

CITY HALL and WAR MEMORIAL

The Official
Dedication Program
of the
Newton City Hall
and
War Memorial Building
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WAR MEMORIAL PORTICO. (Showing the Pediment Group)
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Symbolic Pediment Group

Directly above the columns before the entrance to the War Memorial is this Pediment group, symbolical of "Patriotism" and "History" and the "Spirit of Sacrifice." The motif for this group was worked out by Mr. Charles Collens and the general character of the modeling is in the spirit of Wedgwood, which coincides with the architecture of the building.

The central figure symbolizes "History." The figure holds in its hands a scroll which starts on one side of the group and finishes on the other. On either side of the central figure are two pylons on which are inscribed the names of the great battles in the various wars in which Newton men have taken part. On the left hand side of the group is a figure of "Patriotism" — a youth, wrapped in the American flag and holding a sword in his hand, inspired by the spirit of Patriotism. At his feet are grouped various warlike symbols. On the other side is the "Spirit of Sacrifice," a shrouded female figure among the crosses of the dead.

Dignified Memorial Hall

Mounting the steps between the tall columns one passes through massive doorways to the paneled Colonial foyer and into Memorial Hall. Here is a room of great dignity, austerity and simplicity although following Colonial traditions in every respect. This hall is flanked on both sides by a dignified Ionic colonnade whose cornice carries a light cerulean blue, barrel-vaulted ceiling. At night the hall is flooded with soft light from unseen forces which illuminates this vault disclosing gold stars high above the semi-circular apse where stands the speaker's rostrum. A marble floor of a quiet Napoleon gray keys in with the color scheme of the room. The aisles behind the colonnades are lighted by specially designed chandeliers whose decorative elements are based on patriotic and military symbols. This hall, primarily for gatherings of veteran and patriotic organizations, may also be used for public gatherings by social, fraternal or civic groups.

At the ground floor level, below Memorial Hall, are ample accommodations for the offices of veteran organizations, retiring rooms and coat rooms, a most interesting War Museum wherein are located action models and selected war trophies, a Hall of Flags in which is contained the true memorial — the registry of the Newton dead heroes who died in the service of our country in all of our nation's wars since the struggle for independence. To these interesting and historic shrines entrance from the upper Memorial Hall is attained by passing

through the right front doorway and descending by the most beautiful staircase of the entire structure — a picturesque balustrade of wood and white marble.

Perhaps from a visitors' viewpoint there is the greatest of interest in the War Museum, which is located at the base of this staircase, for in no part of the entire United States are there any action models which compare with the four realistic and spirited miniature models of scenes from America's past wars which are placed there in deep recesses of the walls flanked by trophy cases which tie in with the models by displaying relics of the scenes they depict.

The War Museum


Into the creation of these four battle scenes has gone, not only a year's artistic effort, but also painstaking research which included the close study of records in the libraries of Boston and New York, and in the Navy and Marine Corps Departments in Washington. In addition, it included a study of the *Constitution* herself and visits to the historic sites of Valley Forge and Gettysburg.

A camp scene during the hard bitter days at Valley Forge when Washington and his ragged army of patriots were interned there is faithfully portrayed in the first scene. In the foreground can be seen the tall, erect figure of the Commanding General himself, accompanied by his great drill-master, General Von Steuben, and by the dashing and romantic General "Mad Anthony" Wayne. The three are walking slowly through one of the company streets in Wayne's section of the encampment while a platoon of his Pennsylvanians has been hastily drawn up to attention as they pass.

"Old Ironsides" in Action

The second group represents the quarter deck of the frigate *Constitution*, famous as *Old Ironsides* during her historic fight with the *Guerriere*. A broadside has just been fired, and the gun crews are furiously engaged in their various duties, and in servicing the cannonades for another volley. Captain Isaac Hull, the commander, and one of the country's great naval heroes, stands in the center of the scene, giving an order to one of his midshipmen. Near the wheel is the master, the officer in charge of navigation. A wounded marine sharpshooter is being carefully lowered from the main top. "Powder-monkeys" are getting fresh supplies from the hole in the deck.

The third set shows "The High Tide of the Confederacy" or the farthest northern point to which the grey clad Southerners penetrated during the Civil War. It was the point reached by the desperate, glorious



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charge of Pickert's division during the third day of Gettysburg, the point where it was stopped dead and flung back by the courageous and stubborn resistance of the Union Army. In the foreground is the left gun of Cushing's battery with the artillerymen hastily abandoning their posts to join the infantry in the furious hand-to-hand conflict. The Confederate General Armistead is shown collapsing, mortally wounded, on the stone wall.

Somewhere "Over There"

The fourth of the series of model groups is titled "Somewhere in France," and depicts a typical battle scene of the World War, not any specific or actual incident. A French farm, almost demolished by shell fire, organized for defense by the Germans, is being carried by storm by Yankee doughboys. The battered building, the tumbled in trenches, the machine gun emplacements—all are startlingly reminiscent of scenes all along the Western front. So are the grey-green figures of the enemy, holding out to the bitter end in the face of that on-rushing wave of men in olive drab.

In the construction of these four models, the figures were made of a special composition, of which beeswax is the base. They were all modelled individually so that none of the 200 odd figures are identical, either in posture, figure or face. Each was carefully painted with specially prepared oil paint. The weapons and equipment were all made to scale from actual relics of the periods represented.

The miniature models were designed and executed by Samuel J. Guemsey, Assistant Curator of Archeology at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, and Theodore B. Pitman, in their studio in Harvard Square, Cambridge, Mass.

Honor to Hero Dead

Beyond the museum is the Hall of Flags. There on a pedestal of Sienna marble, recalling the famous Civil War main staircase which adorns the Boston Public Library, is the registry of the dead. It is in the form of a great bronze book, the pages of which are of a specially cast copper, plated in gold. Here is preserved for historical record the names and the portraits of Newton's heroes. Here is the city's tribute to those who died fighting for independence, who gave up their lives and fortunes struggling to preserve the Union, and who left homes and families to journey fearlessly across the vast eastern ocean and there sacrificed their lives on foreign soil in the most devastating war the World has ever known in order that Liberty as we enjoy it might be established universally.

