Q128 – What is Veterans Day?

DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:
Veterans Day is a holiday to honor those who serve in the military today – and those who have served throughout our history. It began as Armistice Day.

The fighting in World War I ended in 1918 with an armistice – a ceasefire – that took effect at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month: November 11th.
In 1926, the Congress resolved that November 11th be marked by “thanksgiving and prayer.” Twenty years later, November 11th became a federal holiday.

After the Korean War, the Congress changed Armistice Day to Veterans Day to honor all veterans. Cities and towns across the country typically mark the day with parades. By tradition, the president lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.
For most of our history, we have relied upon citizen soldiers to do our fighting. From the American Revolution to the Civil War to World War II, most of the troops were amateurs. They were farmers and shopkeepers and school teachers who learned a new trade as riflemen and sailors and pilots. They did their job, won the wars, hung up their uniforms, and went back home to work.
On Veterans Day, we pause to honor all who served.