



The Great War, known today as World War I, began in July 1914 and ended on 11 November 1918. The U.S., led by President Woodrow Wilson, had hoped to stay neutral, but circumstances forced America's hand. Congress declared war on Germany on 6 April 1917, and American troops saw their first combat action in late May 1918. The total number of military and civilian casualties exceeded 16 million worldwide, ranking the war among the deadliest conflicts in human history.

Capt. Alexander Rives Skinker and Cpl. Montgomery Schuyler Batdorf, two parishioners of The Church of St. Michael and All Angels, fell three days apart in the Battle of the Argonne in late September 1918. Capt. Skinker, who was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, was the son of Thomas Keith and Bertha Rives Skinker. Thomas was on the committee that helped found the church in 1912 and served as its first senior warden.

This small book tells the story of how the Great War impacted the Skinker family and the entire parish. It is an exciting story, but one of great sadness. Two sons were lost. A recently-married woman was suddenly a young widow.

During 2018, the centennial year of the end of the Great War, it is fitting that we honor Capt. Skinker and Cpl. Batdorf who lost their lives in the war, and that we praise Isabella and Bertha Skinker, two women of the parish who did so much to support the troops on the home front during and after the war.



*Proceeds from the sale of this book in excess of printing costs will be donated to the Missouri History Museum and designated for the Soldiers Memorial Military Museum. The Memorial will reopen on November 3, 2018, after a \$30 million, two-year renovation enabled by anonymous donations.*