



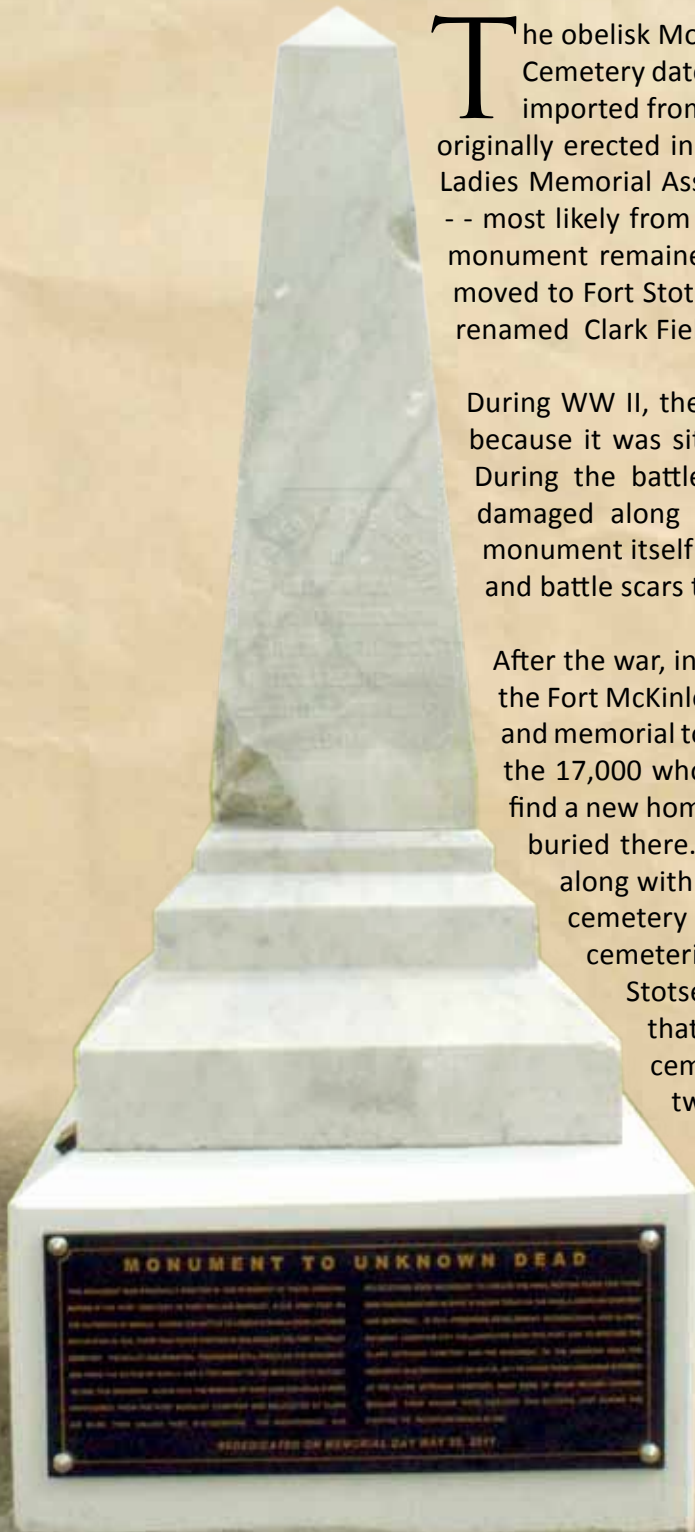
HISTORY OF THE MONUMENT TO UNKNOWN DEAD

The obelisk Monument to the Unknown Dead found in the Clark Veterans Cemetery dates back to 1908. It was made from the finest quality marble imported from the state of Vermont. It was then engraved in Manila and originally erected in the Fort William McKinley Military Post Cemetery by the Ladies Memorial Association of Manila in remembrance of its Unknown Dead - - most likely from those that died during the Philippine-American War. The monument remained in the Fort McKinley cemetery until 1948 when it was moved to Fort Stotsenburg 50 miles to the north. Fort Stotsenburg was later renamed Clark Field.

During WW II, the Fort McKinley cemetery was the scene of heavy fighting because it was situated on a hill that overlooked the city and Manila Bay. During the battle to liberate Manila in early 1945, the monument was damaged along with thousands of graves and cemetery records. The monument itself was hit with bullets and shrapnel leaving many pockmarks and battle scars that are so evident today.

After the war, in 1946, the US and Philippine Government determined that the Fort McKinley cemetery would be the best location for a new cemetery and memorial to honor the WW II dead. However, in order to accommodate the 17,000 who would later be buried there, the US Government had to find a new home and relocate those thousands of non WW II dead already buried there. During the period January to May 1948, the monument along with thousands of graves were relocated to a new military post cemetery at Fort Stotsenburg. Three other known US military post cemeteries were also relocated and consolidated at a new Fort Stotsenburg Military Post Cemetery. The other three cemeteries that were closed and moved to the new Fort Stotsenburg cemetery were the USN Sangley Point Military Cemetery and two smaller and older military cemeteries already at Fort Stotsenburg called Stotsenburg I and II.

In 1949, Fort Stotsenburg was renamed Clark Field and is the present site of the Clark Veterans Cemetery.



The photograph below shows the Monument to the Unknown Dead as it existed before the commencement of WWII. Manila Bay can be seen in the background. This photo was taken in the 1930s.

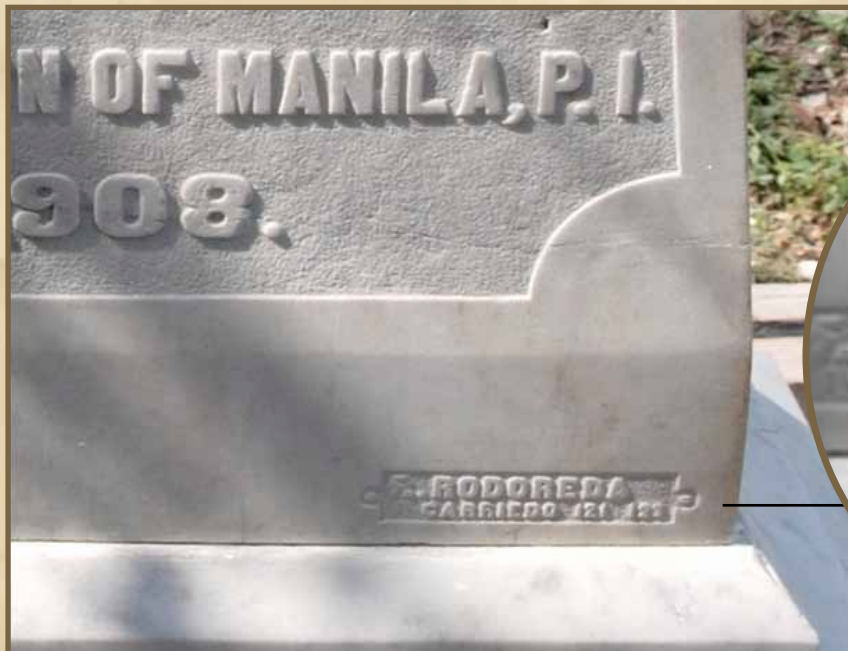


This 1947 photo of the Fort McKinley Military Post Cemetery shows the Monument to the Unknown Dead, a peaceful setting, prior to moving the graves and monument to Fort Stotsenburg, today known as Clark.

Disinterment operations began in 1948. Note the damage to the lower left corner of the obelisk monument in the photo on the right.



The historical significance of this monument goes even much deeper. While the marble itself was imported from the state of Vermont, the actual engraving and installation occurred in 1908 and was done by Francisco Rodoreda, a Spaniard who had a marble shop on Calle Carriedo inside the famous Spanish Fort in Manila called Intramuros. The shop survived the civil and social turmoil of the Spanish American War and transition from Spanish to American control of the islands. This same shop and merchant were referred to and quoted by name in Jose Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere". Jose Rizal is one of the Philippines' most respected and revered National Heroes.



Shrapnel and bullet pockmarks as a result of heavy fighting in the old Fort McKinley cemetery in 1945 are clearly visible. The damage in the lower corner of the monument is believed to have been hit by a larger caliber mortar round.



In 2011, two small American companies, Peregrine Development International and Del-Marco Marble Company collaborated with the local VFW Post 2485 to restore the monument and remount it in a more prominent place in the center of the Clark Veterans Cemetery. There are over 2,100 Unknown Dead buried in the Cemetery today.



The original inscription on the monument reads:

“ERECTED TO THE MEMORY
OF
UNKNOWN DEAD
UNITED STATES SOLDIERS,
SAILORS AND MARINES
BY THE LADIES MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION OF MANILA
1908”.

After the restoration, the monument was relocated to a more prominent location and rededicated to all 2,100 of the Unknown Dead in the cemetery on Memorial Day, May 30, 2011.

MONUMENT TO UNKNOWN DEAD

THIS MONUMENT WAS ORIGINALLY ERECTED IN 1908 IN MEMORY OF THOSE UNKNOWN BURIED IN THE POST CEMETERY OF FORT WILLIAM McKINLEY, A U.S. ARMY POST ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF MANILA. DURING THE BATTLE TO LIBERATE MANILA FROM JAPANESE OCCUPATION IN 1945, THERE WAS FIERCE FIGHTING IN AND AROUND THE FORT McKINLEY CEMETERY. THE BULLET AND SHRAPNEL POCKMARKS STILL VISIBLE ON THE MONUMENT, ARE FROM THE BATTLE OF MANILA AND A TESTAMENT TO THE MONUMENT'S HISTORY. IN 1948, THIS MONUMENT, ALONG WITH THE REMAINS OF OVER 5,000 INDIVIDUALS WERE DISINTERRED FROM THE FORT McKINLEY CEMETERY AND RELOCATED AT CLARK AIR BASE, THEN CALLED FORT STOTSBERG. THE DISINTERMENT AND

RELOCATIONS WERE NECESSARY TO CREATE THE FINAL RESTING PLACE FOR THOSE WHO DIED DURING WWII IN WHAT IS KNOWN TODAY AS THE MANILA AMERICAN CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL. IN 2011, PEREGRINE DEVELOPMENT INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL GATEWAY LOGISTICS CITY COLLABORATED WITH VFW POST 2485 TO RESTORE THE CLARK VETERANS CEMETERY AND THE MONUMENT TO THE UNKNOWN DEAD. THE MONUMENT WAS REDEDICATED ON MAY 30, 2011 TO HONOR THOSE UNKNOWN INTERRED AT THE CLARK VETERANS CEMETERY, MANY MORE OF WHOM BECAME UNKNOWN BECAUSE THEIR GRAVES WERE DAMAGED AND RECORDS LOST DURING THE FIGHTING TO RECAPTURE MANILA IN 1945.

REDEDICATED ON MEMORIAL DAY MAY 30, 2011

“Let No Vet
Be Forgotten”



For more information see www.cvcra.org

