

Neighbors in Contention

KEY: † Military Cemetery



Photo: The National Archives
Lt. Bezael Armstrong served in the 2d Dragoons at Vera Cruz and Mexico City, 1847-48.

DURING THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR OF 1846-48, U.S. forces entered Mexican territory multiple times. The campaigns included landings on the eastern coast of Mexico and advance into Mexico City.

THE MEXICAN EXPEDITION OF 1916, commanded by Brig. Gen. John J. Pershing, was much smaller in use of force, geographic scope, and duration.

Mexico City National Cemetery

The cemetery was established in 1851 as burial space for Americans who died in and near Mexico City during the Mexican American War. It also holds the remains of veterans and families, plus members of the U.S. Diplomatic Service. Congress closed the cemetery in 1924. It came under ABMC's care in 1947.

American Battle Monuments Commission

This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 25 American cemeteries and 26 memorials, monuments and markers in 16 countries. The Commission works to fulfill the vision of its first chairman, General of the Armies John J. Pershing. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I, promised that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds."



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For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit www.abmc.gov



Mexico City National Cemetery

American Battle Monuments Commission





NEIGHBORS IN CONTENTION

The USA's westward expansion in the early 19th Century created contention over territories claimed by Mexico. When Texas became a state in December 1845, Mexico severed diplomatic relations. President James K. Polk ordered Gen. Zachary Taylor's forces into the area near the mouth of the Rio Grande.

MAY 8, 1846: General Taylor's command attacked Mexican units near Palo Alto. The Mexicans withdrew.

SEPTEMBER 21-23: General Taylor's force seized Monterrey.

DECEMBER 12: Col. Stephen W. Kearney's troops reached San Diego.

FEBRUARY 22-23, 1847: Mexican President Santa Anna attacked Taylor's command near Buena Vista. The Americans prevailed.

MARCH 9-27: Gen. Winfield Scott commanded the landing and siege at Vera Cruz.

APRIL 8-SEPTEMBER 8: Scott advanced slowly toward Mexico City.

SEPTEMBER 12-13: Scott's command reached the Chapultepec citadel. Mexican units withdrew. However, six cadets of the military academy stayed and fought to the end. *The Los Niños Heroes* have been honored throughout Mexican history.

SEPTEMBER 14: Mexican authorities surrendered. Scott's forces entered Mexico City.

FEBRUARY 2, 1848: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the war.

THE MEXICAN EXPEDITION

MARCH 9, 1916: Mexican bandit Francisco ("Pancho") Villa and his followers raided Columbus, New Mexico. President Woodrow Wilson immediately ordered a punitive expedition formed under Brig.Gen. John J. Pershing.

MID-MARCH: The expedition entered Mexico. Numerous clashes followed. Villa was never caught.

FEBRUARY 7, 1917: U.S. troops withdrew from Mexico.

The expedition did not achieve its purpose. However, it resulted in U.S. forces being better prepared to mobilize and fight in the war in Europe.

Monument and Flags

The monument marks the common grave of 750 unknown American soldiers killed during 1847 fighting. Their remains were recovered from battlefield graves in and around Mexico City.



Walls of Burial Vaults

The cemetery area was halved in 1976. The interred remains—and their original headstones—were disinterred and placed in vaults on the east and west walls.



Vault Detail

George Heyser of the Pennsylvania Regiment is one of eight veterans of the Mexican War interred here. His vault is on the West wall, Square 2, Line 2, Row 9.



Cemetery Fountain

The sights and sounds of the pool and fountain in the northwest corner enhance the visitor's experience.



Monument Inscription

The monument's inscription reads: TO THE HONORED MEMORY OF 750 AMERICANS KNOWN BUT TO GOD WHOSE BONES COLLECTED BY THEIR COUNTRY'S ORDER ARE HERE BURIED.



Entrance

The gates on Calle Virginia Fabregas include an entrance on the right that enhances accessibility for visitors who may have difficulty using the steps on the left.



Layout

From the entrance on the Calle Virginia Fabregas, the expanse of the cemetery is easily viewed. Its tranquility is appreciated amid the hustle of the busy city around it.



Visitor Room

The visitor room is on the immediate right from the entrance. Here you can meet our staff, get your questions answered, and sign the guest register.



Brig.Gen. John J. Pershing and staff ford a stream near El Valle, August 1916.

Vault Location

WALL:

SQUARE:

LINE:

ROW:

Useful Information

DIMENSIONS: 1 acre
UNKNOWN FROM THE MEXICAN WAR: 750
INTERRED IN THE VAULTS: 813

WARS REPRESENTED: Mexican War, Civil War, Indian Campaigns, and Spanish-American War
DEDICATED: June 26, 1851

