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Underwriters Laboratories in the First World War

### Working for a safer world

In 1893, a young electrical engineer by the name of William Henry Merrill, Jr. was sent from Boston to Chicago to assess and mitigate the fire risks associated with the World's Columbian Exposition. While in Chicago, Mr. Merrill connected with prominent fire insurance underwriters who provided him with the funds to start Underwriters Laboratories (U organization that still exists today and is headquartered in Northbrook, Illinois. During its earliest days, UL focused on testing electrical and fire suppression products for their sa time marched on, UL applied its safety science and engineering knowledge to a wide variety of fields including burglary protection, chemical safety, gases and oils and even the industry.



William Henry Merrill, Jr. founded Underwriters Laboratories (UL) in 1894 and chaired the Fire Prevention Section of the War Industries Board in 1918.

### UL's involvement in World War One

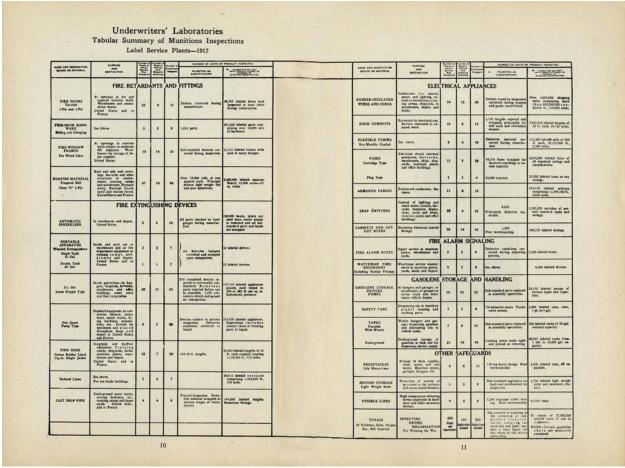
By the time the United States entered into World War One, UL had long been recognized for its expert knowledge in fire prevention and protection engineering. UL had also writ standards that specified the proper materials and construction techniques necessary for the safe production of devices and facilities. In early 1918, Congress was encouraged to introduce a bill that would provide fire insurance to private companies that manufactured, handled or stored war munitions for the U.S. government. Munitions were defined as a materials, machinery and supplies used for war purposes. Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo perceived the value in this fire insurance proposal and called for a c to be appointed. Shortly thereafter, Bernard Baruch, a financier, political advisor and Chairman of the War Industries Board of the Council of National Defense, established the F Prevention Section.



In addition to Mr. Merrill's personal contributions to the war effort, 64 UL employees answered the call to proudly serve their country.

(A sampling of UL servicemen - clockwise from top left: C.J Peacock, V. Harpster, F.J. Bauer, M.B. Smith)

On April 5, 1918, UL's founder William Henry Merrill, Jr. was named Chairman of the Fire Prevention Section of the War Industries Board at a salary of \$1 per year. An experien group of fire experts and insurance underwriters was quickly assembled under Mr. Merrill's capable leadership to collect data related to existing fire hazards in U.S. munitions pl conduct inspections and enforce adequate fire protections at each plant. In seven short months, the Section had fully inspected and made fire protection recommendations at 2, munitions plants with government contracts. Shortly after the war drew to close on November 11, 1918, Mr. Merrill provided a final report to Mr. Baruch who gratefully recognize Prevention Section's achievements in reducing fire risks at the munitions plants across the nation during this critical time in world history.



A chart summarizing UL's munitions inspections.

### About UL today

UL fosters safe living and working conditions for people everywhere through the application of science to solve safety, security and sustainability challenges. The UL Mark enge trust enabling the safe adoption of innovative new products and technologies. Everyone at UL shares a passion to make the world a safer place. We test, inspect, audit, certify, verify, advise and train and we support these efforts with software solutions for safety and sustainability. To learn more about Underwriters Laboratories, visit UL.com.

## For more information about UL's history:

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