosperity of the nation. Professional soldiers, not a conscript army similar to World War II, would lay the foundations of liberty.

With so few official visits to Madingley by American leaders, British politicians have shown little enthusiasm for visiting the site or any direct evidence of interest in its changing meaning. Nevertheless, the presidential focus on the service and sacrifice of individuals at Madingley and the other ABMC cemeteries in Europe does appear to have influenced later Prime Ministers, notably David Cameron and Theresa May. Margaret Thatcher was close to Ronald Reagan, both in personal and ideological terms, sharing his antipathy for big government and famous for her focus on the individual, believing there was 'no such thing as society.'[83] However, she does not appear to have adopted much of his romantic version of World War II, preferring instead the rhetorical certainties of an alliance of shared values and interests guided by national leaders.[84] Other than referencing Capt. Caldwell during President

Clinton's visit to Madingley to reassert an Anglo-American 'special relationship' in the post-Cold War world, John Major also followed a similar approach.

Given the controversy surrounding his support for US intervention in Iraq and his close relationship with George W. Bush, a clear focus on individual service and sacrifice might have proved useful to Tony Blair as a way of shutting down debate on controversial foreign interventions.[85] That he and his successor, Gordon Brown, did not rhetorically follow President Bush and chose instead the more traditional interpretation of cemeteries is likely down to a preference for emphasising government-led endeavour. When Gordon Brown spoke to Congress in March 2009, his rhetorical use of American cemeteries as a symbol of shared interests and values was entirely conventional. His noting of the 'service and sacrifice' of American war dead 'resting row upon row – often alongside comrades-in-arms from Britain' in European cemeteries drew on the original intended meaning of these sites.[86] Although from the political left, Blair and Brown's 'New Labour' drew inspiration from Bill Clinton's centrist 'Third Way' thinking that 'Big Government doesn't work, but no Government works even less.'[87] In the international sphere, they were enthusiastic about using multilateral institutions for interventions to protect 'freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law' as 'universal values of the human spirit'[88] Blair's noted religious sympathy with Bush provided a further idealistic and moral underpinning for his foreign policy. Although it appeared a very personal decision of faith, it also drew on a tradition of accommodation of the US by the British left via the idea of a 'spiritual union' that stretches back at least to the government of Attlee.[89]

At a personal level, relations between David Cameron and Barack Obama were reportedly poor with the former aiming to steer a 'solid not slavish' course in relations with the US.[90] Even so, with his ideological belief in a 'Big Society' to take power away from government, Cameron has mirrored American presidential emphasis on service and sacrifice of the

individual. In his speech to the Conservative Party Conference in October 2014, he singled out a D-Day veteran, Patrick Churchill, before linking his service to the current generation of service personnel. For Cameron, like Bush and Obama, 'the heirs to those who fought on the beaches of Northern France are those fighting in Afghanistan today.'[91] In stating this, he was adopting an American presidential rhetorical device to support Anglo-American foreign policy.

This was, however, also part of a broader commemorative agenda designed to underpin Cameron's domestic social agenda. In October 2012, he announced £50m of funding for a government led commemorative project to mark the centenary of World War I. In his speech, the Prime Minister was comprehensive in his use of the inclusive individual citing the experiences of Major J.V. Bates, Walter Tull, the first black British Army officer and the executed British nurse, Edith Cavell.[92] This was certainly evidence that Britain had experienced many similar social and cultural changes to the US in the years since World War II, but also that he appreciated the change in the presidential rhetoric of Bush and Obama. Cameron's then Education Secretary, Michael Gove, set out the policy rationale for commemorating the service and sacrifice of individuals in a January 2014 article for the *Daily Mail* titled 'Why does the British Left insist on belittling true British Heroes.' Gove wanted people to 'learn from the conflict in the right way in the next four years' which, for him, meant learning 'about the heroism, and sacrifice, of our great-grandparents.' He then took aim at those on the political left, including 'a Cambridge historian and Guardian writer,' with 'at best, [an] ambiguous attitude to this country and, at worst, an unhappy compulsion…to denigrate virtues such as patriotism, honour and courage.[93]

In attempting to overturn an older conservative historiography that saw the war as a tragic blunder, Cameron and Gove aimed to use an emphasis on individual service and sacrifice to bolster patriotism in the uncertain times of referendums on Scottish independence and

membership of the European Union, and close down debate on their domestic and foreign policy.[94] Cameron's successor, Theresa May, appears to have followed a similar line. She rounded off her World War I centenary commemorations by paying her respects at the graves of individual casualties, John Parr and George Ellison, respectively the first and last British casualties of the war.[95] To date, British political use of a rhetorical emphasis on individual service and sacrifice has been largely for a domestic audience, but with the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-Day in 2019, of VE-Day in 2020 and the centenary rapidly approaching, British political leaders may see further opportunities to deploy it directly to Anglo-American relations. Britain has clearly found utility in emphasising the glories of Anglo-American cooperation as a way to keep the US engaged in their security concerns in the past. It remains to be seen how these forthcoming commemorative celebrations merge with British concerns about a resurgent Russia and the potential for US disengagement from NATO.

The ABMC, the Host Country and Commemoration of the Individual

The ABMC has responded to the rhetorical emphasis of politicians and the evolving commemorative terrain with a significant change in mission. Concerns about declining visitor numbers and the time-bound nature of its sites has resulted in major new physical additions to the site at Madingley and a marked openness and acceptance of local host community initiatives regarding individual commemorations. This, in turn, has led to a significant change in the institutional meaning of Madingley that has shifted away from the conservative government-led collective endeavour epitomised in the original design and architecture towards a more fluid, yet still conservative, emphasis on individual sacrifice and service.

When George Bush visited Normandy in 2002, he perhaps unwittingly raised an important question when he noted 'The day will come when no one is left who knew them, when no visitor to this cemetery can stand before a grave remembering a face and a voice.'[96] While

there had been a clear need for commemoration by the families, comrades and the wider public in the years after World War II, what of the generations to come with no direct connection or knowledge of the events and people commemorated? Madingley faced the combined challenge of its peripheral location and falling attendance numbers following the death of veterans and family. How was the site to remain relevant when its form promoted unified national ideals to a modern generation of Americans functioning in a consciously individual centric world?

The ABMC responded to these pressures and challenges with organisation-wide programmes and local initiatives to maintain their relevance and continue to attract visitors. The long-stated aim of the ABMC has been to commemorate the sacrifice of US armed forces, the design, construction and maintenance of US military burial grounds and the control of the design and construction of other US memorials and private monuments by private US citizens and organisations overseas. In 2005, however, during Bush's presidency a new goal emerged that recognised the passing of grieving veterans and families and the need to attract visitors with no immediate connection or knowledge of those commemorated. The ABMC declared that they now aimed to 'have the Commission's Commemorative sites recognized worldwide as inspirational and educational visitor destinations.'[97] The upshot of this change in vision was the ABMC's first interpretational centre, opened in Normandy in 2007, aiming to educate and inform visitors on the service personnel commemorated within a cemetery. The ABMC decided to locate the $30m centre at the cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer to cater to the million plus number of visitors to the site each year.[98] At around 60,000 per annum, Madingley's annual visitor rate is more modest.[99] Even so, the ABMC decided to invest in a new $6m visitor centre that opened in October 2013 with the aim of raising annual visitations to 90,000 by 2016.[100] The focus and content of the interpretive centre took its cue from the cultural changes in the US and the rhetoric of politicians in recent years by focussing on the

stories and sacrifice of individuals buried or commemorated at the cemetery. In addition to coverage of wartime casualties, the displays also include details and artefacts of veterans who survived the war.[101] This surprising addition enables the site to tap into wider cultural celebration of patriotic individual service not necessarily involving the ultimate sacrifice thus broadening its appeal as a visitor attraction. At the same time, while the display does give a broad operational context in its historical displays, it consciously avoids the disagreements and debates surrounding the history of World War II and, as the Eighth Air Forces' unofficial cemetery, the whole controversy surrounding Allied strategic bombing. Despite moving the site beyond its commemorative role and entering the realm of a museum, the new interpretive centre does not aspire to provide a comprehensive presentation of the debates surrounding US participation in the war. The aim of the site remains consciously conservative in its desire to 'inspire future generations to explore, understand and emulate the values for which these heroes gallantly fought.'[102]

Originally, the ABMC planned to roll out the opening of interpretive centres around the world at all their sites, but their experience at Madingley has been instructive. As a Grade I and II listed site close and complicated coordination with the American Fine Arts Commission, English Heritage and local planning bodies was required.[103] Any new intervention in the cemetery design could threaten its original intended purpose if not carefully considered. Finance also had an impact on whether projects went ahead and in what form. As the financial crisis developed from 2008 onward, the ABMC scaled back their plans as funds granted by Congress dried up. Progress has been slower than originally intended, but the ABMC recently announced plans for their tenth centre at the Margraten Cemetery in the Netherlands.[104]

Rather than representing a reassertion of government in the commemorative process, the interpretative centre at Madingley, in some ways, actually represents a retreat. In the original

design, the chapel containing its historical presentations was located at the heart of the site. Planning requirements aside, the new centre at Madingley is brick built, consciously different from Portland stone of the original design and set back on the periphery among trees. Ron Robin has noted that with World War I cemeteries the formal power of the state invested in interpretation had been minimal, but with World War II it moved from the back of the cemetery grounds to the front, transforming the role of government from 'coordinator to guiding light' in a clear American version of events.[105] With the new interpretative centre at Madingley, the government has once more physically retreated to the periphery leaving the site itself to the honoured individual dead.

Declining attendance at military commemorative sites is a problem also faced by CWGC. In response, they opened the Ieper Information Centre in Belgium in 2017 and June 2019 will see the completion of the 'CWGC Experience' Visitor Centre in Arras, France. Both aim to cater for and attract greater numbers of people with no direct connection to those commemorated.[106] Given the recent centenary commemorations, the CWGC's focus has thus far been on World War I cemeteries, with no similar proposals for World War II locations. The National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) near Lichfield, Staffordshire, is not a cemetery but has also recently enhanced their visitor services. The home to the National Armed Forces Memorial commemorating the 16,000 British service deaths in conflict since World War II aims to be a 'spiritually uplifting place which honours the fallen, recognises service and sacrifice, and fosters pride in our country.'[107] It also aims to be a satisfying visitor attraction with a café and shop housed in the new £15.7m visitor centre opened in 2017.[108] Given the chronology of these additions, it is hard to imagine that the ABMC's prior experience in Britain and Europe did not inspire both the CWGC and NMA.

Local host communities have always interacted with and influenced ABMC commemorative sites. They have responded to changes in American cultural emphasis and political rhetoric,

but have also formed their own interpretations of individual sacrifice and, through this, contributed to American commemorative practice. George Bush's speech at the Netherlands American Military Cemetery at Margraten in 2005 acknowledged this local influence. Bush described how a 'Voice of America' broadcast from London on the first V-E Day asked Europe to 'think of these Americans as your dead also' and noted that 'the Dutch have continued this wonderful tradition by adopting and attending to the graves of the people they never met.'[109] In this, Bush was referencing the work of the Stichting Adoptie Graven Amerikaanse Begraafplaats Margraten (Foundation for Adopting Graves American Cemetery Margraten) who since 1945 had conducted regular visits to individual graves to lay flowers and kept in touch with many of the next of kin as other similar organisations do at other American cemeteries on the continent.[110] Yet, Bush took the idea further by suggesting 'each man or woman buried here is more than a headstone and a serial number' and that 'in faded black and white photographs, each one here looks back at us in the full glow of youth.'[111] Local tradition, the President's rhetoric and modern developments in the internet combined to develop a desire to create an online memorial to all individuals containing information and, crucially, a photo of all service personnel buried or commemorated at the cemetery. Initially, this took the form of a website 'adoptiegraven.nl' in 2007, but then took the more definite form of the Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven (SVAAO - Foundation United Adopters American War Graves) in 2011. They aim 'to honor the men and women who have been buried in overseas American war cemeteries in the Netherlands and Belgium by conducting research on them, hoping to preserve the memories of them and their sacrifices.'[112] The activities of the group centre around collecting data and photographs on their website 'fieldsofhonor-database.com' covering six of the continental American cemeteries and bi-annual tribute commemorations at Margraten and Epinal whereby photos of the individual service personnel are placed on their graves or by their names on the

commemorative tablets of the missing. Thus, local tradition and initiative has intermingled with American cultural and political changes and presidential rhetoric to transform the relationship local people have with these commemorative sites.

In recent years, this European initiative has spread to Madingley with a 'Faces of Cambridge' project that has engaged with Americans and the local British community across a variety of media including its own Facebook page to highlight the individuals commemorated at the site.[113] In 2017, the project aimed to place photographs of the war dead on graves or the tablets of the missing as part of the anniversary of the end of the war at the Memorial Day services that year. It was hoped that the event might become a bi-annual affair with one member of the cemetery staff declaring that through the images 'you can empathise and connect to the young person buried there.'[114]

This local British activity clearly took its cue from the Netherlands. It was also a wider response to the cultural changes previously described that apply to a degree across the western world. Commemorating the individual alongside Americans also provides a sense of connection and nostalgia that, no doubt, helps some British people negotiate the tricky terrain of controversial US international actions in the face of relative national powerlessness. This is the descendant of the Anglo-American spiritual union of the Cold War. While Britain has now become a largely secular country, it maintains a comforting sense of shared values with an Anglo-American union centred on commemorating the service and sacrifice of individuals. That the CWGC are beginning to adopt similar initiatives is further evidence of the wider need for secular engagement with commemorative sites. Their 'Faces of Thiepval' project currently underway aims to provide a photo of as many of the 72,000 dead commemorated on the Menin Gate as possible. On 10 November 2017, Liz Woodfield, the CWGC's Director of Information and Communications, said something strikingly similar to the staff at Madingley when she observed 'This initiative will put a human face to the names

engraved in stone and will help future generations discover and cherish the stories of those who gave their today for all our tomorrows.'[115]

In response to the changed commemorative landscape, the ABMC now makes the honouring of individual service and sacrifice the centre of its activities. Empathy with the individual dead and those who survived, the ABMC hopes, will serve to replace the loss of a direct connection and entice new visitors to cemeteries like Madingley. Indeed, the organisation recently gave official confirmation to this pre-eminence of the individual over collective national endeavour. For many years the vision detailed in their annual appropriation request to Congress was General Pershing's promise that 'time will not dim the glory of their deeds.' In 2017, a new vision made its appearance that was indicative of how much the intended meaning of such sites had changed. The ABMC now aimed to 'serve the public by preserving our commemorative sites to an exceptional standard, developing our cultural and historical resources, and telling the story of those we honor.'[116] This adoption of a focus on individual service and sacrifice represents a radical change to the original intended meaning of the site at Madingley, but one that is very familiar in the restrictive ideological uniformity it aims to secure.

The cemetery at Madingley remains a deeply moving commemoration of the American dead from World War II and it is a clear reminder of the unifying values the US wished to project onto itself and its allies during the Cold War. The emphasis on American democracy, freedom, capitalism, technological superiority and republican government as national endeavours went hand in hand with the exclusions along religious, racial, gender and class lines. When these unifying ideals fell from favour in the 1960s, a new consensus built around individual service and sacrifice, just as powerful and restrictive, arose to replace it. Politicians have responded to this change with a similar emphasis to further both their domestic and

international agendas. Local host communities too have drawn on the same themes as they negotiate the position these sites occupy in their personal and national life.

Conscious that it needs to remain relevant and attract visitors, the ABMC has carried out a major addition to the physical nature of Madingley with the construction and development of an interpretive centre. This represents a significant change in meaning. True, the interpretive twist is more inclusive and responsive to the individual, making it more accessible to the public, but the underlying ideological uniformity remains untroubled by any difficult questions emanating from American participation in the war. The dead remain sacrosanct, but there has nevertheless been a significant transformation of the ideological malleability of the site. A focus on the individual rather than clearly defined unifying American ideals provides a portability more difficult to achieve with the original design. Whether on the left or the right, politicians now enlist the individual dead to their cause while local communities rally to the support of controversial policies with seeming indifference to the wider questions provoked.

[1] Ron Robin, *Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900-1965* Princeton, 1992 and also his '"A Foothold in Europe": The Aesthetics and Politics of American War Cemeteries in Western Europe,' *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, Apr., 1995. Thomas H. Conner's *War and Remembrance: The Story of the American Battle Monuments Commission* (Lexington, 2018) is similarly unable to devote much specific space to Madingley. Kate Clarke Lemay covers the American World War II memorials in France in depth in *Triumph of the Dead – American World War II Cemeteries, Monuments, and Diplomacy in France* (Tuscaloosa, 2018).
[2] Kenneth Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of Americans in World War II* London, 2007 and John Bodnar, *The Good War in American Memory* Baltimore, 2011.
[3] John Bodnar, '*Saving Private Ryan* and Post-war Memory in America', *American Historical Review,* Vol. 106, No. 3 2001, pp. 805-817.
[4] Sam Edwards, *Allies in Memory – World War II and the Politics of Transatlantic Commemoration c. 1941-2000* Cambridge, CUP, 2015. Ron Robins, *Enclaves*.
[5] Fiske Kimball 'Worthy of Their High Mission,' *New York Times* 12 November 1944.
[6] Conner, *War and Remembrance*, pp. 15-23.
[7] Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 110.
[8] Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 113 and 'Paul Cret Obituary,' *New York Times* 9 September 1945.
[9] Conner, *War and Remembrance*, p. 183.
[10] Brig Gen. Thomas North to Quartermaster General, Major General Thomas Larkin n. d. and Shenton 'They Will Never Be Forgotten,' *New York Times* 30 May 1945 quoted in Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 122 and 110.
[11] Ron Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 110-111. Robin argues for a concerted campaign by the ABMC to apply 'moral pressure on the bereaved families' to keep the bodies overseas he does not footnote his evidence for this assertion. Conner, *War and Remembrance*, p. 197 and footnote 50 argues that although the ABMC wished the dead to remain overseas, the evidence is lacking in ABMC files for any concerted campaign.
[12] Edward Steere and Thayer M. Boardman, *Final Disposition of World War II Dead* Department of the Army Historical Branch, 1957, 307-319. These were not necessarily all combat deaths, as many would arise from accidents or routine morbidity in a large service population.
[13] Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition*, 310-319. The site of the former cemetery at Lisnabreeny has retained considerable meaning for the local community. See: https://gitrailni.com/gitrail/lisnabreeny-military-cemetary/ accessed 28 January 2019.
[14] Steere and Boardman, *Final Disposition*, 310.
[15] Robin, *Enclaves*, pp. 14-15.
[16] ABMC History https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/history accessed 1 August 2018.
[17] Richard Pells, *Not Like Us – How Europeans Have Love, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* New York, 1997, pp. 78-79. Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 121.
[18] Pells, *Not Like Us*, p. 79.
[19] Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 116.
[20] Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 126.
[21] Robin, *Enclaves*, pp. 116-117. Robin actually uses the term 'scrapped classical' following the public language of contemporary critics such as Aline Louchheim rather than 'stripped' as the professional architectural term.
[22] Conner, *War and Remembrance*, p. 192; Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 117.
[23] Aline B. Louchheim, 'Memorials to Our War Dead Abroad,' *New York Times* 15 January 1950.
[24] John Canaday, 'Our National Pride: The World's Worst Sculpture,' *New York Times* 25 June 1965.
[25] Robin, *Enclaves*, pp. 121-122 and Jane De Hart Matthews, 'Art and Politics in Cold War America,' *American Historical Review* 81, October 1976.
[26] John Harbeson 'Our Memorials Abroad,' *National Sculpture Review: American Battle Monuments Issues* Winter, 1955 quoted in Robin, *Enclaves*, p. 120.
[27] 'Elected to Presidency,' *New York Times* 10 January 1951, 'Re-elected to Presidency,' *New York Times* 9 January 1952 and 'William Wheeler Obituary,' *New York Times* 13 August 1972.
[28] Robin, *Enclaves*, p.128.
[29] Canaday, 'Our National Pride,' *New York Times* 25 June 1965.
[30] Suzie Harrison, Cambridge American Cemetery ABMC email to G Cross, 1 August 2018. The cemetery staff are able to tell the African American burials from indications on the original interment cards rather than any physical records on the graves themselves.
[31] Robins, 'A Foothold,' p. 60.
[32] See *After the Battle* No 59 (1988), 30-50. J Robert Lilly and Michael Thomson, 'Executing US Soldiers in England, World War II: Command Influence and Sexual Racism,' *British Journal of Criminology* Vol. 37 No. 2 Spring, 1997, pp.262-288. Conner, *War and Remembrance*, p.213.

[33] Ron Robin, 'A Foothold,' p.55.
[34] John Harbeson, 'A Collaborative Undertaking,' *A.I.A. Journal* 36, August, 1961, p.34 quoted in Ron Robin, 'A Foothold,' p. 66.
[35] *Cambridge American Military Cemetery and Memorial* (American Battle Monuments Commission, undated), 7-8.
[36] Bodnar, *Good War*.
[37] This is the older sense of the term that stresses crusade against fascism Mark Stolar, 'The Second World War in US History and Memory,' *Diplomatic History* Vol. 25 Issue 3, July 2001 p. 386.
[38] Robin, 'A Foothold,' p. 64. See also John Bodnar, 'Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America,' *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3 June 2001, p. 801.
[39] Robins, 'A Foothold,' p.59. Conner, *War and Remembrance* p. 70 notes personal inscriptions were possible after World War I, but were not available to families after World War II.
[40] Robin, 'A Foothold,' p.60.
[41] American Battle Monuments Commission, *Cambridge American Military Cemetery and Memorial*, ABMC, undated, pp. 22-23, Edwards, *Allies*, p. 20.
[42] Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith – Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York, 2012), pp.440-441.
[43] Preston, *Sword*, p.441.
[44] Preston, *Sword*, p.417 and 441.
[45] See Beacon Planning Heritage statement, p. 9. http://plan.scambs.gov.uk/swiftlg/MediaTemp/1122459-385962.pdf accessed 1 August 2018. Rosamund Harding, the owner, donated the land from the Madingley Hall Estate, but it became property of the University of Cambridge before construction of the cemetery. There was considerable local opposition to the cemetery in 1943 due to rural conservation concerns. See Edwards, *Allies*, pp. 67-68.
[46] American Battle Monuments Commission, *Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial* undated, p.1.
[47] See Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle against Communism in the Early Cold War* (New York, 2011).Preston, *Sword*, p. 434 notes Washington's support for Christian democratic movements in France, Germany and Italy as an anti-communist measure at this time.
[48] Dianne Kirby, 'Divinely Sanctioned: The Anglo-American Cold War Alliance and the Defence of Western Civilization and Christianity, 1945-1948,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 35, No. 3 July, 2000, pp. 389-391. See also Preston, *Sword*, p. 429.
[49] Kirby, 'Divinely Sanctioned,' p. 399 and 412. On British anti-Americanism see J. Lyons *America in the British Imagination 1945 to the Present* New York 2013, pp.7-34.
[50] For further discussion of these social and generational changes see Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* Oxford, 2000, James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States,1945-1974* Oxford, 1997 and John Morton Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974* New York, 1991.
[51] Savage, *Monument Wars*, 261-284.
[52] See https://www.ushmm.org/ accessed 8 August 2018.
[53] Bodnar, 'Saving,' p. 807.
[54] Edwards, *Allies*, p.158.
[55] Bodnar, 'Saving,' p. 817.
[56] See Mark Stolar, 'The Second World War in US History and Memory,' 2001 pp.391-392 and Bodnar, 'Saving,' p. 804.
[57] See Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* London, 2001. For a critique of the phenomenon, see the earlier Michael C. C. Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II* Baltimore, 1993 and Bodnar, *Good War*.
[58] See https://www.stpauls.co.uk/history-collections/history/history-highlights/american-memorial-chapel-1958 accessed 22 November 2018.
[59] Fiske Kimball, 'Worthy of Their High Mission,' *New York Times* 12 November 1944.
[60] Edwards, *Allies*, pp.62-64.
[61] Lyndon B. Johnson 'Remarks to Members of the Delegation to the D-Day Ceremonies,' 3 June 1964 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26292 accessed 1 August 2018. See also Jimmy Carter 'Normandy, France Remarks of the President and President Giscard d'Estaing on Visiting the Site of the D-Day Landings,' 5 January 1978 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29994 accessed 1 August 2018.
[62] Edwards, *Allies*, p. 177.
[63] See Carter 'Remarks,' January 5, 1978 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29994 accessed 22 August 2018.
[64] Douglas Brinkley ed., *The Reagan Diaries* (New York, 2007), 245. On Reagan's policy aims, see Edwards, *Allies*, p. 178.

[65] Ronald Reagan 'Remarks at a Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion, D-day,' 6 June 1984 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=40018 accessed 22 August 2018.
[66] Douglas Brinkley, *The Boys of Point du Hoc: Ronald Reagan, D-Day, and the US Army 2nd Ranger Battalion* New York, 2005 p.7. See also Edwards, *Allies*, pp.190-191.
[67] George Bush 'Address before a Joint Session of the Congress on the Persian Gulf Crisis,' 11 September 1990 https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/264415 accessed 12 February 2019.
[68] George Bush 'Address,' 11 September 1990 https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/264415 accessed 12 February 2019.
[69] 'Gulf War Widow Wins Test of Wills,' unattributed contemporary news article in 'Capt. Caldwell Burial File' held at Cambridge American Military Cemetery.
[70] Mrs T Wise to ABMC 19 June 1991 in 'Major Dennis G. Wise Burial File' Cambridge American Military Cemetery.
[71] John Major 'Speech at United States Cemetery in Cambridge,' 4 June 1994 http://www.johnmajorarchive.org.uk/1990-1997/mr-majors-joint-speech-with-bill-clinton-4-june-1994/ accessed 12 February 2019.
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[73] William J. Clinton, *My Life* London, 2004, p. 522.
[74] William J. Clinton 'Remarks at the United States Cemetery in Cambridge, UK,' 4 June 1994 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=50286 accessed 22 August 2018
[75] William J. Clinton 'Remarks,' 4 June 1994 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=50286 accessed 22 August 2018.
[76] See William J. Clinton 'Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of D-Day at Pointe du Hoc in Normandy, France,' 6 June 1994 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=50297, 'Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of D-Day at Utah Beach in Normandy,' 6 June 1994 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=50299 and 'Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of D-Day at the United States Cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer, France, 6 June 1994 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=50300 accessed 22 August 2018.
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[97] The ABMC Annual reports between 2004 and 2018 are available at https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/annual-reports accessed 24 August 2018. For the 'new' goal, see the 2005 Annual Report, p. 11.
[98] See https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/europe/normandy-american-cemetery#.W6uHHyXwapo accessed 26 September 2018.
[99] Figures are an estimate provided by local ABMC staff at Madingley. Suzie Harrison, Interpretive Guide Email to G Cross 1 August 2018. The ABMC plans to install turnstile counters to accurately record visitor numbers.
[100] Projections document of uncertain origin provided by former cemetery guide Arthur Brookes to G Cross in 2013 detailed annual visits of 75,000 (including 15,000 US visitors). The 'expectations' detailed were 80,000 for 2014, 85,000 for 2015 and 90,000 for 2016. The current visitor estimates indicate this was somewhat ambitious.
[101] For example, the displays contain panels on Eighth Air Force fighter pilots Don Gentile and William Cullerton, both of whom survived the war. The centre also currently (as of September 2018) a substantial display board provided by the veterans organisation, the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.
[102] 'Program for the Ground breaking Ceremony for the Normandy American Visitors and Interpretive Center' 28 August 2004 quoted in Conner, *War and Remembrance* p. p.231.
[103] The ABMC has a statutory duty to take guidance from Fine Arts Commission. The British listing system put in place by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 applies at Madingley designating aspects of the site as of 'exceptional interest' (Grade I) and 'particularly important' (Grade II). As such, permission must be given by local planning authorities for any demolition, extension or alteration. See Heritage statement, p.15 http://plan.scambs.gov.uk/swiftlg/MediaTemp/1122527-386021.pdf. accessed 2 February 2019.
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[115]'CWGC Joins Forces With Shrouds of the Somme.' https://www.cwgc.org/learn/news-and-events/news/2017/11/09/18/50/cwgc-joins-forces-with-shrouds-of-the-somme-to-launch-first-world-war-legacy-project accessed 14 March 2019.
[116] ABMC Appropriation Requests 2005-2019 are available here: https://www.abmc.gov/budget-and-performance accessed 26 September 2018.