

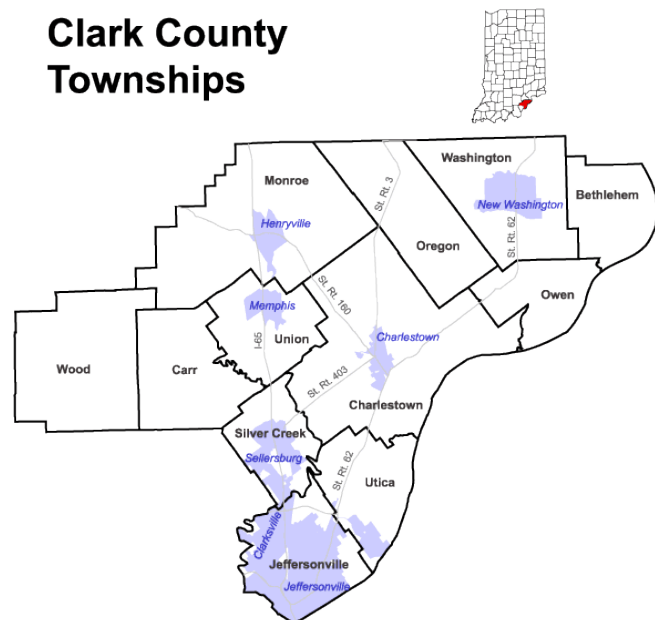
Clark County, Indiana During World War One

Nichole Garbrough

Clark County, Indiana was just like many other regions in America during the early Twentieth Century- isolationist and agricultural. The First World War thrust America into events pertaining to the rest of the world. Clark County, Indiana perhaps made the biggest contributions toward the war effort in all of America because of its Quarter Master Depot located in Jeffersonville, as well as the Ohio Falls Car Manufacturing Company, also known as the American Car Foundry; the competitiveness of the residents towards Liberty Bond Sales; and the farming of the area that supplied the war effort, as well as the citizens of America, with many of its crops. Additionally, hundreds of men from the county entered into military service while those at home planted gardens and watched the newspaper daily for instructions on how to better the war effort.¹ The war provided ample opportunities for the residents of Clark County, Indiana, bringing them out of their isolation and into the forefront of America's war effort.² This paper, while discussing all of Clark County, will mostly focus on Jeffersonville and Clarksville, Indiana when it comes to the specific places mentioned.

On July 29, 1914 the first shots of the war rang as Austro-Hungary opened fire on Belgrade.³ As countries all over eastern and western Europe and Japan, in addition to European colonies from Australia, New Zealand, and Africa joined in the conflict, America remained neutral until finally declaring war on April 6, 1917.⁴ According to Eric Dorn Brose in *A History of the Great War*, America joined the fighting in Europe due to populism by the American people who were becoming more and more agitated by the actions of Germany.⁵ After the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, the American people still had no desire to enter the war, according to ballots cast in November 1916.⁶ The publishing of the "Zimmermann

Clark County Townships



Source: Census 2000 Tiger files
Map produced by the Indiana Business Research Center,
IU Kelley School of Business

¹ Kramer, Carl. *This Place We Call Home: A History of Clark County, Indiana*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2007, 291; *The Evening News* 1914-1918.

² Phillips, Clifton J. *Indiana in Transition: 1880-1920 The History of Indiana Vol. IV*. Indiana Historical Society, 1968, 586.

³ Brose, Eric Dorn, *A History of the Great War: World War One and the International Crisis of the Early Twentieth Century*. Oxford University Press: New York, 2010, 75.

⁴ Brose, 249.

⁵ Ibid, 248-249.

⁶ Ibid, 114-115, 248.

Telegram” on March 1, 1917, which stated that U-Boat warfare would begin once more, in addition to attacks on American ships that cost lives throughout March, outraged citizens who heralded support for American involvement in World War One.⁷

From 1914 to 1916, Clark County, Indiana was fighting a war of its own against tuberculosis and influenza.⁸ While many areas were quarantined in order to efficiently prevent the disease, many were also sent to tuberculosis hospitals throughout Indiana and across the Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky.⁹ One such hospital was Waverly Hills Sanitarium, the largest tuberculosis hospital in Louisville.¹⁰ Waverly Hills Sanitarium in 1911, when the photo on the previous page was taken, only held eight patients.¹¹ These patients were given plenty of room and fresh air, which was thought necessary to cure them of this ailment.¹² By 1924, this small hospital could no longer cope with the amount of patients needing treatment and was soon replaced by the larger structure still seen and visited today as one of the most haunted places in America.¹³

In addition to the efforts being made toward disease prevention in Clark County during 1914-1916, *The Evening News*, from Jeffersonville, and *The Jeffersonville Star* wrote constantly about divorce seekers, bigamy trials, escapes from the nearby prison in Jeffersonville, deaths of citizens, infrastructure plans such as bridges to cross the Ohio River and new highways, prohibition, teacher examinations, the upcoming bicentennial celebrations of Indiana becoming a state in 1916, and charities for the needy in Jeffersonville during cold weather.¹⁴ Indiana, as a whole, was a conservative state which caused problems of progression during this reform era.¹⁵ As seen in the contents of the local newspapers above, progressive reforms in Clark County, that also affected the rest of America at this time, tended to be moderate and only focused on welfare for the needy, public health, and prohibition.¹⁶ Clark County was more worried about what was occurring within their own region, than the rest of America, let alone the world. As a matter of fact, from 1914 to 1916, the only information one would get on the war was through advertisements for *The Literary Digest*.¹⁷ All of Indiana was largely isolationist during 1914.¹⁸ The state, which had been very active during the Civil War and the War of 1812 was, by 1914, suffering a severe decline in militia enrollment, morale, and public support.¹⁹ With very little exception, the people of Clark County, Indiana were simply not concerned with the war until America’s direct involvement in 1917.

⁷ Ibid, 248-249.

⁸ *The Evening News* 1914-1916, 1918.

⁹ *The Evening News* 1914-1916.

¹⁰ “Patients and nurses on porch, Louisville, Kentucky, 1922. *U of L University Libraries Digital Collections*. <http://digital.library.louisville.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cs/id/909/rec/7>. Retrieved on November 22, 2012.

¹¹ “Waverly Hills Sanitarium”. *U of L University Libraries Digital Collections*. <http://digital.library.louisville.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/kyimages/id/130/rec/15>. Retrieved on November 22, 2012.

¹² “Waverly Hills Sanitarium”. *U of L University Libraries Digital Collections*. <http://digital.library.louisville.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/kyimages/id/130/rec/15>. Retrieved on November 22, 2012.

¹³ “Waverly Hills History”. *WaverlyHills.net*. <http://www.waverlyhills.net/history.php>. Retrieved on November 22, 2012.

¹⁴ *The Evening News* 1914-1916; *The Jeffersonville Star*, 1916.

¹⁵ Madison, James H. *The Indiana Way: A State History*. Indiana University Press and the Indiana Historical Society, Bloomington, IN, 1986, 222.

¹⁶ Ibid, 222-223.

¹⁷ *The Evening News* 1914-1916.

¹⁸ Phillips, 591.

¹⁹ Ibid.

With the outbreak of war in Europe, American newspapers immediately damned Germany for their harsh treatment of the Belgian people.²⁰ However, Clark County, Indiana had a large population of German immigrants in which German language newspapers still frequented the area and German church services were held on Sundays.²¹ On September 24, 1914, *The Evening News* published a letter shared by Mrs. Glover L. Coots, a prominent funeral home director in Jeffersonville since the family began the business in the 1860s.²² The letter was written by the aunt of Mrs. Coots, who lived in Bentheim Enlicheim, Hanover Germany.²³ Inside, Mrs. Coots' aunt describes the anxiety felt by the German people.²⁴ Her forty year old son had been called to arms and "the demand for men is universal and that men of all ages ranks and conditions are called to the colors. Even a hunch back, it is said, would not be exempt but any man with a head, two arms and two legs [are needed] for service."²⁵ Additionally, Mrs. Coots' aunt stated, "they were glad to know that at the time thing[s] were going favorably for the Germans but how long such a condition would continue she could not dare say."²⁶

It is safe to say that at this time, persecution against German-Americans was not a problem in Clark County, Indiana. However, once America's involvement in the war caused the people to look more deeply into Germany's actions, Anti-German sentiment spread into Clark County.²⁷ Indiana began an intense drive for conformity during the war and looked for any signs of disloyalty.²⁸ In 1918, Jeffersonville High School stopped teaching German and St. Luke's Reformed Church ended their German speaking services.²⁹ As early as January 3, 1918 a specific story was detailed in *The Evening News* in which Carl Horst was arrested by U.S. Marshals for insulting remarks he had allegedly made against the United States.³⁰ Horst supposedly advised a young man to go to Mexico to escape the draft and even went so far as to agree to supply said man with maps or other conveniences that would allow him to reach Mexico.³¹ According to this report, Horst also requested a few weeks earlier for permission to place a notice which stated that he was a German and requested that people not discuss the war with him.³² Surely this request did not help his case, as even though he had lived in the United States for several years, he still identified himself as a German.³³ On January 29, 1918, "Notice of Registering of Aliens" was announced in *The Evening News* in which "German born men, who were not naturalized, were required to present themselves.³⁴ The article stated, "All Natives, Citizens, Denizens, or subjects of a Foreign Nation or Government, with which war has been declared, being Males of the age of 14 years and upward...to register as Alien Enemies."³⁵

²⁰ Ibid, 586-587.

²¹ Kramer, 292.

²² *The Evening News* "Letters From War Zone" September 24, 1914; "Serving Families Since 1860" *E. M. Coots' Sons Funeral Home*. <http://www.cootsfuneralhome.com/history.htm>. Retrieved on November 22, 2012.

²³ *The Evening News* "Letters From War Zone" September 24, 1914.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Kramer, 292.

²⁸ Phillips, 600-601.

²⁹ Kramer, 292.

³⁰ *The Evening News* "German is Interned" January 3, 1918.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

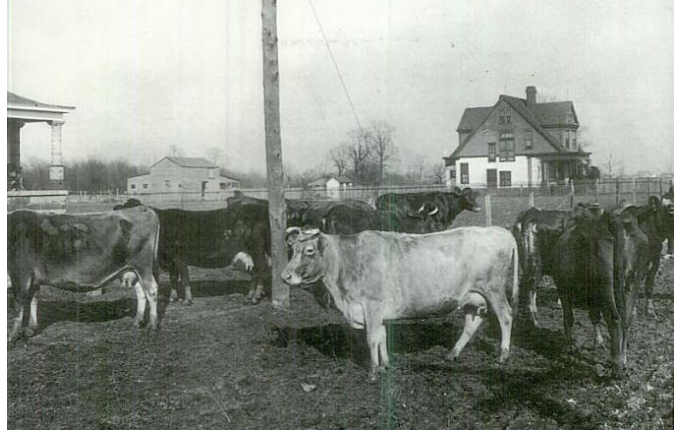
³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *The Evening News* "Notice of Registering of Aliens" January 29, 1918.

³⁵ Ibid.

The penalty for not doing so was arrest.³⁶ Next on June 1, 1918, German women were called to register.³⁷ Some German immigrants were arrested; however, this occurred when they were found too close to the Jeffersonville Quarter Master Depot, as they were suspected of being spies.³⁸ One individual, who had been applying for a job but failed to have his registration card on hand, was arrested for vagrancy.³⁹

America's involvement in the First World War brought Clark County, Indiana, as well as the rest of the United States, out of its isolation and into curiosity about the events occurring in Europe. In 1918, Jeffersonville's newspaper *The Evening News* began running more information about the war, but still only in regards to how the community could help, what the community was doing for the home front, who was going off to war, who had been wounded or killed, and letters published from loved ones on the front lines. The opportunities that came out of the war for the citizens of Clark County were astounding and many took advantage of them while also feeling like they were doing their part for the war effort.



The Baird Dairy in 1905 in Clarksville, Indiana
Printed with the permission of Jane Sarles

Clark County, Indiana was very agricultural in the early part of the Twentieth Century, especially when the war broke out. During the war, the farmers of Clark County saw an increase in their livelihoods. According to *Agricultural Development of Southeastern Indiana, 1840-1940*, Clark County saw a decrease in the number of farms in 1910 by 8.42% but an increase in the number of improved acres by 36.7%.⁴⁰ Clark County was the only county in the region to experience an improved acreage increase during this period.⁴¹ The cash value of farms increased 46.7% and livestock value increased 76.3%.⁴² World War I led to an increase in wheat production for Clark County farms of 45.8% while corn decreased only 7.9% and oats decreased 20.2%.⁴³ In addition, the value of farm machinery rose 170.9%.⁴⁴ After the war, in the 1920s, according to this same study, a retrenchment followed.⁴⁵ The number of improved acres decreased by 24% and the value of farmland, machinery, livestock, and market-garden also declined.⁴⁶ Grain decreased 35.3%, back to its pre-war levels.⁴⁷ Farmers had been encouraged to

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *The Evening News* "Alien German Women Next" June 1, 1918.

³⁸ *The Evening News* "Was Snooping at Q. M. Depot" March 28, 1918; "Aged German is Held for Inquiry" May 8, 1918.

³⁹ *The Evening News* "Aged German is Held for Inquiry" May 8, 1918.

⁴⁰ *Agricultural Development of Southeastern Indiana: 1840-1940*. Lead Agency: Indiana Department of Transportation. Prepared for: Community Transportation Solutions Louisville, KY. Prepared by: Gray & Pape, Inc. Project manager, Michael J. Matts: Cincinnati, OH, January 13, 2009, 8.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 9.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

plant and had borrowed heavily in order to buy more land and equipment.⁴⁸ After the war, the government cancelled their food contracts and prices plummeted, leaving farmers in financial straits.⁴⁹ Farmers were hurt by the collapse of prices but the percentage of farm decreases were not mentioned in the 1920 census.⁵⁰ However, it can be seen by these statistics that the farmers of Clark County helped the war effort in their increased production of wheat, which was much needed during the war as often portrayed in *The Evening News*, when daily orders were sounded out to conserve flour and eggs, and “Save the Wheat”.⁵¹

The Evening News and *The Jeffersonville Star* gave daily accounts of the war effort and what the citizens on the home front were to do to preserve the country while the men on the front lines fought for the country. Both papers gave information on the nation’s news, the local news, and society news; however, international news was highly absent. *The Jeffersonville Star* gave information on the bicentennial celebrations in 1916 for the state of Indiana, including the events in Indianapolis, as well as the parade in Clark County.⁵² However, *The Jeffersonville Star* also gave the first information I came across about the United States’ call to arms on July 25, 1916, nine months before America declared war.⁵³ Unfortunately, the only microfilm left of *The Jeffersonville Star*, pertaining to this period, is that of 1916. *The Evening News* was much more helpful in this research as its records had been saved in the Jeffersonville Public Library from 1914 until mid-1916, in which both this half period of 1916 and all of 1917 have been obviously stolen from the collection. The box, which should contain the microfilm, is there and clearly labeled, but is tattered, torn, and empty inside.

The Evening News in 1918 gave daily accounts of how to help the war effort, those going off to war, letters from men on the front lines, men wounded, and men who had died. The newspaper tended to care more about the effects the war had on the local region rather than a worldly perspective. Much of the information written in *The Evening News* is obviously that which was sent to all local newspapers from the national arena in order to help the war effort. An example is, “Join the U.S Army or Navy Now. Your Country Needs You!” This advertisement was visible almost every day in the first half of the 1918 papers.⁵⁴ It was located in the upper left hand corner of the news and was at times followed with information regarding the local war effort, such as “Schedule Day by Day for Hooverized Week” (meaning the meal plans Herbert Hoover had specified as national food administrator, in which he planned out proposed rations of daily meals in order to save food to send off to the



⁴⁸ Kramer, 291.

⁴⁹ Kramer, 291.

⁵⁰ *Agricultural Development of Southeastern Indiana: 1840-1940*. Lead Agency: Indiana Department of Transportation. Prepared for: Community Transportation Solutions Louisville, KY. Prepared by: Gray & Pape, Inc. Project manager, Michael J. Matts: Cincinnati, OH, January 13, 2009; Kramer, 293.

⁵¹ *The Evening News* June 10, 1918.

⁵² *The Jeffersonville Star* 1916.

⁵³ *The Jeffersonville Star*. “Answering Call to Join Colors” July 25, 1916.

⁵⁴ *The Evening News* “Join the U.S. Army or Navy Now” January 5, 1918.



Allies relief efforts) or “War Garden Committee Director Named for each Ward in City.”⁵⁵ This information was intended to give the citizens of Clark County a rule guide, if you will, to assist in the war effort. In addition to wheat, meat, and fat restrictions, residents were often asked to lessen their flour, sugar, bread, and egg intake.⁵⁶ No information was found regarding if the people heeded these proposed regulations, however the pride the newspaper took in relaying the actions the population did take for the war effort seems to allude to the possibility that the people were indeed taking these proposed actions seriously.

The Evening News proudly displayed the many ways in which the people of Clark County, Indiana supported the war effort. Remembering that *The Evening News* for 1917 is missing, the earliest papers we have cataloged at the Jeffersonville Public Library show daily the many ways in which people could and were helping the war effort. On January 3, 1918, *The Evening News* detailed the many drives chartered by the Red Cross including a membership and knitting drive.⁵⁷ *The Evening News* would also, practically daily, announce the activities of the Red Cross within the county. The many actions of women, especially at this time, were popular in order to show their pride and to continue to get other women involved in the war effort. Articles relayed events such as food canning drives, gardening (in order to feed your own family off of your own produce rather than the government supplies), sending books to the soldiers, and training for women to be in charge of big registration drives for voluntary service.⁵⁸ These drives were huge affairs as women were often pressured to register:

...no loyal Indiana woman, understanding the situation would refuse to register for service, and that they women who refused to register after the matter had been made clear should not be permitted to do so, as her registration under duress would be of small value and would constitute an insult to the United States government which has asked the women to register as a patriotic act made necessary by the demands of the war and the needs of the hour.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *The Evening News* “Schedule Day by Day for Hooverized Week” February 11, 1918; “War Garden Committee” April 1, 1918; “Herbert Hoover” *Spartacus Educational* <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAhoover.htm>. Retrieved on November 23, 2012.

⁵⁶ *The Evening News* 1918.

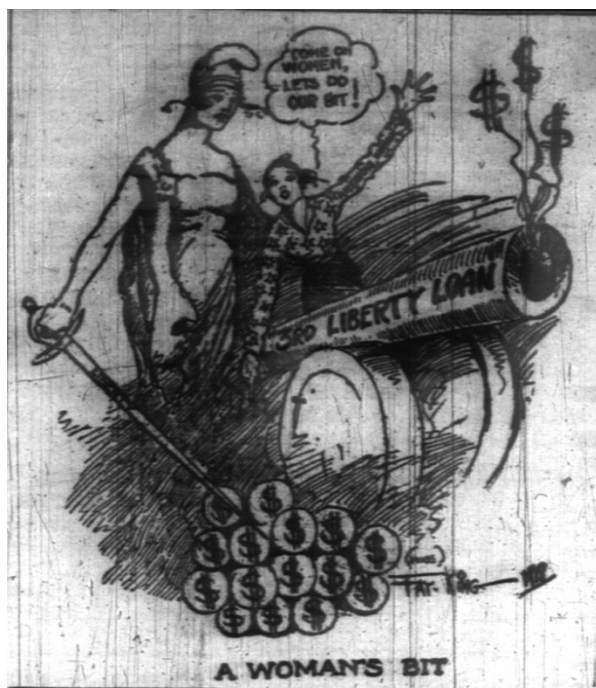
⁵⁷ *The Evening News* “Awaiting Reports From Chairman” January 3, 1918.

⁵⁸ *The Evening News* “Big Drive For Indiana Starts April 19” February 28, 1918; “Girls Canning Club” July 2, 1918; “We Want More Books For Soldiers” July 30, 1918.

⁵⁹ *The Evening News* “Big Drive For Indiana Starts April 19” February 28, 1918.

Children were also involved in the war effort, as seen in *The Evening News*. Children were organized in the Juniors Red Cross.⁶⁰ This organization was added to the school curriculum and would include “learning the lessons of ‘true’ patriotism” as girls sewed and knit and boys would do various work.⁶¹ Additionally the Boy Scouts passed out pamphlets giving official information on the war to the residents.⁶² These pamphlets included information on “How the War Came to America”, “The Government of Germany”, “The War of Self-Defense” and “American Interest in Popular Government Abroad”, among others.⁶³ All these actions showed the pride of the people, the pressure of the people, the enforcement as well as the encouragement of all, including the young and especially the females to help the war effort.

The calls for patriotism was a highly motivating factor to join the service even on the home front, because, as seen in the case of women volunteers, one could be ostracized for not partaking in the war effort. Articles such as, “Appeal to Patriotism is Issued” which was only asking that the citizens “Do Without Wheat As Nearly As



The Evening News May 6, 1918

Possible”⁶⁴ as well as “An Appeal to the

Sellersburg, Indiana	
Bath towels	6
Hand towels	15
Handkerchiefs	65
Napkins	44
Sheets	17
Ladies' of St. Luke's Church, Jeffersonville	
Bath towels	2
Napkins	1
Sheets	19
Hand Towels	2
Total Number of articles collected	
Bath towels	822
Hand towels	768
Handkerchiefs	1065
Napkins	668
Sheets	275
Pillow Slips	38
Wash Cloths	12
Tray Covers	3
Pillow	1
Cash	\$625.61
Respectfully submitted,	

the Patriotism of Students” calling for the “young people of America . . . to aid in the defense of Democracy and Civilization . . . to volunteer in all lines of service”⁶⁵ could obviously have been an influential technique in recruiting people of all ages to join in the home front efforts. The need to show your patriotism or rather disprove any unpatriotic perceptions placed upon you seemed to be a highly motivating factor behind the war effort in Clark County, Indiana.

Another interesting motivating factor that is seen quite often in these 1918 newspapers is the competitiveness of the residents. This competitiveness was also seen when advertising the sale of Liberty Bonds and War Stamps. On April 23, 1918 *The Evening News* announced the progress Indiana had made

thus far in the Liberty Bond subscriptions stating that “Indiana is Well Up in Front”, evening announcing that Clark County was “over the top” and “still going strong” in their state quotas

⁶⁰ *The Evening News* “Children’s Red Cross Organized” February 21, 1918.

⁶¹ *The Evening News* “Children’s Red Cross Organized” February 21, 1918.

⁶² *The Evening News* “Boy Scouts On Boosting Expedition” January 30, 1918.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ *The Evening News* “Appeal to Patriotism is Issued” April 1, 1918.

⁶⁵ *The Evening News* “An Appeal to the Patriotism of Students” March 28, 1918.

however, if you read on it is specified that while some townships in Clark County were over their respective quotas, the entire county as a whole was behind.⁶⁶ As seen previously the newspaper took competition to a more local level between counties. Yet there was always a prize to be had and aspire to for the citizens of Clark County, as well as the rest of the state. The Honor Flag was one such prize that was given to those districts that met their quotas.⁶⁷ An April 17, 1918 article stated, "To win an Honor Flag the county must not only subscribe its quota of Bonds but must report a number of individual subscriptions equal to seven and one half per cent of its population."⁶⁸ While Clark County residents seemed eager to help in the war effort, competitiveness was a great strategy to keep the citizens involved and active.

The Evening News often announced how much had been collected and what these collections would be used for. This was another great strategy for keeping people involved, interested, and knowing that their work was going to good use. One such example of this is pictured to the right, in which items that had been collected for the Red Cross were posted as well as descriptions of how they would go to use.⁶⁹ This strategy was also used to purchase Liberty Bonds as seen on March 28, 1918 in an article entitled, "What Your Bond Purchase Will Accomplish".⁷⁰ This article went on to state: that, "One fifty dollar bond will buy trench knives for a rifle company, or 23 hand grenades, or 14 rifle grenades, or 37 cases of surgical instruments for enlisted men's belts, or 10 cases of surgical instruments for officers belt."⁷¹ The article continued by describing what a hundred dollar bond will do for the war effort and so on and so forth.⁷² This strategy was very helpful not only to keep people interested but to keep the donations coming effectively.

Yet another strategy, often times used during times of conflict universally, was propaganda. *The Evening News* was no exception. In the April 23rd issue, one such propaganda was printed, "Loan Now, Or Give Your All To Kaiserism Later" which declared "If we withhold our dollars...we are nurturing the curse of kaiserism."⁷³ While I was unable to obtain any of the Boy Scout pamphlets distributed, mentioned previously, I am sure those as well contained propaganda to show the benevolence of the United States and the wickedness of Germany.

The Evening News frequently included information regarding men being drafted and soldiers sent off to the front lines. Indiana's drafted men mobilized at Camp Zachary Taylor, near Louisville, KY.⁷⁴ Beginning on January 3, 1918 the headlines stated "National Guard Off To France" in which "Movement of the national guard in the United States toward Europe may be expected at any time."⁷⁵ May 30, 1918 headlines stated, "Leave For Over There Very Soon" in which

The friends of many Jeffersonville and Clark County young men who have been sent to Camp Zachary Taylor for training will be interested in the following Washington Special:

⁶⁶ *The Evening News* "Indiana is Well Up in Front" April 23, 1918.

⁶⁷ Ibid..

⁶⁸ *The Evening News* "Liberty Loan Subscriptions" April 17, 1918.

⁶⁹ *The Evening News* "Red Cross" October 28, 1918.

⁷⁰ *The Evening News* "What Your Bond Purchase Will Accomplish" March 28, 1918.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ *The Evening News* "Loan Now, Or Give Your All To Kaiserism Later" April 23, 1918.

⁷⁴ Phillips, 607.

⁷⁵ *The Evening News* "National Guard Off To France" January 3, 1918.

The Lincoln (84th) Division that will soon be transferred from Camp Zachary Taylor (sic.) to Camp Sherman is headed (sic.) for France.⁷⁶

Information regarding specific individuals from the area also donned the society pages, if not the front page, such as on January 4, 1918 “Will Soon Go To Europe” about Milton B. Campbell, from the Aviation Corps.⁷⁷ The society section of this same paper also mentioned Finley Dunevy from Jeffersonville who “has passed an examination for the aviation corps and has been sent to the Great Lakes, Illinois training station.”⁷⁸ On June 1, 1918 the society pages in *The Evening News* discussed:

Miss Bernadine Wolpert formerly of this city but more recently of Louisville departed this morning for Camp Meade, Maryland, where she will remain for a few weeks (sic.) training and then she will sail for France. Miss Wolpert was graduated from the city hospital as a trained nurse May the 18th, 1917. She has since that time been on cases in Louisville and surrounding country of a serious nature and has proved herself an exceptionally good nurse, especially in cases where operations were necessary.

Miss Wolpert is a full fledged registered Red Cross nurse. She will go to (sic.) France with Dr. Irwin Abell Unit of 100 nurses; Miss Rosa Rapp also of this city but now at Camp Lewis, Washington, D. C. will be in the party when she sails and about half the nurses who were graduated from the (sic.) city hospital this month will go....⁷⁹

Letters from the front line were often recorded in *The Evening News*. February 28, 1918 included a letter from Capt. Daniel Glossbrenner that told of the conditions in Flanders.⁸⁰ The letter was written on January 27, 1918 and did not disclose any information relative to the American troops but rather on the British Isles to get some ideas about the artillery in action.⁸¹ Glossbrenner wrote:

...the recreation and eating rendezvous for the officers in the Battery. It is a little steel culvert in the ruins of an old building. It is ‘most extraordinary’ . . . how men can exist and make themselves cosy and cheerful in such ruins.

We were sitting at the table day before yesterday and heard the familiar whirr of “Fritz’s” shell overhead. He was only shelling the remains of a railway station which was about a hundred and fifty yards in the rear of our dining room. He dropped only twelve shells. In the afternoon I went over to see the effects and investigate the shell holes.

You have been told and still hear of ‘Flanders mud’ but you can’t appreciate how nice old Indiana dust is until you see this sea. One can hardly realize the devastation and havoc wrought in the battle zones.

I had the pleasure of sending my ‘compliments’ by shell route to the Hun the other day. I also made a trip to the line under fire . . . One has to recall all of his

⁷⁶ *The Evening News* “Leave For Over There Very Soon” May 30, 1918.

⁷⁷ *The Evening News* “Will Soon Go To Europe” January 4, 1918.

⁷⁸ *The Evening News* “Accepted For Aviation Corps” January 4, 1918.

⁷⁹ *The Evening News* “Will Help Boys Over There” June 1, 1918.

⁸⁰ *The Evening News* “Letter From Capt. Daniel Glossbrenner” February 28, 1918.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

athletic training in order to enjoy the dives, rolls and twists which are necessary to 'good health' in shelled area. We finally landed at our observation station from where I reviewed the Hun lines, some two to five hundred yards away. He is quite a worker but he does it most at night. The same out methodical German mind sticks out in all his lines and action . . .

One of the Battery officers went to a [observation] balloon the other day and went up. Of course the Hun got a direct hit on the cable and the occupants found themselves going upwards; they both jumped from 4200 feet and 5400 feet respectively, and landed in out lines safely . . .

We enjoyed (?) a whiff of gas the other night and if you want to imagine one with a gas helmet on take a good look at the next rail welder working on some of the crossings downtown.

I've been traveling in rather high army society, such as it is Yesterday I visited tawo (sic.) Infantry Generals in the front line, each of which was comfortably located in old Hun 'pill boxes'. A pill box is a concrete Hun dug out which is generally of shell proof construction. These pill boxes when in the Hun's hands were electrically lighted and and elaborately furnished. Of course they move without their household belongings as in the above cases . . .

We play bridge quite a good deal and some of the English officers can play too by the way....

I am feeling fine and getting lots of exercise.⁸²

On July 18, 1918 *The Evening News* posted a letter by Capt. Lee Sparks who was with the 24th Engineers Corps in France.⁸³

We are settled down to work at last in one of the nginned (sic.) Depots but a little too far back of the lines to suit me.... I also landed in another city of considerable size in the early morning and could find no one at all who could speak English. Results-I could not get in a hotel and had to sleep in a chair in a railroad station with some French soldiers. In the morning I had a hard time getting washed, breakfast, etc. While they had a buffet and wash room at the station, nothing opened until 8 o'clock and my train left at 8:23. The French don't know how to get up early and don't seem to worry much about work.

All I have seen of France has been very orderly however, the farms and villages ver yneat (sic.) with no rubbish piles at all. The whole country is very beautiful with vivid colorings and flowers. Houses are all of stone and fences of stone, hedge or earth.

My health is excellent. We are in a very beautiful section and now it is warm and balmy although at first it was very cold and wet.

We have good food but plain and very comfortable quarters alongside of which Camp Dix was palatial. I am in a wooden hut with two Lieutenants and a Medical Lieutenant. We have a stove and electric light, also a home made bath tub made of a larbe (sic.) tobacco box lined with tin. Wood and good water are scarce but we get by.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ *The Evening News* "From One of Our Boys Over Seas" July 18, 1918.

Some of the old towns that I have seen are very interesting and the people are very cordial but rarely do we find any one speak English. We are quite away from a city with only little villages around. We are quite away from a city with only little villages around. We are handling great stores of equipment and I judge may be here for some time. You could not comprehend the enormity of this depot only by contact with it.

Life in a depot on lines of communication is rather hum drum and monotonous but I am getting along nicely and am well. Once day it is hot and the next is cold and damp. The rye has headed and we are getting good vegetables and cauliflower, lettuce, etc.

If the doubtful ones at home could see the many women here in mourning and know as we are beginning to know how the French have and are now offering and using their man power in our cause, could know what it means to be rationed and how terribly inflicting the wages of war are, they would not hesitate to give all of their assistance towad (sic.) bringing this business to an early ending.

We are far enough back to be fairly safe from air raids. aHve (sic.) a big German prison camp here, but they are the most harmless things when captive. They are well treated and take to prison life like a duck to water. No danger of them strolling off. They would not go far for fear of not being able to find their way back.

Sunday night two other officers and myself were royally entertained at dinner by a peasant family. The French do take life lightly and enjoy themselves excepting when the war is mentioned, then become serious. The grandmother in this home has lost three of her four sons in the war, and the fourth has been in a hospital for nine months, being gassed. The husbands of two of her daughters ae (sic.) at the front also.

Has a good swim yesterday in the Cher, the first of the season. The American boys swim in the river a good deal but have never sen (sic.) any French do that, so I asked one of the interpreters the other day why the Frtnch (sic.) did not take to swimming. He replied that they did before the war, but now the old men do not care to swim, and there are no young men here to go swimming.

We have two sure enough American women at the Y. M. C. A. and it is good to see them after seeing so much of the peasant type.

This stevedore work is bringing our men out. They are getting to be a husky lot and as tan and brown as leather. I weighed 145 pounds this past week which is 22 more than when I went into service.

There is a French training camp near where they make fit the physicallp (sic.) unfit. The French are not wasting anything, and we may have to do the same.⁸⁴

This paper, of the same date, had another letter from the front lines by Pvt. John G. Schimpff “of this city, written ‘somewhere in Fance (sic.) ...it will be seen that Mr. Schimpff is fully imbued with the conquering spirit of America.”⁸⁵

One could write a very interesting lette (sic.) were it not for the rigid prohibition of the names of ships, places, countries and movements.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ *The Evening News* “Letter Says Kaiser Will ‘Get His’” July 18, 1918.

The one most perceptible observation ‘over here’ is the very remarkable and wonderful symmetry and uniformity of land plotting, construction and materials used.

I must conform to regulation by giving address within body of letter: Pvt. John G. Schimpff. Co., F., 112th Infantry, American E. F. via New York. The beauty and grandeur of landscape in ‘certain countries’ over here actually defy description!

I have been over here some time. The weather has been and ideal (sic.). The American boys are easily acclimated to this climate and all are happy, but those who are not yet in action are eager to do their bit to crush the Kaiser and his coterie.

Have conversed with many of the British, Scotch, Belgians, and French troops and the facts they relate regarding the inhuman diabolical, atrocious and un-natural crimes committed by the Kaiser and his ‘Boches’ are fully corroborated and verified by the peasants, whose veracity and integrity are unquestioned! The most skeptical who hesitate to accept the terrible crimes committed by the German butchers as published and otherwise disseminated as facts, or give credence to their source, would be firmly convinced beyond any doubt if they were ‘over here’.

The American boys will never retun (sic.) home satisfied and contented with the mere ‘hauling down of Hindenburg’s flag’ and the subjugation of the Kaiseh (sic.) and his coterie of out-laws, but their objective is to mete out that ‘what the Kaiser has bought for himself’ and personally, in my opinion, he will eventually get it!

The ‘Yanks’ are giving a good account of themselves and when the last page of the history of this conflict is written it will be found that Uncle Sam’s ‘Sammies’ decided the issue!⁸⁶

September 10, 1918’s edition of *The Evening News* had a letter from Sergt. Fred B. Vawter.⁸⁷ Vawter’s letter was written on August 17th from Italy and at this time was the only Clark County boy in Italy with the American Expeditionary Force.⁸⁸

There are a great many very interesting things in this country but I haven’e (sic.) seen anything yet that was so awfully wonderful, that we could not beat it in the U. S. any time almost anywhere.

I saw quite a bit Tlps (sic.) [Alps] Mountains and some of the most prominent of them and they aren’t one, two, three with our Rockies or even the hills and bluffs along the upper Mississippi, as far as scenery is concerned.

I made a little visit a couple of weeks ago to one of the larger cities and saw one of those old arenas, where in ancient times old Nero used to celebrate on some of his sprees. They claim it was built about 400 B. C. and it sure looks like it. It was where Romeo and Juliet put on their famous show, and the place that they used for the killing of Christians and prisoners by turning the lions in on them.

Some of the old fairy tales (?), I read in ancient history seem a little more real after viewing the place where the stuff was pulled off . . .

As to the war, I have nothing to offer; you get the news as quick as we do and sometimes I guess a little bit quicker.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ *The Evening News* “Hun Sees That There’s A Difference” September 10, 1918.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

The Americans are very much admired over here as fighters, even the Huns are beginning to realize the difference between the real Yank and the ones they were told about.

Don't forget to boose (sic.) [boost] the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. all you can, for they are certainly a great benefit to us over here. I really do not know what we would without them. On our moves all along the line when we would be tired out and about ready to crowd a little, the train would stop some place, and there would be a real American lady ready with hot coffee, a little bit of candy or a smoke or something that would fix us up for a few more hours. In one place we arriver (sic.) later than we expected, and it was about 4 o'clock when everybody unloaded, about half asleep and half mad, and there at the station were the Red Cross women, who has been waiting all night, with hot soup, cakes and coffee. They have a place where we can go and get a lemonade or a cup of coffee most anytime....⁸⁹

Sergt. Fred B. Vawter was a member of the Infantry and was awarded the Italian Medal of Valor for an exploit at Tagliamento River on November 3, 1918.⁹⁰ Vawter also spent some time in the Commons, Austria and Cattaro Dalmatia and Mandres, France, a rural village in the High Department of the Marne near Chaumont.⁹¹

On September 14, 1918, Ernest F. Righthouse wrote of his experience in France as a Private in Company G., Ammunition Train, American Expeditionary Forces.⁹²

We left Camp Upton just a month after the day that I went to Camp Taylor. The trip across the water was rather manotous (sic.) [monotonous]. It was just eat, sleep read and play cards. We slept in hammocks.

We ran into one of the largest cities in England one morning, unloaded in the afternoon, then walked seven miles to a rest camp. The walk was rather exerting after loafing on the ship so long. It also rained all the way out and all night, and when we left the camp in the morning it was pouring down rain. We were put in a yotrain (sic.) [toy train] and went to another rest camp, riding eight hours and hiking four miles to the final destination, where we arrived about 3 a. m. We stayed there that night and the next night, but at noon following left and boarded a ship around 5 p. m.. were on board about 5 hours and then unloaded on French soil. There we hiked to a rest camp for the night and next morning got on board another toy train, which took us to as pretty a spot as you would care to see.

We are living in 'pup' tents and the weather is ideal for tentlife. The days are a little warm, but the nights are fine. In England it was nothing but rain but here there has been only a light sprinkle, in fact the corps are burning up for want of rain.

In England I did not see a field of ground that was idle, even the right of way along the railroads was planted in the potatoes. Everything was green there. The place where we now are, is practically a private park with shrubbery and trees everywhere.

From the papers we are getting it looks as if the Germans were going back pretty fast, but I think we will see some of the fun before winter. At least I hope so.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ "The Infantry in WWI" *WorldWarIVets.com*. <http://www.wvwets.com/Infantry.html>. Retrieved on November 24, 2012.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² *The Evening News* "Will Handle Munitions" September 14, 1918.

We are breaking camp now and have a hike before us. I think we will get some real training then at a large camp. Believe me, I am making my pack as small as I can! I have seen some wounded merican (sic.) boys, who say, that the slogan is the front is: "H---, Heaven or Hoboken by Christmas." (sic.)⁹³

A second letter is also placed in this issue from Pvt. Righthouse dated August 14, 1918.

I am eating every chance I get.... When I think of home, once or a dozen times a day, the first thing that comes to my mind is: Eats! Believe me, you will have to have a cellar full. I think all the fellows think the same way about it as I do.

We have moved from the camp from which I wrote last. This camp is not so good. There is about 5 inches of dirty sand covering the place, very hard to walk in. Our foot drill is about over and we have a few of our mules and some horses and more coming....⁹⁴

On November 28, 1918, *The Evening News* discussed the events of the war in France through a Jeffersonville soldier.⁹⁵ Robert Perkins offered a realistic description of the war by firstly offering his apologies to his mother for not having the time to write as his corps had "been in the hottest battle along the front."⁹⁶ The article continued:

He says he does not like to write of what he saw to his mother and thinks it is better unwritten, and even if he did write, he thinks, it would not give a true picture of what really happened.

As to relics, he says: "I do not take any great interest in them.

What I really want, is to set my feet once more on good United States soil, but not until we are quite through here."

He is feeling fine, and in spite of warfare is getting fat....⁹⁷

On November 26, 1918, fifteen days after the war was pronounced over, a letter from Pvt. Raymond Doherty, from the 29th Division Infantry, was discussed in the paper as his parents had been worried and had attempted to get news from him after hearing he had been wounded.⁹⁸ The letter was mailed on October 21, 1918 but was written on October 7, 1918.⁹⁹ A postscript was added to the letter to explain this time in between the writing of the letter and it being mailed, "I have been in the thick aof (sic.) it and got maine (sic.) but I am out again now."¹⁰⁰ A previous letter had been written on Doherty's behalf on October 14, 1918 and only said that he had been wounded and was in a hospital and hoped to get along alright.¹⁰¹ It did not indicate the nature of the wounds beyond expressing a hope that they would not be

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ *The Evening News* "Bunch of Letters Tell The Story" November 28, 1918.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ *The Evening News* "In Thick And Got His; Out Again" November 26, 1918; "Raymond F. Doherty" *Find A Grave*. <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSmid=47519998&GRid=71657272&>. Created by: Chris Brady, June 20, 2011. Retrieved on November 24, 2012.

⁹⁹ *The Evening News* "In Thick And Got His; Out Again" November 26, 1918.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

serious.¹⁰² The definite word, from Doherty himself, a week later had set their minds at rest. A third letter and postcard by Doherty was discussed on November 27, 1918 in which the postcard had been written on October 1, 1918 and the letter mailed on November 6, 1918.¹⁰³ The letter told more of his wound which consisted of an injury to the knee.¹⁰⁴ The letter stated that Doherty had been bedridden for nineteen days in an evacuation hospital but was soon to leave for a base hospital.¹⁰⁵ Doherty wrote that he felt all right except that he had to keep his knee moving which hurt him a good deal.¹⁰⁶

Another letter was discussed in the November 26th issue from Capt. David Cohen, from the medical corps, who was reported sick with pneumonia.¹⁰⁷ The letter stated that he had recovered.¹⁰⁸ Earlier attempts to find more on his status was futile and rumors were even being spread of that he had died but this newest letter proved that false.¹⁰⁹

Throughout the war, news of the wounded and casualties of Clark County soldiers had made their way to the front pages of *The Evening News*, this was most especially true in the weeks following the end of the war on November 11, 1918. Capt. Stephen B. Elrod wrote a letter regarding his wounds that was printed on December 4, 1918.¹¹⁰ Elrod's letter was written on November 11, 1918 stating that he was still confined in Base Hospital No. 26 where he had been since the first of October.¹¹¹ Capt. Elrod wrote, "There is nothing whatever the matter with my head, my nerves nor my appetite the trouble is purely one of physical exhaustion."¹¹² The article continues:

From the time of his arrival in France in June, he has been at the front with the Field Hospital of the 26th Division which has been in the hardest fighting in the Chateau Thierry drive, later at St. Mihiel and still later in the Argonne Forest where he broke down completely.

Dr. Elrod is greatly disappointed at not being able to stay at the front until the end of the war. At the time he wrote the last letter it was then presumed that he would be able to travel to southern France on sick leave about the middle of November. He was supposed to return to the Base Hospital about the first of December for examination and further assignment to duty if able. 'But who knows' he writes 'but they may be sending the convalescents home by that time....'¹¹³

The Evening News on November 26, 1918 also wrote about Jeffersonville's Clarence I. Sparks who had been on the slightly wounded list, "It is probable he is recovered and discharged by this time as his wounds are described as slight and the lists are some weeks in time behind the casualties listed."¹¹⁴

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ *The Evening News* "Another Letter From Doherty" November 27, 1918.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ *The Evening News* "In Thick And Got His; Out Again" November 26, 1918.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ *The Evening News* "Capt. Elrod Still In Base Hospital" December 4, 1918.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ *The Evening News* "In Thick And Got His; Out Again" November 26, 1918.

Gerald O. Haffner, included in his *A Brief, Informal History of Clark County, Indiana* a letter from Pvt. John Joseph Kerberg written on August 17, 1918.¹¹⁵ Kerberg entered the service on September 19, 1917 and was sent to Camp Taylor, Kentucky. He was assigned to Company F, 163rd Infantry. He went overseas in January 1918 and was placed in Company L, 168th Infantry, Forty-second (Rainbow) Division. Kerberg fought in the battles of Lorraine, Chateau-Thierry, and St. Mihiel. The letter was received by his parents on September 30, 1918. *The Evening News* printed the letter on October 3, 1918.¹¹⁶

I received your letter about a month, [ago] but have been too busy to answer it until now. It would make a book if I were to write everything in detail that happened last month.

The night of the Third of July we started for the front. We were to go over the top and take a hill, but orders were changed, and we moved to another front. We hiked all night and slept on the Fourth of July, and that night we started out again.

We sure had some noises for our Fourth, for the French were putting over a barrage on the front, wither we were going. It could be heard for miles. They kept this up until about 9:00 o'clock and then the French went over the top and took a number of prisoners. We landed about three miles from the front at about 11:00 o'clock in a woods and put up our tents.

We could see the front lines from the edge of the woods. We stayed there for about ten days. We dug our trench in a day. We could not do much sleeping because there were guns all around us and when they would shoot they would make our clothes shake on your back. The sounded as if they were inside of your tent.

The night of the nineteenth of July I did not go to bed because we knew the Germans intended to start the drive. The French appeared to know just to the minute when it was to start. I went out to the edge of the woods to watch the plain and the signals at the front lines.

About 11:45 the boys were all awakened and we got into the trench to wait for what might be coming.

About 12:10 the drive started. The skyline looked as if it were on fire with the flashes of the guns far and near. They all started at once and it was some roar. It was heard fifteen miles away. It was not long before it was raining iron around us. They had their gunner direct it so that it covered the entire front with shell fire. They shot as far to our rear as their range would reach. This was kept up for about five [?] hours and in the meantime we went into the dugout, if we had not, we should all have been killed.

About daybreak the Germans started over the top, but they were pretty well shot up by this time because the French had started their barrage a half an hour before the Germans. The Germans were shoulder to shoulder in the trenches. They did not make any gains along the front. We were on the second line of defense.

We remained there for five days, starting then for another front, making several hikes at night, one day a truck ride and several days and several nights. On one of those marches we passed through a village which the Germans were as big as a man. The next day we arrived at what had been No Man's Land the day before

¹¹⁵ Haffner, Gerald O. *A Brief, Informal History of Clark County, Indiana*. Indiana University Southeast Bookstore: New Albany, IN, 1985, 155.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

and then we went into a woods where we were only a short time before the Germans dropped shells so close to us that we had to move.

The next day we began our advance under German artillery fire. Shells were bursting on all sides cutting down the tops of trees and often the trees themselves. There was nothing to do but to keep right on. The boys would say 'If they have your number they will get you that' all.'

There were troops ahead of us driving the Germans.

The next day was our time to go to the front. We rose at 3:00 a.m. to find the Germans and we did not go far before we found them. It was not a brief time before the air was full of machine gun bullets as thick as rain. The artillery shells were bursting all around us.

Our charge worked like clockwork. Hundreds of men advancing, all dropping to the ground when the machine gun spoke or when a big shell dropped close to us. Then we would get up and run about ten yards and drop again. We kept this up until we got to the machine guns, shooting as we went. We took several prisoners. This was kept up until 9:00 p.m. After dark we dug in, burrowing a hole sufficient to lay down in. This was our frontal line. Several big shells hit so close to us that they threw dirt over us; airplanes flew over us and shot at us. We stayed there a couple of days.

The artillery would bombard us from about 3:00 p.m. until midnight and once in a while would send a shell during the night to remind us that they were still there. But this did not keep us from sleeping.

I slept just as soundly as if at home in bed. When you are in a fight like this, you cease to care for anything, because you feel that at any time you may meet your Maker.

After a few more men came to the front, we dropped back along a little hill or ledge along the road about three feet high, and there we remained a couple a days. But the artillery kept on shelling us, but it was hard for them to hit us for we were on the slope of a hill.

There was a machine gun and its crew between another fellow and myself sitting up on the ledge. A shell hit it and knocked it about ten feet and the bar holding the gun's ammunition dropped on me. I thought I was gone for a minute. I thought my arm was knocked off.

The man next to me asked 'Did it get you?'

I answered 'No!'

It blew my helmet about ten feet.

If it had been about ten inches higher, I should have been wearing my asbestos gloves by now. A piece of shell went through my gun strap and other pieces came near getting me on close calls.

We captured thousands of dollars worth of ammunition from rifle cartridges to ten inch shells and all kinds of equipment; helmets by the hundreds, which Germans had run from in under.

I should have sent you one, but did not have enough stamps. The ground was covered with souvenirs.

We fell back into a woods and remained there for a week. We could hear the dropping of bombs every night and a few dropped in our neighborhood, but they missed us.

We saw airplanes fight every day and several falling to earth crippled or in flames. We saw one observatory balloon come down burning. We saw three tanks. I think they were German, and we saw three big ten inch guns taken from them.

We are at a rest camp now. Our Division drove the enemy back about 12 miles and our company took hill 212. Our Battaalion (sic.) took the city of Sargie [Sergy].¹¹⁷

Pvt. John J. Kerberg was killed in action on September 12, 1918 during the Western Allied forces' drive on St. Mihiel, eighteen days before this letter was delivered to his parents.¹¹⁸

On August 21, 1918 a letter from Pvt. Lawrence Capehart was posted, which was written on August 1, 1918, from a Paris hospital six days before his death from wounds received in action.¹¹⁹ Capehart was the first Clark County man to die on foreign soil. He was buried in Suresnes, France and the American Legion Post in Jeffersonville, Indiana is named in his honor. *The Evening News* described this letter as, "a voice from the grave, for it is brimful of a noble and quiet courage and a tender thoughtfulness that throw a flood of light on the sterling character of the writer who has thus been called upon to make the last great sacrifice in the early prime of his manhood."¹²⁰

My dear, dear Mother: Have been looking forward to the day when I could write you a real long letter and tell you the news. And now, thank goodness, I can do it with my own hands too. In others words I am improved to such an extent that I can sit up a little and write. And it sure feels good too.

I am sure that you are wondering just how and when I was injured so am going to relieve your mind and tell you. You doubtless know of the big battle that began on July 18. My regiment got into the game on the 19th and it was inevitable that some of us get it. I was lucky, might lucky, compared with some of the men. I got back to a dressing station after a while and was transported to a field hospital. A machine gun bullet entered my left thigh....¹²¹

The news of Clark County casualties often times donned the front pages of *The Evening News*. "Influenza Gets Clark County Boy" emblazoned the front page of October 9, 1918.¹²² Otto Kallembach was the first Clark County boy to fall victim to Spanish influenza at Camp Zachary Taylor where it was reported that the disease was still raging.¹²³ Kallembach's death was one of fifty which had occurred there the day before. The article stated,

While there are fifty deaths at Camp Taylor during the 24 hours up to 8 o'clock Tuesday night the general situation is regarded by the doctors there as improved.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 157-162.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 162.

¹¹⁹ *Gold Star Honor Roll 1914-1918: Indiana World War Records*. Fort Wayne Printing Company and Indiana Historical Commission: Indianapolis, IN, 1921, 75; *The Evening News* "Letter From Lawrence Capehart" August 21, 1918.

¹²⁰ *The Evening News* "Letter From Lawrence Capehart" August 21, 1918.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² *The Evening News* "Influenza Gets Clark County Boy" October 9, 1918.

¹²³ *The Evening News* "Influenza Gets Clark County Boy" October 9, 1918.

During the same period the admissions of new patients numbered 495 and the discharges from quarantine as cured totaled six hundred.¹²⁴

On October 22, 1918 “Death of Soldier at Camp” detailed Noble Colvin who was a victim of influenza the day before at the base hospital at Camp Zachary Taylor.¹²⁵ Colvin’s brother, William, had just recently died as well from influenza ten days earlier.¹²⁶ Colvin entered the service on August 9, 1918 and was sent to Camp Gordon, GA and assigned to the 3rd Company, Development Battalion.¹²⁷ Colvin had returned to Jeffersonville for the funeral of his brother and was stricken with influenza at that time.¹²⁸

Clark County, Indiana businesses perhaps made the greatest contribution and in doing so gave its residents many opportunities to support the war effort while better supporting themselves. Businesses in Clark County boomed during the Great War and many were put under government contract to produce a plethora of items for the war effort at home and across the Atlantic. The Reformatory, the Ohio Falls Car and Locomotive Company, and the Jeffersonville Quarter Master Depot all contributed to the war. The last section of this paper is going to discuss these companies’ individual impacts on the war at home and abroad.

The Indiana Reformatory had two prisons in Clark County in the nineteenth century. nIndiana Prison North was located in Jeffersonville while Indiana Prison South was in Clarksville. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, prison reforms closed the Jeffersonville prison because of the poor conditions and treatment of the prisoners.



Photos of the Indiana Reformatory printed with the permission of Jane Sarles

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ *The Evening News* “Death of Soldier at Camp” October 22, 1918.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ *Gold Star Honor Roll 1914-1918: Indiana World War Records*. Fort Wayne Printing Company and Indiana Historical Commission: Indianapolis, IN, 1921, 75.

¹²⁸ Ibid.



The inmates were moved to the Clarksville prison and the Jeffersonville location was abandoned. In 1918, the abandoned prison was rumored to be turned into a munitions plant and was even discussed among Democratic delegates at a state convention in Indianapolis in June. However, it seems nothing came of these discussions. Inmates at Indiana Prison South were suggested to help thresh wheat, as there was a large amount of wheat to be harvested and not enough men to help with such work, in 1918. I was unable to find if these inmates did actually help in the harvesting of wheat. An article in *The Evening News* stated that equipment was being requested, in addition to the men, for assistance in this work, but at the time the news regarding the Reformatory was spent discussing the plans to improve the jail after a fire had devastated much of it in February. However, it is known that the prison never fully recovered after the fire and was sold to the Colgate Company in 1923 where it remained a working factory until 2008.¹²⁹

The Ohio Falls Car and Locomotive Company (Car Foundry) was built in 1864 to produce railway cars and equipment. After a fire in 1876, it was rebuilt and became the Ohio Falls Car Company, also often called the American Car Foundry. In 1899, the foundry was producing at a rate of one railway car daily. The Foundry specialized in freight cars, passenger cars, and associated parts while an adjacent plant produced castings and chilled iron wheels. During World War I, the American Car Foundry was the government's largest contractor and made a variety of metal equipment. The Jeffersonville plant produced escort wagons, wagon wheels, and nose forgings for shells for the U.S. Army. The first rolling kitchens and the

¹²⁹ Sarles, Jane. *Images of America: Clarksville, Indiana*. Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, SC, 2001, 103.

Phillips packsaddle, designed to let mules carry howitzer components or other heavy loads, were produced at the American Car Foundry.¹³⁰

The largest contributor, providing the most opportunities as well for the citizens of Clark County, Indiana, was the Jeffersonville Quarter Master Depot. The primary mission of the Depot was to procure, manufacture, and ship huge quantities of harnesses, pack saddles, water bags, tarpaulins, wagon covers, and other supplies that had been part of its duties since its conception in 1864. Another prime function of the Quartermaster during the Civil War was the production of shirts. During this time, the garments were cut out by hand, issued in bundles of four to eight for widows, mothers, and sisters of Union soldiers and made up in their homes to then be returned to the Depot a few days later for inspection. This function continued during the Great War and gave many opportunities to the women who became seamstresses.

The Jeffersonville Quartermaster Depot was confronted with the necessity of an enormous expansion during the First World War in order to meet demands. On August 1917, Congress passed legislation allowing the army to requisition land in Jeffersonville. The government then acquired fifty parcels of land and by 1919 had built, or contracted for construction, seventy permanent and two-hundred and eleven temporary buildings, added 5.8 miles of railroad switches, a pumping station, and electric plant, encompassing two-hundred and sixteen acres. By World War I, the Depot was self-contained with its own fire station, homes, and even a branch of the Secret Service. The Harness Shop, at the beginning of the First World War, employed about 35 men and turned out approximately 100 sets of ambulance harness weekly. By the spring of 1918, the workforce was increased to 100 men and the production to 500 sets weekly.¹³¹ The Clothing and Manufacturing Branch and home operatives were increased from approximately two thousand to twenty thousand workers which produced six-hundred thousand to eight and a half million garments a year, making it the world's largest shirt factory. Uniforms were also manufactured at the Depot with the output being 750 service coats and 1,000 pairs of pants a day. Women were given ample opportunities because of this expansion in garment making. The sewing was done as piecework, which, just as during the Civil War, would be inspected at the Depot afterwards and treated for lice. In addition to the employment opportunity this gave women, seamstresses would often sew their name and address in the pockets in the hopes that she may become pen pals with the soldier who received the garment. One soldier, on a Kansas fort, received one such shirt. The soldier and the seamstress wrote to each other for two years until his service was completed and he came to Indiana. The soldier and the seamstress were married, however divorced only two years later.¹³²

The plight of the sewing women was often a topic of discussion in *The Evening News*. On August 14, 1918 an article stated that more pay was necessary for the seamstresses in order to keep up with the demands.¹³³ At the time, the women were paid \$4.45 a week for their work

¹³⁰Sarles, 9; "Ohio Falls Car & Locomotive Company" *Ohio Falls Car Manufacturing Company* <http://www.midcontinent.org/rollingstock/builders/ohiofalls.htm>. Updated in January 18, 2007. Retrieved on November 25, 2012.

¹³¹ Hamilton, C.S. Lieut. Colonel, Q.M.C. "Jeffersonville Quartermaster Intermediate Depot; History and Function." *The Quartermaster Review*. July-August 1927. <http://www.qmfound.com/jeffersonville.htm>. Updated October 9, 2000. Retrieved on November 25, 2012; Jeanne Burke, interview with the Clark County museum curator, Jeffersonville, Indiana, 20 November 2012, Kramer 291-292.

¹³² Hamilton, C.S. Lieut. Colonel, Q.M.C. "Jeffersonville Quartermaster Intermediate Depot; History and Function." *The Quartermaster Review*. July-August 1927. <http://www.qmfound.com/jeffersonville.htm>. Updated October 9, 2000. Retrieved on November 25, 2012; Jeanne Burke, interview with the Clark County museum curator, Jeffersonville, Indiana, 20 November 2012.

¹³³ *The Evening News* "Plight of the Sewing Women" August 14, 1918.

while the men who work at the Jeffersonville Depot itself were due for another pay raise: “Everybody gets a raise (except those most deserving, the sewing women, they receiving no more for shirts that before the war began, notwithstanding railroad fares are higher, living is higher and everything.” On September 6, 1918, women were threatening to quit working as seamstresses if a pay increase was not given.¹³⁴ A letter was written from a resident of the county to the editor of *The Evening News*, and published:

The sewing women who make government shirts for soldiers are getting discouraged over the small pay they get for the amount of work done and time spent. Many are giving it up and more will have to do so, if the cost of living advances. Country women pay so much more for car fare and have to lose so much time in coming, they think the Government should furnish them free passes. Many are helping with this work in order to help win the war, and in doing so are neglecting their families and injuring their own health with over work; while men or boys are paid as much for one week’s work as any women can earn in a month, and work all day and half of the night.¹³⁵

I was unable to find any information regarding whether these women were able to receive their pay raise; however, another article on November 15, 1918, only four days after the end of the war, announced that the making of shirts were to be reduced and were quickly back to its pre-war levels of production in which obviously approximately 18,000 women were suddenly out of a job.¹³⁶

The end of the war was celebrated in Clark County, Indiana by a huge victory parade on Saturday, November 16, 1918. All residents were requested to decorate their houses and automobiles with red, white, and blue bunting. Floats were requested and each township sent out delegations of wagons and autos. Everyone was to fall in the line of march starting at East Court Avenue and travelling throughout downtown Jeffersonville. School children were to ride in trucks made available by the U.S. government and two white and two “colored” bands played martial music.¹³⁷ On November 28, 1918, a letter from a local soldier, Dan D. Zollinger, was discussed in *The Evening News*, which described the celebration at the Bay Ridge Barracks in New York.¹³⁸ The letter was dated November 22 and gave “a vivid description of the celebration in the big burg of Manhattan.”¹³⁹ Cigars were passed around and discharge papers were expected by June.¹⁴⁰ Zollinger ended his letter by thanking the Navy and debated on whether he should enlist for a full four years, “if I can get a first class gunners rating.”¹⁴¹

After the parade, the conversion from wartime to peacetime began immediately. People were laid off from the many employment opportunities that had grown out of the First World War in Clark County. Yet Clark County, Indiana’s contribution to the First World War was quite impressive while most of these events pertained only to them and their boys across the Atlantic, their patriotism was competitive and based clearly off of the news offered to them by

¹³⁴ *The Evening News* “Women’s Wages and Suffrage” September 6, 1918.

^{135,135} *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Kramer, 292; *The Evening News* “Making of Shirts Will Be Reduced” November 15, 1918.

¹³⁷ Haffner, 163.

¹³⁸ *The Evening News* “Bunch of Letters Tell the Story” November 28, 1918.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

The Evening News and *The Jeffersonville Star*. The Great War offered many opportunities to the citizens of Clark County while also taking many lives and livelihoods away with its end.