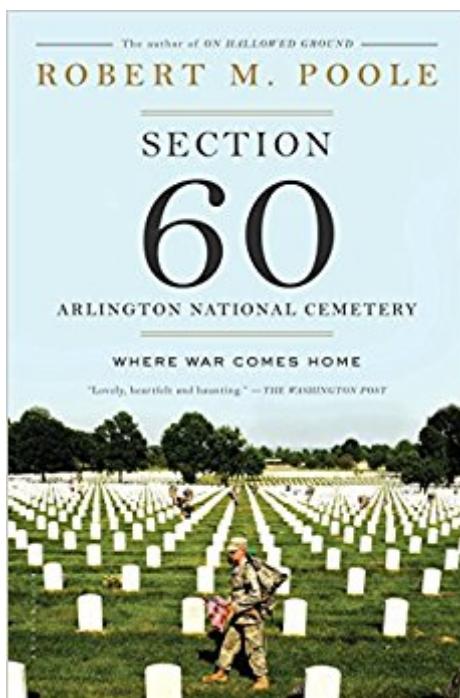


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# Section 60: Arlington National Cemetery: Where War Comes Home



## Synopsis

Gifted writer and reporter Robert Poole opens Section 60: Arlington National Cemetery with preparations for Memorial Day when thousands of families come to visit those buried in the 624-acre cemetery, legions of Rolling Thunder motorcyclists patrol the streets with fluttering POW flags, and service members place miniature flags before each of Arlington's graves. Section 60, where many of those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan have been laid to rest alongside service members from earlier wars, is a fourteen-acre plot that looms far larger in the minds and hearts of Americans. It represents a living, breathing community of fellow members of the military, family members, friends, and loved ones of those who have fallen to the new weapons of war: improvised explosive devices, suicide bombs, and enemies who blend in with local populations. Several of the newest recruits for Section 60 have been brought there by suicide or post-traumatic stress disorder, a war injury newly described but dating to ancient times. Using this section as a window into the latest wars, Poole recounts stories of courage and sacrifice by fallen heroes, and explores the ways in which soldiers' comrades, friends, and families honor and remember those lost to war--carrying on with life in the aftermath of tragedy. Section 60 is a moving tribute to those who have fought and died for our country, and to those who love them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A vivid, badly-needed reminder of the terrible price being paid by too many members of our all-volunteer armed forces and the families that have to struggle on without them."

—Geoffrey C. Ward, author of *THE ROOSEVELTS: AN INTIMATE*

HISTORYÃ¢â€”“Lovely, heartfelt and haunting.”Ã¢â€”“Momentous and moving . . . Powerful stories of family members and comrades in heart-rending prose.”Ã¢â€”“Poole’s approach is poignant and personal . . . a valuable look at what it costs to serve one’s country.”Ã¢â€”“Publishers Weekly

Robert M. Poole is a writer and editor whose work for National Geographic, Smithsonian, and other magazines has taken him around the world. His last book, *On Hallowed Ground*, earned wide critical acclaim and was one of the Washington Post’s Best Books of 2009. Poole, former executive editor of National Geographic, lives in Vermont.

Arlington National Cemetery is a living tribute from all of America’s war to those who gave so much. I will be in Washington DC late September of 2016 to visit friends from my time in Iraq and Afghanistan. I have wavered in part to visit because of the trauma of the moment in time and from yesteryear. But, reading Section 60..the book has a way of calming the pending "moment".The heartbreak is the Vietnam War, Iraq and Afghanistan have not materialized historically in the same context as World War II. That said, for those who volunteered to step forward to fight our nation’s most current wars shall never be forgotten..shall have the respect and endearment of those who have sacrificed since the beginning of our founding. Let this great nation always hold those who left us so early in great respect and admiration.

Being retired military I so can associate myself with this book. I have the other book by Mr. Poole, *On Hallowed Ground*, and it was very, very good. It brings Arlington home by the very beginning of its existence. Although I am a Vietnam vet, that makes no difference because of all the wars or conflicts that we have been in. I have gone to Arlington several times, while on vacation in Virginia with my kids, but each time I feel a very close comfort there. It is peaceful and so so beautiful. Looking at all the rows of markers, it seems to go on and on and I know that there are my brothers and sisters buried there. There will be a day when all of those graves will be open, what a day that will be.

“One does not truly die until his name ceases to be said.” Robert Poole’s book on the stories behind some of the gravestones in Section 60 at Arlington are riveting, compassionate and thoroughly researched. The Soldiers profiled in this book will never be forgotten and will forever be more than

just names on marble slabs. Mr. Poole has created a fascinating story of service members who were killed in action and those who died of other causes. He chronicles both gritty combat stories along with edgy portrayals of those who killed themselves after battles with PTS and depression. The history of Arlington is painted in a way that any reader can understand the depths at which the US military goes to honor, revere, and remember its Fallen. Even as an active duty soldier myself, I learned a tremendous amount of the daily work occurring at Section 60. The only complaint I have is that I wish Mr. Poole profiled more and more of these soldiers' stories; the book is much too thin. I could read a hundred more of those same stories. An awesome book that will end up in my retirement library!

This is a book I bought for our church library and did not expect to read it myself. I did read it and learned so much about our service men and women and the people close to them. The Arlington National Cemetery is an emotional and beautiful national treasure. I thought this book might appeal to men more than women but found out that this is a book everyone should read. It is a book that is easy to understand, emotional, thought provoking, I am glad to say I have read it.

I personally live the experiences in this book, since I am a Gold Star Mother and my son is buried there. I got to know some of the people mentioned in the book, as well as the author. Mr Poole took the time to visit the cemetery frequently over a long period of time to observe the families who visit there. This book is as close as one can be without actually being at the cemetery. It is important to realize that war does not affect other countries only. It is also our country's reality. Mr Poole has perfectly described our lives now.

If you're not personally affected by something you tend not to spend a lot of time dealing with it. I'm a believer in details so I can form my own opinion not simplistic headlines. This book in plain unsensational language articulates the human cost of conflict with a historical background. No matter your beliefs a book like this can help give life a more pragmatic perspective.

This beautifully crafted book brings home the cost of our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the most human of terms. Whether Poole is interweaving Arlington's spit-and-polish operations with its fascinating history, untangling the mysteries of death by friendly fire, or linking today's ravages of PTSD with Herodotus, this portrait of a singular national address is, in the end, a canny study of the nature of heroism and sacrifice. Having worked on

assignment for Poole at National Geographic years back, I know him to be not only a masterful editor but also the nimblest of reporters and an elegant writer, as ÁfÁ¢Á ªÁ “Section 60ÁfÁ¢Á ªÁ • admirably shows.

We have been to this beautiful cemetery but did not know about this special area. Wow! Who would have known what was contained in this small area but a jam packed memory bound place that lives even today with our wars. It's is good that we have this place and traditions. We look forward to our next visit in honor of those who have given theirs for our fleeting freedoms. We need to remember.

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