

# THE UNITED STATES WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



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## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Records compiled by the Office of the Adjutant General show that Illinois gave 351,153 men to the armed forces of the United States during the war, the third highest total number. To commemorate the centenary of our involvement in the Great War, the Illinois World War I Centennial Committee has a mission to:

**ADVOCATE.** Encourage other entities in Illinois to recognize the contributions of Illinois to the First World War.

**EDUCATE.** Develop tools to educate others about the contributions of Illinois to the First World War.

## Lewis Institute and Armour Institute of Technology during the First World War

*University Archives & Special Collections, Illinois Institute of Technology*



*Lewis Annual yearbook page for section listing students in the armed services, 1917*

Although **Illinois Institute of Technology** was not formed until 1940, **Lewis Institute** and **Armour Institute of Technology**, its two predecessor schools, were both well-established when the U.S. entered World War in 1917. Over the next two years student life on both campuses was temporarily transformed as enlisted students were shipped out, campus war training programs were established, and new war effort clubs appeared. Today, we see the effects of wartime in our collections of student yearbooks, photographs, and alumni correspondence.

Though they evolved in different directions, the origin stories of Lewis Institute and Armour Tech sound strikingly similar. Both were founded in the late nineteenth century to offer “practical” education, both drew funds from business leaders, and both aligned themselves with progressive and educational reform movements. **Lewis Institute** was established in 1895 through the will of Allen C. Lewis, who dictated that his estate should be used for a progressive educational mission. Under the direction of educational reformer George N. Carman, Lewis Institute stayed true to this vision, offering both two and four year degrees to men and women as well as being the first college to offer evening classes for working students. Lewis’s diverse student body was made up of



**FACILITATE.** Support other entities that are recognizing the contributions of Illinois to the First World War.

**ELEVATE.** Recognize and celebrate Illinois veterans and civilians for their sacrifices and contributions to the First World War.

**PARTICIPATE.** Join other states in a national effort to recognize veterans and civilians for their sacrifices and contributions to the First World War throughout the United States.

## ILLINOIS INSTITUTIONS IN THE GREAT WAR



A growing number of institutions, companies, and universities are contributing their wartime stories for posterity. [Learn more about them here.](#)

## COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES IN ILLINOIS



An interim report on commemorative activities at Illinois cultural institutions can be [found here](#).

## PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

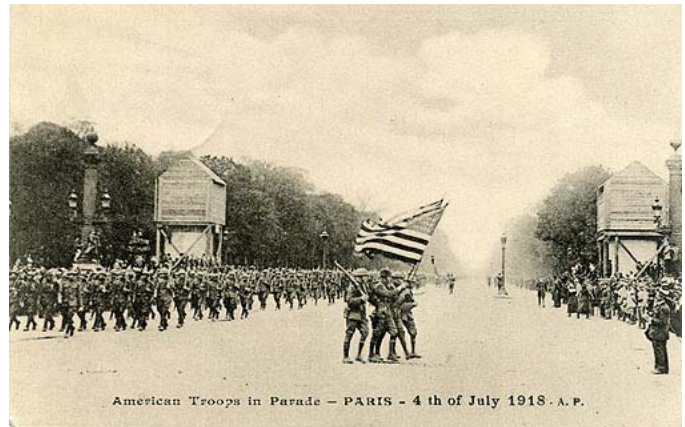


Illinois is fortunate indeed to be the home of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library, whose

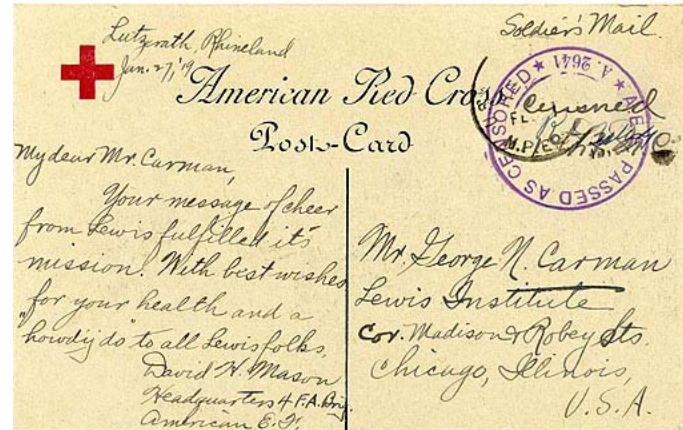
first and second generation immigrants, who displayed no small amount of school spirit.

**Armour Institute of Technology** was likewise founded in 1892 by a prominent Chicago pastor and social Frank Gunsaulus and funded by industrialist Philip D Armour. In fact, the idea for Armour Tech had grown out of the Armour family's earlier interest in the settlement house movement, and the college was initially established adjacent to the Armour Mission and Armour Flats apartments. However, as Armour Tech grew eventually took over those buildings while also shifting towards a technical focus and traditional collegiate personality. By 1902 the student body had become exclusively male and remained so until 1940, when the with Lewis Institute returned liberal arts and female students to campus.

Wartime changes to campus reflect the different personalities of Lewis Institute and Armour Tech. Lewis I sent its first two students overseas in May 1917, when Hospital Unit 12 was called to France. When Ellen T and Budy Streitmatter were told to report by the end of the week with a year's supply of clothing, their clas the Domestic Arts Department leapt into action to help purchase, sew, and launder the necessary supplies. T planted the seeds for a Patriotic League, open to any women associated with the Institute, who worked thro the war collecting reading materials and clothing for soldiers, supplying refreshments and entertainment at Lakes training centers, and raising money for the Red Cross and war orphans. Within a year, Lewis Institut at least one hundred students to Europe to serve in the army or in hospital units, many of whom appeared to close touch with the school and each other. And in 1918 the school became even more involved when it ent contract with the War Department to train drafted men in woodworking, metal work, and electrical work in month courses, which brought 200 additional men at a time to study, eat, and live at Lewis Institute. Altoge records suggest 2,705 Lewis students and alumni served and 24 were killed by the end of the war.



American Troops in Parade - PARIS - 4th of July 1918 - A.P.



Postcard to Lewis Institute director George Carman from a student in Paris, 1919

commitment and sponsorship of Illinois and National World War One centenary commemoration efforts has been both tireless and unswerving.

### PROCLAMATION ESTABLISHING THE COMMITTEE



#### Proclamation

Presented this 1st day of April 2016

**WHEREAS** in 1916 the State of Illinois began its work as a 1916-1917 Bicentennial and during World War I and continued the work from 1918-1919 and the nation's war effort and that year...

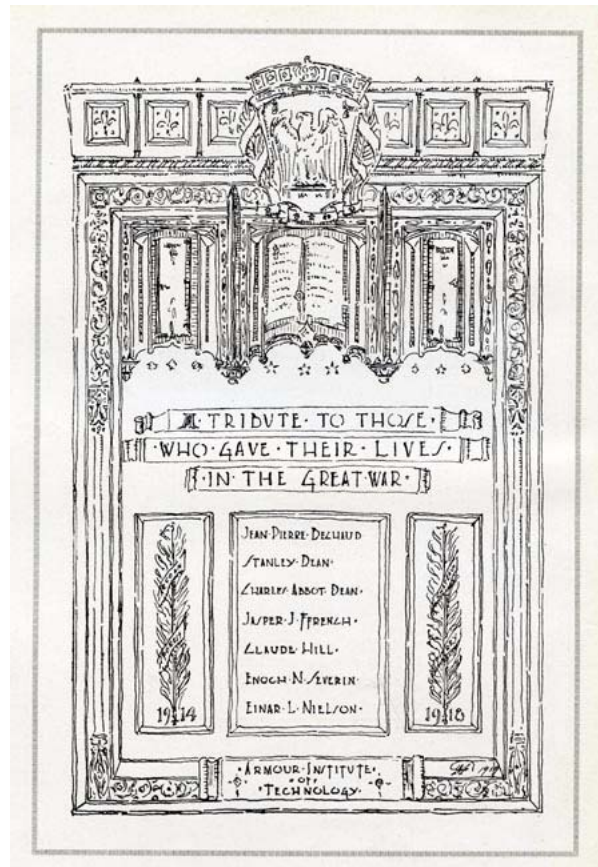


On April 1, 2016, Governor Bruce Rauner issued a proclamation officially recognizing the Illinois World War One Centennial Committee



Lewis Institute students in France, c.1918

Armour Tech also sent students to fight overseas: the 1919 yearbook commemorates six students killed and commissioned men. Though the all-male student body of Armour Tech seemed less inclined to support don effort organizations or host drafted soldiers, they eagerly participated in the Student Army Training Corps ( program. This national program added military training and drills to the standard college course load to train students as be officers, modifying student housing into barracks and dining into a mess hall. A significant part student body enrolled in this program and the naval training unit, around 300 in total, though the war ended most of the graduated.



The Cycle Armour Tech yearbook dedication page, 1919



**Armour Tech training unit group photo, c.1918**

In our collections at the University Archives & Special Collections, the war's impact is most visible in the : produced yearbooks, which contain dedications, summaries of war news, and the activities of war effort clt between 1917 and 1919. We also hold correspondence between the Lewis Institute patriotic league and enli soldiers, and photographs and draft records from war training programs at both schools.

For more information about the Armour Institute or Lewis Institute during the war, contact:

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