When the war ended, people around the world rejoiced. For those in the middle of the maelstrom, this meant the end of the very real risk of death and the effects of global warfare. For some, the mere images of the war, or even reminders of those events, would represent a vivid trigger for horrible times and were best forgotten. For others, despite the horrors, the images evolved into a version of history and nostalgia to be archived. Several images emerged immediately after the war and later on as well, such as the trenches of the western front, the paintings of German artist Wilhelm Heinrich Otto Dix, and the cartoons of veterans such as Abian A. Wallgren; Alban B. Butler Jr., whose book Happy Days featured cartoons very similar to those of Wallgren; and photographs of the combat zones.¹

After the official end of hostilities and the signing of the Armistice, U.S. combatants feared they would be shifted to other theaters of combat, specifically Russia, which was in the midst of a civil war.² Wallgren, ever the satirical humorist of the scuttlebutt in camp, noted a cartoon that offered “Helpful Hints” on how to

be comfortable in Siberia (see figure 61). Most of the U.S. forces committed to Russia in September 1918 were sent to Archangelsk to guard the railway line from that town to the port of Murmansk.³ The comic strip showed a soldier (more than likely at this point not a Marine) wearing a stove strapped to their coat with a small bin of wood and oil on the back. It appears quite contrived, as might be expected in a Rube Goldberg contraption of the era (figure 101).⁴

This last comment on the conflict was all the more telling in a publication that came out after the war ended. The Recruiters’ Bulletin, which changed its name in November 1918 to Marines Bulletin,

⁴ In this case, Rube Goldberg was a cartoonist, known for his elaborate—some would say overly complicated—machines used for a movement. For example, rather than a simple spring hinge used with a trigger covered in cheese to kill a mouse, the Goldberg design would incorporate a variety of different machines and seemingly impossible actions to make the machine work. This type of comic gag in cartoons has continued for decades since. For further information, see “About Rube Goldberg,” RubeGoldberg.com, accessed 22 April 2022; Emily Wilson, “The Story Behind Rube Goldberg’s Complicated Contraptions,” Smithsonian Magazine, 1 May 2018; and Abian Wallgren, “Just Think of the Lads in Siberia: Helpful Hints,” Stars and Stripes, 27 September 1918, 7.
tin, published a series of cartoons focused on the Armistice. One full page was dedicated to cartoons from a variety of sources and how they depicted Marines. These images came from some notable publications, such as the *New York Tribune*; the political cartoon magazine from England, *Judge*, which featured three Marines in firing positions titled “Our sweet anchor, the Marines”; and a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* cartoon that featured a Marine talking to a French Poilu asking how he obtained his job of mopping, which was through “influence.” Later in that same issue, two well-known artists offered cartoons in commemoration of the Marines: Bruce Bairnsfather, who said “Best of luck to the marines from ‘Old Bill’ ” (figure 102); and the other from Rube Goldberg, who drew a cartoon specifically for the *Marines Bulletin*. In it, a

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5 *Marines Bulletin*, November 1918, cover, 2.
7 Bruce Bairnsfather, “Best of Luck to the Marines from ‘Old Bill’ and Bruce Bairnsfather,” *Marines Bulletin*, November 1918, 57.
returning Marine meets a man in uniform who is clearly wounded. The Marine asks, “Hello, pal, Were you at Château Thierry, too?” to which the wounded man responds, “No, I run an elevator in a department store.” This cartoon also subtly notes the injuries that many suffered during the war, but at the same time warns people not to prejudge based on appearances (figure 103).\(^8\)

Private Alvan C. Hadley created a cartoon that depicted the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, in which Martha dreams of becoming a Marine, due in part to the Service having the “prettiest uniforms” (figure 104).\(^9\) When she is given one, it is ill-fitting at best. This cartoon plays off of a column written by Private Martha L. Wilchinski, who did in fact join the Marines in World War I and wrote a column that was illustrated by other Marines. The idea behind the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve was that those

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serving would free men up to then serve on the front lines.\textsuperscript{10} This was a way to show women’s contribution to the Service in the Great War.\textsuperscript{11}

Abian Wallgren also worked on two different books after the war ended. The first was a compilation of the cartoons that ran in \textit{Stars and Stripes}. \textit{Wally: His Cartoons of the AEF} was published in 1919.\textsuperscript{12} It presented the full series of the cartoons from the period, which were extensive in their design and the amount of visual materials.\textsuperscript{13} The other book he coauthored was released in 1929. \textit{The Songs My Mother Never Taught Me} featured illustrations (e.g., figure 105) and lyrics that were commonly sung by combatants at the front, as well as

\textsuperscript{10} Hewitt, \textit{Women Marines in World War I}, 1–3.
\textsuperscript{11} Pvt Alvan C. Hadley, “Martha the Marine!,” \textit{Marines Bulletin} (January 1919), 7–10, 14, 19, 31.
\textsuperscript{13} The dimensions of Wallgren’s book is approximately 7.5 inches by 17.75 inches. To accommodate storage, the author has seen more than a few of these books folded in half, which puts a strain on the pages and eventually disintegrated the images or bindings.
Figure 106. Mademoiselle from Armentières—Parlez Vous

stories, poems, and cartoons telling of their experiences (figures 106–11). 14

Finally, other books featured illustrations of a more serious nature. Two artists who created more realistic depictions of the Marines were First Lieutenant Claggett Wilson, who painted scenes from the front (figure 112). He was wounded twice during the war and received the Navy Cross for his actions. Wilson has been compared to a German war artist and counterpart, Wilhelm

Heinrich Otto Dix.15 The other was U.S. Army Private Cyrus L. Baldridge, who was with the combatants of the AEF as a war correspondent and illustrator.16 His work featured depictions of the

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16 Baldridge was National Guard who was activated and utilized in 1918 by Stars and Stripes. Cyrus Baldridge and Hilmar R. Baukhage, “I Was There!” with the Yanks in France: Sketches from the Western Front, 1917–1919 (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1919), 9.
Figure 109. Oh, the Ocean’s Wild, the Ocean’s Rough—It’s Tossin’ and It’s Pitchin’

Figure 110. Corpsmen with Litter


Figure 111. Irate General to Members of U.S. Air Service

Marines in more realistic terms as well, though his work would be more in line with sketch art rather than cartoon art. One additional artist of note for the Marines was Second Lieutenant John

17 Baldridge and Baukhage, “I Was There!” with the Yanks in France, 18.
Figure 113. Summers Days in the American Sectors


W. Thomason. His work was featured in several magazines and publications for the Marines during the war years.ⁱ⁸

By 1919, most aspects of the war effort had been officially pared back or shut down. The cartoons from *Stars and Stripes*, which had been such an integral part of the paper with art published on page seven in each issue, were shown for their last time.

Source: Col John W. Thomason Jr., USMC, National Museum of the Marine Corps.
on 13 June 1919 featuring Wallgren’s cartoon “Company Dis—
missed” as the theme. Additionally, the publications Recruiters’ 
Bulletin and Marines Magazine briefly merged for three issues, then 
split again. Post conflict, the Recruiters’ Bulletin reemerged as a 
24-page monthly periodical but with only one or two cartoons. 
These new cartoons were more in line with what recruiters might 
encounter.

19 Stars and Stripes, 13 June 1919, 7.