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This dissertation examines the effects of conscription in North Carolina during the First World War. While primarily focusing on the war years of 1917 – 1918, I also explore the history of personal service in the state from the colonial period to just before the war, and also examine broadly the memory of service and the influence of the war in the years leading up to the Second World War. Research for this study centered on primary source materials from archives, as well as biographies from key individuals, information from newspapers and published reports, and contemporary material from select secondary sources. This dissertation challenges the prevailing narrative that conscription and the war were heavily resisted throughout the South. Rather, I argue that the current views fail to examine the war as a series of events and reactions within the finite period of U.S. involvement, and that in North Carolina support for the war and for conscription grew both within and outside of the official organs tasked to support the conflict. While later histories sometimes labeled the war as useless, for North Carolinians their service was celebrated proudly. They had been asked to serve, to help win a war, and they had done so.

THE LAST WAR OF HONOR: MANHOOD, RACE, GENDER,
CLASS AND CONSCRIPTION IN NORTH CAROLINA
DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the implementation of selective service in North Carolina during the First World War. Enacted simply to raise an army with which the United States could fight the war, the draft evolved into much more. The presence of the draft made every family of a draftee or potential draftee subject to the possibility that by the end of the war a soldier related to them might find himself on a battlefield in France, facing possible injury or death, a circumstance which seemed only a slight possibility when the United States entered the conflict. Service, duty, honor, country, all these notions played on the minds of the state's citizens as they negotiated the draft and fulfilled the nation's request for the young men to fight their war. The result, an evolving obligation which increased in size and scale over a period of eighteen months, made the draft, and the associated war effort, a huge undertaking involving almost every segment of each local community throughout the state.

This community began with the potential draftees. The first group of young men were called because they were the correct age, found to be physically fit, and importantly for this study, able to leave the confines of their homes without an overall negative effect on the economic viability of their families or communities. These men had mothers, sisters and cousins who served the Red Cross, sold War Bonds, worked as registrars or in

canteens, or volunteered as nurses. There were also fathers who were outside draft age, as were sons or younger brothers, many of whom worked to sell Thrift Stamps, or simply took a soldier's place on the farm when he was ordered to camp. In the beginning, with U.S. involvement in the war starting in April 1917, the call-ups were small, the parameters of the eventual U.S. war effort undetermined, and the community footprint of the draft and the draftees' families and the associated volunteer network was still rather trivial. Approaching the end of the conflict in November 1918, the numbers of men subject to the draft had been more than doubled. The attached support effort, the linked family members, the volunteers both official and unofficial, grew exponentially. This study examines how the imposition of the draft pulled nearly every segment of North Carolina's population, men and women, black and white, to somehow support the constantly expanding war effort.

The importance of this study does not begin with the war's anniversary. The fact that the conflict ended almost exactly a century ago does not in any way diminish the war's significance. This examination has more to do with the individual obligation to serve and the role of the government in people's lives and the concurrent obligation a citizen owes to the state. The First World War was a piece in continuing a long negotiation between people and government, one that began long before the war and continued to evolve until another draft was enacted just over twenty years later. This dissertation examines the response to the draft during this time of war, attempting to tease out what the citizens of North Carolina thought about their duty and service throughout the comparatively short (for the U.S.) conflict.

Especially significant to this dissertation, and any examination of the war as well, is the changing nature of the war effort. The course of every war is unknown at the beginning, but this was especially true for the United States in this conflict. The citizens of the state, along with those of the nation, were parties to an ever-changing war effort. The conflict in Europe transformed immensely from the time that the U.S. entered the war and asked her citizens to become involved. The token force of April 1917 became, gradually, a two-million-man army in France and another larger and still growing force of soldiers and draftees still in the United States, preparing to join their countrymen in France for a war many expected to last until 1920. This meant more men, more money, more nurses and volunteers, more community involvement, and more absent husbands and fathers. The response to these evolving requests for service best answer the query as to what citizens of the state felt about their obligation to participate in the war effort.

This participation was open ended. Each time the draft requested men, the nation asked for war loans, the Red Cross or Councils of Defense asked for assistance or volunteers, the people responded. Not only did they come forward each time they were asked, but as the war progressed, as the effort got larger, and especially as the American troops began to participate in the fighting, the support grew more fervent. This was not the ultra-nationalism of 1914 Europe, but a sometimes-grim determination of a state and nation motivated to finish the bloody war they had only recently entered. Certainly, the prospective draftees could have disobeyed the law and avoided the draft, and some did. But the support apparatus was under no such obligation. Lukewarm support for the war,

for the soldiers and the army, could have greeted every call-up, but it did not. Even in the face of an uncertain war, the people were resilient and seemingly always there.

The draft was the benchmark against which to measure this resilience. These requests for men to possibly become soldiers were the litmus test for the state and nation and their support of the war. And the draft was the basic building block for the war effort. The registration boards, draft boards, medical exams, clerical help, insurance and servicemen's aid all existed to support the ongoing effort to draft an army. Alongside the draft was established the growing official and unofficial effort supporting the war, staffed almost completely by volunteers filling the spaces government would mostly assume in the war to come some twenty years later. Without the local focus of the draft, without the exemption board as the hub of the war effort, the community involvement could easily have been quite different. This war was not only supported from the top down, but from the ground up as well. This notion of widespread popular support of the war and the draft goes against current scholarship, adding a differing angle to the existing historiography.

There are many elements to the historiography of the First World War. The key work on the logistics and challenges of the draft in 1917 is *To Raise an Army* by John Whiteclay Chambers. This tome is a broad examination of the political effort by the administration of President Woodrow Wilson to produce a fighting force that could be sent to France, and Chambers engages all aspects of the draft in the First World War, including the debate over conscription at the national level, practical issues of whom to call and how to go about it, whether and how blacks and women could "serve," as well as a comprehensive history of compulsory service in the Americas since the very first

English settlements in the early 17th century. Chambers remains the foremost authority on the draft in the United States, and his book is an invaluable contribution to the (especially) political history of the draft during the First World War, but it deals with the South only in the context of the larger examination of the draft, and North Carolina is a very small piece in this larger narrative.¹ This study will supplement Chambers' work in an important way by focusing on North Carolina and examining the effect Selective Service had on the state during and after the conflict.

In addition to Chamber's study, there are several books that scrutinize the issue of personal service from the colonial period to the Civil War and after. The broadest study in this area is John Mahon's *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, which examines the idea of individual service to the community through the militia from the earliest colonists until the establishment of the National Guard shortly before the First World War.² Another useful volume is *Citizens in Arms: The Army and Militia in American Society to the War of 1812*, by Lawrence Cress.³ Cress also looks at the notion of militia service, especially the idea that men were required to serve when their communities needed them. Also important to the issue of compulsory service are the

¹ John Whiteclay Chambers, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America*. (New York: Free Press, 1987). Chambers treatise has been described as the definitive study on this issue by many of the historians who use his work as a source, and I am inclined to agree. However, other books have expertly engaged this issue, including: Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I*. (New York: Oxford Press, 1968); David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford Press, 1980); Robert H. Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

² John Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983).

³ Lawrence Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

time-honored customs surrounding militia service, especially the notions of substitution and exemption, both important matters with the coming of changes brought on by the First World War. This dissertation contributes to the historiography of personal service by further examining the idea of personal service in a modern state and the citizen's response to the state's attempts to compel service.

The Civil War is also especially important to the first chapter, primarily because it was the only time a "nationwide" draft was implemented before the First World War, and also because the imposition of the draft in this conflict, and the mistakes that were made, were essential to the construction of the modern draft surveyed in the following study. Furthermore, the draft in North Carolina was highly contested. There were large resistance and peace movements throughout the state, and the struggle within the state and the recollection of the Civil War and the state's role in it inform many aspects of the response to the draft and to service in the First World War. There are several important sources on the draft during this period, but James Geary's *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* is one of the key works.⁴ Geary examines the implementation of the draft in the North and the consequences of conscription on the society, including the advantages and disadvantages to the military, and the social layers of the draft and the concept of personal service and possibilities for certain sections of society to escape service. Another essential publication is Paul Escott's *Military Necessity: Civil-Military*

⁴ James Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991).

Relations in the Confederacy, which explores the special challenges of implementing conscription during the war in a country founded on the principle of states 'rights.'⁵

Another important work on the draft in the Civil War is *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army after 1861* by Kenneth Noe.⁶ This analysis looks at the men who were drafted or joined the southern army after the initial rush in 1861, finding them to be less than eager to join, but concluding that they normally made good soldiers. The other essential book for the southern draft in this period is Albert Burton Moore's *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy*. Moore studies the draft in the South in light of the contradictions of a strong centralized state directing her citizens to join the war often against their will.⁷

The second chapter of this dissertation, "Manhood and Service," explores a couple of layers of the draft in the state. The first examines the motivation of these men to serve their country when called to do so. This involves the language used to get the men (and their scattered communities) to serve, and the measure of the overall response. The second layer is the actual implementation of the draft in the communities and the public presence of the draft and the war effort itself. This was the sharp edge of the draft, the actual mechanism of conscription as it touched the citizens of the state. The response to the draft by the men and their communities throughout the state gave an indication as

⁵ Paul Escott, *Military Necessity: Civil-Military Relations in the Confederacy* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2006).

⁶ Kenneth Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates who joined the Army after 1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

⁷ Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy*. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924).

to the support of the war throughout the conflict and spoke to the individual notions of duty, honor and shame of the young men and others who were touched by the draft.

Books on manhood and shame in the South are many, but the one that best informs this dissertation is Bertram Wyatt-Brown's classic work, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*.⁸ Wyatt-Brown describes a society based on obligation and principle, self-worth, the importance of public perception, reputation, and the prominence of shame in the assessment of personal honor. Another important work on honor in the South is W.J. Cash's *The Mind of the South*.⁹ This volume investigates the southern class system and society through the lens of racism, romanticism and religion. Honor is also often the subject of John Hope Franklin's *The Militant South*.¹⁰ While his study explores a period some fifty years before the First World War, the concepts of honor he examines certainly influenced southern society in the years leading up to the First World War. This dissertation contributes to the historiography of honor and duty in the South by exploring these same concepts surrounding citizens and the draft in North Carolina during the war.

The second layer, the implementation of the draft in the state, has seen very little scrutiny up to this point. But, there are some books that explore the draft and the South. The best of these is Jeanette Keith's *Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Fight*.¹¹ Keith

⁸ Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁹ W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941).

¹⁰ John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹¹ Jeanette Keith, *Rich Man's War Poor Man's Fight: Race, Class and Power in the Rural South during the First World War*. (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2004). This study is an expansion of Keith's earlier effort *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland*. (Chapel Hill, UNC Press: 1995), where she

describes her work as “an examination of state power in the rural South during the Great War,”¹² and she explores many aspects of the draft in the South and elsewhere. These include the amplification of race and class prejudices, the examination of a “proper” role for women in the war, draft resistance and protest, and the ever widening role of the federal government into what previously had been largely private or state matters in the Southern states.¹³ My dissertation argues that North Carolina did in fact support the war, and that her study observes the war as a singular event and therefore fails to understand the evolving nature of that support. In addition, whereas Keith studies almost solely the rural experience, my scope of inquiry includes examinations of both the experience of the North Carolina countryside and the population in the cities and larger towns.¹⁴ Furthermore, my study also builds on her work by offering an account of the changing relationship between the state of North Carolina and her citizens because of their service, either in the military or as part of the emerging support network.¹⁵

Another work on the draft that focuses (at least partly) on the South is Gerald Shenk’s *Work or Fight*. Shenk introduces his account by saying he “hope(s) to provide a multilayered portrayal and analysis of what the draft meant to Americans of all kinds

devotes a chapter to the examination of federal power, Southern conscription, and the roles played by political notables in this local arena.

¹² Keith, *Rich Man’s War*, 4.

¹³ Keith uses the term *South* to denote the eleven former states of the Confederacy.

¹⁴ Being from the countryside or from the city proved to make little difference in the response to the draft.

¹⁵ Service in the military in this period was almost exclusively for men, but women served in a variety of capacities – both organized and ad-hoc – to support the war effort. What value they (and others) placed on this contribution was important to their perceived place in North Carolina society, and will be explored within the framework of this study.

where they lived their daily lives in their homes and communities.”¹⁶ Shenk fully agrees with Keith in asserting that political power in the South rested fully in the hands of the white elite, writing that “the extent to which people had the power to determine their own and others’ fate within this system was, in part, a measure of both their manliness and their whiteness,” but Shenk only looks at one Southern region, Coweta County, Georgia.¹⁷ Shenk’s book, like Keith’s, focuses primarily on resistance, but in doing so he explores other aspects of prejudice and racism surrounding conscription in this period, including white supremacy, paternalism, political power, dependency and the legacy of a plantation society. Both Shenk and Keith have some truth in their respective arguments, but my interpretation of resistance is that it must be measured across the entirety of the war. Neither of these works attempt to quantify change over the course of the conflict. Chapter two of my dissertation will engage manhood, while later chapters will survey the issues of white supremacy, race and gender.

Chapter three explores women and the draft. The role of women in the war has recently become more popular, and many works are available in this field. One of the most recent is Lynn Dumenil’s, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I*. This work is an overall survey on women and the war, described as “examining not just war’s impact on women, but also women’s impact on war.”¹⁸ She views women’s activities through the new-found opportunities created by the war, such

¹⁶ Gerald Shenk, *Work or Fight! Race, Gender, and the Draft in World War One* (New York: Macmillan, 2005), 4.

¹⁷ Gerald Shenk, *Work or Fight*, 4.

¹⁸ Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill, UNC Press 2017), 11.

as nursing and in the workplace, as well as through the prism of those hoping to expand the opportunities and improve the lot of women in the country through these actions. Probing all classes and races, Dumenil explores the entire range of political and support activities conducted by women during the conflict, from “club women” to the “working class,” and she explores too the emergence of women from the war amid the “excitement, as well as the tensions ... (of the) early twentieth century.”¹⁹ This chapter will explore some of the ways the war empowered women, through service and opportunity, to occupy roles not always open to them before the war, and often closed again after.

Another important work is Susan Zeiger’s *In Uncle Sam’s Service: Women Workers With the American Expeditionary Force, 1917-1919*. This work explores the women with the AEF in France, comparing the subordinated status of these women with their personal and professional aspirations within the context of the war. Dorothy and Carl Schneider’s *Into the Breach: American Women Overseas in World War I*, looks at women in the AEF as well. Maurine Greenwald’s *Women, War, and Work: The Impact of World War I on Women Workers in the United States* examines the women’s labor movement during the war, as does Carrie Brown’s *Rosie’s Mom: Forgotten Women Workers of the First World War*.²⁰ However, while Lynn Dumenil reviews nurses serving both in the U.S. and abroad, none of these works really evaluate the establishment and the

¹⁹ Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 12.

²⁰ Susan Zeiger, *In Uncle Sam’s Service: Women Workers With the American Expeditionary Force, 1917-1919*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000). Dorothy and Carl Schneider, *Into the Breach: American Women Overseas in World War I* (New York: Viking Press, 1991). Maurine Greenwald *Women, War, and Work: The Impact of World War I on Women Workers in the United States* (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1980). Carrie Brown, *Rosie’s Mom: Forgotten Women Workers of the First World War* (Boston: Northeastern Press, 2002).

extraordinary growth of the women's volunteer organizations or the individual volunteers which expanded with the draft on the local level.

In addition to evaluating the role of women in the war, chapter three also examines the role of white women in the South and their own evaluation of their "proper" place and role as supporters of the communities and their men fighting the war. Within the confines of the conscription debate, in the Southern states especially, there must be a discussion about the very notion of manhood, along with an investigation of the concepts of gender and the proper place for white women in Southern society at this time. There are certainly many facets to these questions, but historians of the period see manhood as beginning with white men – and continuing with the constant discourse between the powerful aristocracy in the South, other whites, women, and blacks. Within these sub-groups there are of course also class and gender questions to be sorted out. Perhaps the essential work to begin with is Glenda Gilmore's *Gender and Jim Crow*. Her work is invaluable in examining the interplay between race, class, and gender in North Carolina in this period, and she recognizes the constructed and "negotiated" nature of manhood in the South.²¹ In addition, a more recent publication tackles some of the same issues. The essay collection *Southern Masculinity* explores the evolving definitions of masculine identity in the South after Reconstruction.²² This dissertation adds to the debate over the

²¹ Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University Press, 1996). This work engages nearly all of the underlying aspects of this study, whiteness, manhood, class tension, racial tension, the roles of women, and other issues as well.

²² Craig Thompson Friend, *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South since Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009).

proper place and role for women in this time of crisis, arguing that for the women of North Carolina theirs was a support role in a patriarchal society, a station generally accepted during the war.

In addition to the broader manuscripts, there are also two recently published edited collections that make significant contributions to the historiography of women and the First World War in North Carolina. The first of these is *The American South and the Great War*, edited by Matthew Downs and Ryan Floyd.²³ This collection contains an essay exploring the contributions to the war by the state's Women's Colleges, citing some of the same material appearing in this chapter, and later in this dissertation. The other recent publication is *North Carolina's Experience during the First World War* (University of Tennessee Press, 2018), edited by Shepherd McKinley and Steve Sabol.²⁴ This anthology contains one piece on nurses from North Carolina serving overseas, as well as an article by Angela Robbins concerning North Carolina women on the homefront, which also draws from some of the same sources as this chapter. However, none of the articles deal with the draft in any substantial way, with the essays from the second collection mentioning neither conscription or the draft at any time throughout their segments.

Chapter four is titled "Race, Class and the Draft." This chapter will argue that racism and classism was easily applied by the white ruling class and largely accepted as

²³ Matthew Downs and Ryan Floyd, eds., *The American South and the Great War, 1914-1924* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2018).

²⁴ Shepherd McKinley and Steve Sabol eds., *North Carolina's Experience during the First World War* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018).

the norm by most of the black population of the state, at least that portion that encountered the war effort. I also argue that classism was both accepted and expected by the majority as well. The key for this study is to deal with the issue as it relates to conscription in the state, so each inquiry dealing with a black family – whether to draft or defer, how best to deal with the allotment issue, how to handle black draftees while awaiting shipment to camp, all of these questions draw in the plethora of racial stereotypes and expectations in North Carolina in this period. Moreover, there is the matter of black soldiers and their experiences and expectations once they enter the army, a topic addressed by Chad Williams in *Torchbearers of Democracy*, which posits that war service was part of a different type of struggle for “meaning ...and everyday realities of democracy” for blacks during and after the war.²⁵ This study will add to the scholarship of race in the state during this period by arguing that while black draftees may have seemed reluctant to serve, the black community outwardly and publicly supported the war through participation in all the assorted volunteer organizations, especially the war bond drives and Red Cross auxiliaries.

Another book that explores the black experience and the war is Nina Mjagkij’s *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience during World War I*. She

²⁵ Chad Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2010), 3. Also see Arthur Barbeau and Florette Henri, *The Unknown Soldiers: African-American Troops in World War I* (New York: De Capo Press, 1996).

The states’ minorities also include a significant Indian population, but the available secondary literature deals with this issue only on a national scale. Susan Krouse, *North American Indians in the Great War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), and Thomas A Britten, *American Indians in World War I: At War and At Home* (University of New Mexico Press, 1997), are the two most recent offerings in this area, but most Indians in North Carolina were citizens, and therefore subject to the draft just as any other male of the proper age.

looks at all aspects of black support for the war, from the leadership to the soldiers, and also explores the racism and repression the black population experienced even in light of this broad support.²⁶ There are other works dealing with black soldiers too, including Jeffrey Sammon's recent *Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality*, which also explores racism on the home front, but is mainly a history of black soldiers in combat.²⁷ All these works examine the exemplary record of black combat troops, but none of these books deeply examines conscription, except to mention that most black soldiers found their way into uniform through the draft, and at a higher percentage than the white population among which they lived.

Other scholars who have examined race have done so within the confines of their larger studies of the war. Mark Ellis' *Race, War and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I*, investigates the mistrust of blacks by the authorities during the war, efforts to both keep the black population from becoming subversive and disloyal, and the complete lack of understanding of this segment of Americans by most of the government and the white population.²⁸ Adrienne Lentz-Smith also explores racism in the war era in *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I*.²⁹ The previously mentioned works by Capozzola and

²⁶ Nina Mjagkij *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience during World War I* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011).

²⁷ Jeffrey Sammon *Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2014).

²⁸ Mark Ellis *Race, War and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

²⁹ Adrienne Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I* (Cambridge Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2009).

Kennedy also both examine racism to some degree, Capozzola writes that that “few black people openly questioned whether they owed military service to the state.”³⁰ Kennedy mentions black soldiers only briefly, but maintains that “the Selective Service System did treat blacks unfairly,” limiting his discussion of the matter to only a few pages.³¹

Chapter five of this dissertation is titled “Resistance, Desertion and Pacifism” and explores resistance to the draft in the state. Resistance to the draft must be broken down into sub-categories, those of active and passive resisters (for a lack of better labels). Active resisters were those who attempted to avoid the draft, and the passive group were mostly those who became what were termed “shirkers or delinquents,” men who through either laziness or inattention did not respond to the draft as they should.³² There were also two instances of armed group resistance in the state, and the resolution of these was eventually largely peaceful and indicative of the otherwise widespread support of the war, as well as the unique approach of state leaders and draft officials to such an occurrence. In any event, most resistance was by individual soldiers or potential draftees, and proved only a minor nuisance to draft officials and merited allocation of few resources due to the availability of manpower and the short duration of U.S. involvement.

The most recent work dealing with resistance in the First World War is Michael Kazin’s *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918*.³³ This work is a

³⁰ Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*, 33.

³¹ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162.

³² Laziness and ignorance were part of the official line, but I believe are mainly supported by the available sources.

³³ Michael Kazin, *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918* (New York : Simon & Schuster, 2017).

broad overview of the peace movement in the U.S., including the anti-preparedness and anti-imperialist movements that functioned in the country in the early part of the 20th Century. However, this work examines mostly the political stance of anti-war groups against U.S. entry into the war, a movement which lost most of its energy and political juice after the declaration of war in April of 1917. Where Kazin investigates resistance through desertion and delinquency, he largely accepts other author's accounts, most notably Jeanette Keith, whom he quotes at length. His conclusions, not surprisingly, are much the same as Keith's, that the South was rife with resisters and many in the region actually opposed the war.

The final chapter of this dissertation is titled "War, Memory and Change." This section attempts to tease out what the key participant groups wanted from the war as compared to what the war's end brought about. To do this I follow the return of the veterans, the parades and celebrations immediately following the war, and then the long memorial process from the end of the war up to the Second World War. Using the unveiling of the various memorials and the events surrounding them I studied three groups, white men, white women, and the black residents of the state. Gauging from their various expectations from the war, most of the servicemen wanted a return to the pre-war status quo, something they largely received. Only later, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, did they ask, as part of a larger movement, for tangible benefits from their war service. For the white men in the power structure, they too wanted a return to the status quo, and this they realized as well. Those in the elite stayed there, and in the rigid class structure of the time, mobility remained difficult in the postwar years.

For white women, the story was much the same. Most of the club women who served in the leadership of the Red Cross and various Ladies Auxiliaries moved easily back into their existing roles, while many found new avenues for their energies with postwar auxiliaries to the American Legion or the United Daughters of the Confederacy and Daughters of the American Revolution chapters scattered throughout the state. They had asked for nothing from the war save suffrage (for some), and it came quickly enough. For the elite white women, it was important that they maintain their place at the top of the social ladder, and the war was a perfect tool to cement that status. Like their men, a return to what had been was about all they had wished for, and it was in fact what they received.

Black citizens expected different things from the war depending upon where they were socially before the U.S. entry into the conflict. Most expected not equality, but at least progress to some degree, but I argue that the more distant the war became the less the black population gained from war service. As the state advanced in time toward the next war, the Jim Crow South became even more entrenched, and opportunities for the black population contracted more than expanded.

There are many sources on the United States after the war, but most of course take a national view. Perhaps the best starting point is Jennifer Keene's *Doughboys: The Great War and the Remaking of America*, which expands on the idea of a negotiated relationship between the state and returning soldiers, arguing that the soldiers who fought the First World War became the leaders who fought for the privileged GI of the Second World War. In doing so Keene explores the unfolding discourse between the soldiers and

their evolving hopes for the future in light of their service to the nation.³⁴ Other works on servicemen in the postwar period focus on their reminiscences, like Richard Rubin's *The Last of the Doughboys*, which is a collection of recollections from the last surviving veterans of the American Expeditionary Force. A similar work is Edward Gutierrez's *Doughboys on the Great War: How American Soldiers Viewed Their Military Experience*.³⁵ Gutierrez uses the recollections of soldiers immediately after their return home, while Rubin uses interviews conducted decades after the conflict, but both are useful in their respective approaches.³⁶ This study contributes to the historiography of postwar North Carolina by examining the unique perspective of societal changes through memorials and the celebration of war and memory in the state through the 1920s and 1930s.

³⁴ Jennifer Keene, *Doughboys: The Great War and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2001).

³⁵ Richard Rubin, *The Last of the Doughboys* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2013).

³⁶ Edward Gutierrez, *Doughboys on the Great War: How American Soldiers Viewed Their Military Experience* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2014).

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF CONSCRIPTION IN THE UNITED STATES

The notion of serving the community in common defense traveled across the Atlantic with the first English colonists, for whom the idea of a standing militia force compelled to serve and composed of the available male population of a given locale dated to pre-Norman England. The concept of personal service, the belief that an individual duty was owed to the community, endured for North Carolinians up until the start of the First World War. While the parameters of personal service changed only slightly with the transition from colony to state, and later with the impact of early colonial encounters and the eventual military struggles of the early republic, the citizens of the state in her first two centuries proved willing enough to serve when called. The Civil War (1861-1865) especially tested this conception of service owed to the state. The attempts by the Confederate government to force men to serve ushered in a period of resistance and infighting in North Carolina that continued throughout the conflict, accompanied by a parallel argument as to whether it was the state or a national government that had the right to compel service. After the war, during Reconstruction and the emancipation of the recently enslaved population, the majority of North Carolinians chose to focus their energy on recovery from the economic effects of the war, while maintaining racial supremacy in the state. Resistance to the recent war was largely silenced, and by the 20th century all but forgotten.

As the new century approached, there were debates as to the practicality of using conscription to form armies in the evolving landscape of postwar America. Advocates for differing approaches to military readiness examined the issue, from those backing Universal Military Training to groups promoting locally raised volunteer militias meant to buttress a small centralized professional force. Throughout the deliberations, however, few questioned the need for a man to perform the now age-old duty to come to the defense of the community. There were many arguments over the conditions of service, and even over future need, but no real debate about overturning the system outright.

Militia service was something quite familiar to the colonists, including the small population of the Carolinas, whether they had ever actually participated in a military action or not. In the absence of any significant military presence in the colonies, and without a strong central government, the colonists readily participated in this “community of arms.” Living truly on the frontier, and subject to the possibility of attack from a native population that did not want their lands encroached upon, settlers in North Carolina and throughout the colonies accepted the need for individual military service when the community requested it.¹

The original colonizers of the Carolinas had been given the right to form militias in their original charter, granted by Charles II in 1663. The first eight Lords Proprietors were granted the authority to “levy, muster and train all sorts of men” for the defense of

¹ There are many sources that discuss the origins of the militia in England and the relationship to military service in the United States. The two I have most useful for this study are John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 6-35; and Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 3-12.

the colony.² This act was bolstered by additional measures in the following years, with the Fundamental Constitutions of 1669 further requiring “all inhabitants and freemen of Carolina to bear arms and serve as soldiers whenever the grand council shall find it necessary.”³ In the Carolinas, and throughout the colonies, militias were generally composed of all able-bodied freemen, males who held property and were between the ages of about 17 and 60, with slight variations depending on the colony and the era. Militia rolls generally excluded slaves, apprentices, indentured servants, and what the colonists termed “2nd class citizens” but this could change depending on the significance of the “emergency” for which the militia was called. Quakers, and some other religious pacifists, were included in the muster but could avoid militia service by hiring a substitute or paying an accepted fine. No colony forced Quakers to bear arms if they were willing to pay for an exemption.⁴ In addition, others were periodically exempt from service due to their importance to the economy of the colony.⁵

Terms of service varied depending on colony but were in general the conditions in the Carolinas were very similar to those in the other colonies. Tradition held the term at three months, but in this early period lengths of service were usually much shorter, or

² E. Milton Wheeler “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia.” *North Carolina Historical Review* 41 (July 1964), 307.

³ Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 307-8.

⁴ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 18. Quakers in North Carolina were kept on the militia rolls, enabling the government to enroll the same number of men through substitution or enlistment. Quakers could either serve, hire a substitute, or pay a fine. A fine of 10 pounds was outlined by the 1760 Militia Act.

⁵ Lawrence Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and the Militia in American Society to the War of 1812*. (UNC Press, 1982), 4-5. Ages 17 to 60 codified for Carolinas in Fundamental Constitutions of 1669, and later by measures in 1715 and 1740. Length of service was not specified, but generally was simply for duration of the “emergency.” Feudal tradition was typically 30 days, the time believed to successfully besiege a castle or fortress.

nonexistent.⁶ The population in the colony was scattered throughout a large area, and threats to the colony itself were few. Musters of the militia were the exception, not the rule. Men called to meetings could be required to travel long distances over un-improved tracks, and the absence of any real threat made these dangerous and burdensome treks largely unnecessary.⁷ However, even while dormant, the militia's principle of personal service, written in law and present in tradition, was not questioned. Nothing changed about the obligation of the colony to maintain the militia, or in fact the obligation of the men to serve, but the system suffered from such complacency and neglect that militia musters were almost unheard of before 1711.⁸

The Tuscarora War in 1711-1712 precipitated changes in the early militia system in the Carolinas.⁹ The North Carolina militia had been unable to adequately defend the colony in the event, and the aftermath of the conflict brought changes in the

⁶ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 19.

⁷ Wheeler, "Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia," 308. Wheeler notes that the population of North Carolina was only 4,000 in 1675, and that it was typically both dangerous and inconvenient for men to leave their farms for militia meetings.

⁸ Wheeler, "Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia," 308. North Carolina seldom used the militia in the 1600s and was one of the few colonies that were reported to Queen Anne in 1706 as lacking a "regular militia."

France, Spain and the Dutch all had similar notions of compulsory service, and indeed most skirmishes between the colonizers involved militia, not regular soldiers. But it was the threat from Indians, not other Europeans, which ensured the development and maintenance of militia forces in the colonies of the New World. Mahon, *History of the Militia*, 15.

Despite the situation in the Carolinas, a robust militia system was maintained in the Northern colonies.

Mahon, *History of the Militia*, 18–20.

Also see Weigley, *History of the Militia*, 10-12, for a discussion of the importance and impact of geographic limitations.

⁹ Wheeler, "Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia," 308-309. Tuscarora Indians clashed with white settlers over desirable homesites. Treaties made by colonists were usually broken, leading to conflict in 1711. Militiamen aided by Cherokee and other allies defeated the Tuscarora by 1715. See Howard Peckham, *The Colonial Wars 1689-1762*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 75-76.

organization.¹⁰ In 1715 the colony passed the Militia Act, standardizing the militia system for the remainder of the colonial era. The act established organizational guidelines and rules for the maintenance of an effective militia; the governor was designated as the commander, empowered to call out units the militia when he felt the need. He was also granted the power to appoint the officers of the militia, who were to organize the daily activities of the group. Rolls were to be kept by militia officers, and men were required to serve when called, and further required to furnish their own arms to some extent.¹¹ Periodic mustering was ordered, where training would ostensibly take place. While militia meetings were still inconvenient and burdensome in the colony, following the recent war the “periodic, unpaid, compulsory training and short-term service was widely accepted as necessary to defend highly vulnerable outposts in the wilderness.”¹²

Besides the individual’s personal obligation, the 1715 Act also outlined several other measures relating to membership in the militia. Fines were prescribed for officers who failed to maintain active rolls, and men could also be fined for failure to muster when called. In addition, certain occupations were allowed exemption from service, including ministers, doctors, and several occupations that would later be labeled civil

¹⁰ Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 309. North Carolina was completely unable to mount a defense, and the Governor had to ask the neighboring colonies for help. Victory was won by force of native troops and white officers from South Carolina.

¹¹ While some colonies had supplies of arms, individuals supplying their own weapons and ammunition was not new. Early settlers were sometimes required to have arms in order to obtain a grant of land. Mahon, *History of the Militia* 16.

¹² Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 14. By 1701, the population was estimated at only 5,000. Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 309.

servants.¹³ Geographic limitations were also applied to the use of militia forces, as were limits as to length of service. Most of these citizen-soldiers were still farmers, and their labor was crucial to their own well-being, as well as that of the colony, so the length of militia service was typically limited to three months. The short duration of service, in addition to the geographic limits on the use of militia forces, made the group suitable only as a short term defensive tool.¹⁴ This was less important as the threats remained both immediate and local – primarily in the early period, but as the population of the colonies grew and the frontier continued to shift west the militia itself became less and less the military instrument called upon to fight. However, the notion of compulsory service remained.¹⁵

The westward movement of the frontier, coupled with the growth of the population, changed the nature of personal service in the defense of the colonies. While militias were still an important concept, guarding of the frontier became more and more a function of units of soldiers on active service. This was not a “regular army” unit in a strict sense, but unlike the compulsory militia was composed of paid volunteers recruited for longer terms of service, typically a year at least. Furthermore, while these volunteers were often men liable for militia service, they could also be recruited from that class of

¹³ Further legislation regarding the militia was passed in 1740, 1746 and 1749. The changes had to do with organization and pay primarily, save the measure on aid to neighboring colonies noted below. Wheeler, 309-15.

¹⁴ Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 313. The 1746 Militia Act included a clause whereby the governor could send forces from North Carolina to aid the neighboring colonies of Virginia or South Carolina, provided they requested support and footed the bill.

¹⁵ In many regions, notably New England, there existed volunteer militias filled with ranks of men who chose membership in them, with the general understanding that they would be called upon first when men were needed for active service. Mahon, *History of the Militia*, 22 and Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 8-9.

men not subject to militia service.¹⁶ However, if volunteers were not forthcoming, militia officers were empowered to “draft” soldiers to fill their manpower needs. While the machinery varied from colony to colony, in North Carolina the authority to draft came from the governor, and these drafts were generally applied to members of the militia. In practice, however, well-to-do men were usually called up, and these men either hired substitutes or paid fines – fines which were then used for enlistment bonuses to attract the necessary recruits.¹⁷

So, while the service obligation still existed for colonial subjects, this two-tiered system of raising military forces increasingly became the norm in the colonies. The militia was available for emergency use, and indeed in New England was the first source of manpower for these long-term forces, but in the Carolinas and elsewhere forces were recruited from whatever manpower was available. More and more these longer-term forces were raised not from the militia, but outside of it. Conscription was not abandoned, but simply altered to suit the needs of the particular colony. When simple recruiting failed to raise adequate numbers, enlistment bonuses were offered. If the numbers still fell short, a draft could be ordered, in which case those with means could

¹⁶ Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 4-6.

¹⁷ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 18-19. Substitutes were simply that – a person paid to replace someone in the ranks who was called upon for service. The idea was almost as old as the militia itself, and in this era of “landholding militia” there were available men outside the compulsory service sphere willing to serve for the substitution fee. The fines levied were used in much the same way, to induce service through enlistment bonuses or other forms of incentive. Substitution would continue through the Civil War.

hire substitutes, pay the fine, or choose to serve. The resulting force was hardly a cross section of the populace, but the obligation was met by individual colonists one way or another.¹⁸

1754 ushered in the last colonial war fought in North America. This conflict, largely supported by the colonists, was the first real test of this evolving “American” system of putting military forces in the field. The conflict was fought between France and Britain, and both sides relied heavily on Indian allies and their respective colonists to buttress regular military forces – regular forces sent from Europe to fight in America. The English colonists had a much larger population to utilize, and plenty of experience in combating periodic “Indian uprisings,” but the fragility of relying on untrained temporary military forces, against an able and organized opponent, was on display almost immediately.

Small numbers of North Carolina troops were involved almost from the outset, most notably in expeditions led by Virginia Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie. These men were drawn from the militia, recruited from their ranks for extended service outside the colony. Enlisted for a mission just to the west of Virginia, the threat to North Carolina was deemed real enough to supply the number of men requested. This small force, in addition to some 300 men from Virginia and the later addition of a company of regular British soldiers, was eventually surrendered to French forces at Fort Necessity on

¹⁸ Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 317, 319. Fines or fees for not coming forward for service had existed since the initial charters of the Carolinas.

4 July 1754.¹⁹ Throughout this initial period of the conflict, low enlistment - regardless of the inducements offered - remained the rule. Moreover, the military leadership complained regularly about the quality of the men enlisting for service, especially in the South.²⁰

While militia commanders in North Carolina seemed ready to lead in this conflict - responding quickly to replies from Governor Arthur Dobbs - mustering adequate numbers of men and the means to equip them continued to be difficult.²¹ Except for a small victory in 1755, early British and colonial forces in America met with defeat. Colonial forces of either volunteers or drafted men supplied troops described by George Washington as “of no service to the people and very burthensome to the country.”²² North Carolina’s contribution during this period was mainly indentured servants paid for by the British Crown, and forces from the colony were seldom used farther north than Virginia.²³

The militia system began to fully participate in the conflict when William Pitt became prime minister in Britain in late 1757. Pitt asked the colonists for 20,000 “citizen soldiers,” and promised to pay the costs as well. With fresh energy to prosecute and win

¹⁹ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 28, Also Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*. (New York: Knopf, 2000), 50-65.

²⁰ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 322-323. Anderson writes that the conflict having remained primarily in the North, there was little support from the South except when southern colonies were directly threatened by the French or their Indian allies. See also, Douglas E. Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 29-30.

²¹ Wheeler, “Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia,” 314.

²² Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 29.

²³ Since most of the fighting was in the North, and the treaty with the Cherokee recently signed, popular recruitment in North Carolina and throughout the South continued to be challenging. Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 28-29.

the war coming from new leadership, new men were procured directly through the militia system. In these instances, the militia would be mustered, and commanders would ask for volunteers from among the ranks.²⁴ North Carolina's contribution, however, numbered only in the hundreds. Indeed, throughout the South it was difficult to find men to serve without an immediate and present threat. American manpower was certainly important to eventual victory over the French, but debate would continue as to what degree they actually contributed. Furthermore, opinions hardened as to how effective a part-time militia was when pitted against a "real" army. The British argued for the effectiveness of their standing volunteer force, while most Americans, with some notable exceptions, argued that citizen soldiers were adequate as long as militiamen received proper training, weaponry and leadership.²⁵

Therefore, on the eve of the American Revolution, the colonists faced two givens. One was that they never wanted British regular forces in the colonies, something many had come to view as a true threat to individualism and liberty in America. While many acknowledged the shortcomings to the citizen in arms and the unique way Americans raised forces to fight afield, to most the militia system was a citizen yeomanry that had proven itself adequate to supply manpower and leadership the face of even a European threat. Yes, the British had supplied regular forces to fight as well, but much of the heavy

²⁴ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 225-231.

²⁵ Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 15-33. See also Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 29-31 and Wheeler "Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia," 316-317.

lifting had been done by the colonists, especially after Pitt's command changes and promises of money and support.²⁶

The other given was that the militia system was still intact. That is, there was no question in any of the colonies as to whether a citizen owed personal service. This idea predated the first colonists, and indeed was centuries old. Still, most colonists had come to accept that the best way to raise military forces for extended service was first through the recruitment of willing and available men, possibly with some form of inducement; conscription of individuals to serve was a last resort. In addition, for many in the higher social tiers of these mostly small and dispersed communities there were various accepted ways for an individual with means to avoid a draft. Militia service thus became less a true reflection of the community it served, and more an instrument relying upon the lower class of men either tempted by bonuses or unable to evade service when called. The methods of avoiding conscription varied from colony to colony, but they were mostly recorded in statute and accepted by the members of the community. Finally, the idea of compulsory service was a local phenomenon. If a force had to be raised through a draft, a citizen was subject to the needs of his *local* government. There was no mechanism for a central authority above the colony level to compel a citizen to serve. This last issue would be confronted soon.²⁷

²⁶ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, describes the change in American attitude after Pitt's ascent to Prime Minister, 208-293 especially.

²⁷ Wheeler, "*Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia*," 319-323.

The American Revolution

The Revolution would test the ability of the colonies to field an independent military force, but the manner of raising armies looked much the same in the beginning. In North Carolina and elsewhere, the militia provided short-term soldiers, mainly for defense once again, but in numbers alone made up the bulk of American forces. Militia call-ups were still typically geared to the growing season, subject only to local operations, and fixed to terms of three months.²⁸ Militia forces continually harassed supply lines and communications and were key to the British inability to control rural areas in any effective way. Hastily assembled forces, however, would often melt away as quickly as they appeared. After the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775, George Washington expected the militiamen to enlist in the new Continental Regiments, but few actually did. Soldiers were needed, and the debate over compelling men to serve was once again joined.²⁹

The weak central government had no power to compel individuals to serve in a Continental Army. The numbers of men available waxed and waned with the attachment of temporary militiamen. Patriotic appeals, enlistment bonuses, promises of extended furloughs, and other measures were increased in order to attract soldiers. When these proved inadequate, the states promptly expanded the pool of men eligible to serve. In North Carolina, “able bodied” substitutes could be hired, but by 1780 they still could not include “Frenchmen, Spaniards, British deserters, Hessian deserters, Indians, (or)

²⁸ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 32, and Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 5.

²⁹ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 37-39.

slaves.”³⁰ Eventually non-citizens were allowed, including prisoners-of-war. In addition, states would purchase the contracts of indentured servants and even pardon serving felons if they would enlist. Also, largely in response to the British policy of granting freedom to blacks who served in the British Army, blacks were encouraged to enlist. Free blacks had in fact been serving in New England since the beginning, but eventually every southern state except Georgia and South Carolina enlisted blacks in some capacity – both slaves and freemen.³¹

Still, enlistments were too few and the states resorted to drafting men to serve. In practice these became exercises whereby militia officers or other appointed officials drafted men who were affluent enough to hire substitutes – which they normally did – thereby avoiding service themselves but enabling a continued supply of men. Some states exempted married men, and all exempted certain occupations and some religious sects. All methods of recruitment and inducement eventually brought some 200,000 Americans under arms in the Revolution, at different times and for varying periods. The majority served brief terms in a local militia. The Continental Army itself reached a maximum strength in 1778 of 16,800, but the average number was considerably less.³²

The conflict having been won, for many the debate over how best to assemble a military force had simply been reaffirmed according to where one stood politically. For the localists the militia system had proven itself, having turned out men when needed,

³⁰ Wheeler, *Development and Organization of the North Carolina Militia*, 320.

³¹ An excellent short treatment of the difficulties of maintaining a Continental Force is found in Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 29-73.

³² Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 23, and Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 35-45.

albeit with mostly limited missions. For the nationalists, the conflict had shown the necessity of a standing force of professionals, best to face possible European enemies now that the United States was to take her place in the community of modern nations. The debate enjoined the full play of republicanism versus centralized power, regional ideology and anti-statists. However, there was still much support throughout the country for the “embattled farmers” of the militia, and for many the war proved the effectiveness of the combination of militia and longer-service volunteers.³³

Nonetheless, 1784 saw the creation of 1st U.S. Regiment, a largely constabulary force stationed on the frontier and manned by volunteers. The militia would still be utilized to maintain internal order and provide for national defense. Congress, a body of conflicting regional and political interests, could not at this point agree on how to turn ‘yeomanry’ into a national force should the need arise. Different areas of the country worried over the use of “our money and men” toward other regions specific issues, and believed the region that dominated the central government would look first to their own area – a reasonable assumption. Furthermore, the militia was still seen by many as a safeguard against the “potential power of the central government.”³⁴

However, even in light of such opposition to a standing military, moderate Whigs in Congress were able to advance a small standing force. But the power to use such a force, command arrangements, raising men, etc., were split between the president and the

³³ Don Higginbotham, “The Debate over National Military Institutions: An Issue Slowly Resolved, 1775-1815,” William M Fowler Jr, Carol Berkin and Wallace Coyle, eds., *The American Revolution: Changing Perspectives* (Boston, 1979), pp. 153-168.

³⁴ Quotation from Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 48. Also see Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 74-94.

Congress. The majority of the delegates in Philadelphia – and the state ratifying conventions – accepted the argument that a trained force in being was necessary, and that the states, while able to keep armed militias, would not have their own armies. Congress was given power to “raise and support Armies,” but whether a national government could draft soldiers was an open issue. Any reading of the documentation supports the assertion that the ability to compel men to serve still rested with the states, and not specifically with the central government.³⁵

A national army was clearly authorized by the new Constitution, but the means of raising such a force was not spelled out. The United States was to retain the long-established dual state / national military force. After long debate at the higher levels of government it had been decided that the president was commander in chief, but that Congress would have the ability to raise armies and too held the power to declare war. The high command would be exercised by men appointed by the president, but most of the officers would still be appointed by the states, as was the practice in the current model. The states would raise the men and handle periodic training and assembly, and the national government would provide “uniform standards of organization and training.” But the reasons for which the militia could be called for service were in fact quite clear: “to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrection, and repel invasion.”³⁶

³⁵ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 48-50, Also see Weigley, *History of the United States Army* 74-94, and Cress, *Citizens in Arms*, 94-109.

³⁶ Constitution of the United States, Article 1, Section 8. This section also gives Congress the power to “organize, arm and discipline[e] the militia” when used in the service of the United States, but reserves for states the right to appoint officers and oversee training.

Measures were introduced in the following years to standardize the militia, to expand the allowances for the federal government to initiate a call-up, and to increase the ability of the national government to ask the states for men in the event of a crisis. However, the fact remained that citizens of the United States in this period had a dual citizenship that lacked a clear definition. The founding documents of the national government place the emphasis on rights, not obligations. Obligation to serve in the state militia did nothing toward clearing up the question of any *national* service obligation. The emphasis was on individual consent. There was certainly a great deal of national consciousness in this period, but obligation carried a local tint, not a national one. By the late 18th century an increasingly commercial populace wanted a federal government that would leave them alone to pursue private economic pursuits.³⁷

The new country took some steps to create uniform militia standards. Two acts were passed in 1792 to ensure the reliability of the militia as a source for manpower, and also to create some semblance of standardization so that state units could act together when and if needed. However, each of the fifteen states then passed their own legislation with regard to their militias. All of the states reaffirmed the right of the governor to draft men into service, but all also allowed substitution. In addition, each state allowed exemptions from service for conscientious objectors, but the guidelines varied according to the state, and in some states these men were still charged a commutation fee. Moreover, there were different laws on when to train, how often, and who exactly was

³⁷ Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia 1865-1920*. (Lincoln Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 7-9, provides a good short summary of the ideological argument.

subject to militia call-ups. The federal government could still call on the states to provide men, and Congress could authorize large numbers, but the government in Washington still could not compel men for personal service without state consent – at least according to statute.³⁸

The war with Britain in 1812 showcased the nation’s inability to mobilize a weak regionalist country for war. The Regular Army was expanded to 10,000 men, but mostly remained on the western frontier throughout the conflict. Another new force was authorized; some 25,000 men for an invasion of Canada, but these would be “national volunteers.” Congress also authorized an additional 50,000 locally raised volunteers and some 100,000 militiamen if necessary. Protests immediately went up from the states about patronage and influence possible with such a large force of soldiers under national command. In addition, governors worried that the cream of the militia would be taken away, rendering ineffective the state formations should they be called upon for local duties.³⁹

However, the nature of the threat to the states was soon to change. While the risk of invasion to individual states was limited during the first period of the conflict, the British Army defeated the French in 1814 (or so it appeared) and promptly released soldiers to invade the United States.⁴⁰ Some 25,000 men launched a number of forays,

³⁸ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 51-62. Congress authorized militia calls for 80,000 in 1794 and 1797, but Mahon describes the militia so detailed as being unable to train together as a large force, usually due to distance between the disparate bodies of men, with the result being an even less prepared body of unorganized men, p. 61.

³⁹ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 117-121. See also Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 67-69.

⁴⁰ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 72.

against which a harried national government was wholly ineffective, after which state governments began to raise volunteer forces to serve in addition to their militia forces.⁴¹

In the midst of this, and with President James Madison hoping still for a successful invasion of Canada, Secretary of War James Monroe proposed the first true national conscription. Obstinate state governors would be bypassed, and militia officers would be directed to “obtain soldiers from the free male population.”⁴² Monroe assured a suspicious Congress that this was only an emergency measure, that those selected should be young and unmarried, and that these men were the most easily spared from the colonies. Monroe wrote, “The Commonwealth has a right to the service of all of its citizens ...the citizens composing the Commonwealth have a right collectively and individually to the service of each other, to repel any danger which may be menaced.”⁴³

Conscription such as this, by the national government and without the cooperation of many of the state governors, was viewed by even Madison’s supporters as a serious blunder. The draft itself was denounced by Daniel Webster as “a horrible lottery.” He warned that the conscripts of such an army “will perish of disease or pestilence, or they will leave their bones to whiten in fields beyond the frontier.”⁴⁴ The majority in Congress simply ignored the conscription proposal, instead resorting again to an increase in enlistment bounties and the inclusion of non-citizens and blacks in the available

⁴¹ The ability of the states to raise their own armies is forbidden by the Constitution – depending upon one’s interpretation. Article I section 10 states that “No state shall ... keep troops or ships of war in time of peace.”

⁴² Jack F. Leach, *Conscription in the United States: Historical Background* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle Publishing, 1952), 69-70.

⁴³ Leach, *Conscription in the United States*, 96-97.

⁴⁴ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 75.

manpower pool. When this too proved not enough, Congress returned to the debate, eventually proposing an authorization of 80,000 state militiamen to serve the federal government. The length of service was an unprecedented 18 months, and the states were directed to draft if necessary, in order to fill their quotas. As before, regional interests more than any national consciousness would determine voting on the final bill. However, as peace drew near in late 1814 relieved legislators happily tabled the matter.⁴⁵

Victory in 1814 did little to resolve the debate over professional and citizen soldiers. Those pushing a larger national force cited what for them was the obvious need for a professional standing army, noting especially the early reverses in 1812 as evidence that such a body was needed. On the other hand, the supporters of citizen-soldiers pointed to the eventual victory as vindication of the idea that properly led local forces were wholly effective against professional forces, so long as they were competently led. As for conscription, there was no critical reason to discuss the matter in peacetime.⁴⁶

The Regular Army in this period was kept small, even as the United States' population and economy continued to expand. The idea that there was some merit to a national militia, in particular a trained reserve of some kind with standardized organization and federal direction, and paid for by Washington, was received by a divided Congress with little notice. Even the crisis with Mexico in 1837, and the eventual war with the same in 1846 were not enough to push a divided Congress to act. Conscription was considered but rejected by the House of Representatives. In the event, the war with

⁴⁵ Leach, *Conscription in the United States*, 115-18.

⁴⁶ Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 63-77, Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard*, 11-14.

Mexico was fought by an enlarged Regular Army and some 61,000 volunteers, primarily recruited from the South and West. Once again, the prevailing format for fielding an army had proven adequate.⁴⁷

The one important change in the established military model in the first half of the 19th century was the elimination of compulsory militia training in the northern half of the country. Increased citizenship meant the poor and working class dominated the rolls, and what was once a middle-class institution had changed forever. The result was that many of the more affluent citizens simply opted out of training, choosing instead to pay the fines associated with nonattendance. With popular support waning, and an urban population believing the practice to be wasteful, many state governors repealed the ancient statutes requiring training for every citizen, and the compulsory militia system largely ceased to exist in the North. But, while they may have disbanded the system, the right to call the militia itself was not surrendered.⁴⁸

The situation was different with the militia in the South. The region was almost entirely agrarian, and the few training days were typically no drag on the economy. Furthermore, with a growing slave population, the militia and the slave patrol were viewed as essential elements to ensure the prevailing racial balance. Also, martial skills were still very important to many rural whites, often considered to be a bonding

⁴⁷ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 173-189.

⁴⁸ Mahon, *History of the Militia*, 83-86.

mechanism for white southern men. Lastly, militia membership in the Deep South was sometimes a prerequisite for suffrage if a man was of military age.⁴⁹

The Civil War brought to the country the first national conscription acts. The South would use the draft first, a reasonable measure as the weaker of the two foes, but also a curious move for the side that championed states' rights and individual liberty as one of her key motivations for seceding from the Union. The North turned to the draft later in the conflict, but the move was no more popular there. In the event, both sides fought primarily with volunteers, and the outcome was not determined by conscripted forces. However, the relationship of the national government to the states and to individual citizens was changed forever by the war.

The North began the war with the traditional two-tiered format that had been firmly established up to this point. That is, a small regular army supplanted by militia units maintained by the states. When the war began, the initial call from President Abraham Lincoln for 75,000 volunteers for 90 days was met primarily by militia forces sent from the states. Most of the states met their quotas easily, and the majority of the men stepped forward when Lincoln steeled himself and the country for a long war and asked in July 1861 for three-year volunteers. Volunteers eventually furnished 92 percent of the 2.1 million men who served in the Union Army.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861*(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 172-186. See also Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 83.

⁵⁰ Militia numbers are broken down in Mahon, *The History of the Militia*, 97-100. Overall numbers from Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 42.

The South, of course, was not a country and had no army. However, with a nucleus of over 300 officers who had resigned their commissions in the U.S. Army to fight for their home states, as well as a robust volunteer militia system, she set about to build an army. Volunteers streamed forward in the South, just as they did for Lincoln in the North. Volunteer units were raised according to quotas handed down to states according to population and were thus apportioned to counties and cities in much the same way. Volunteers initially proved enough for both sides' manpower needs, but high casualty rates made the less populous Confederacy quickly turn to drafting soldiers. The Conscription Act of April 1862 was primarily designed not to raise new men, but to retain the volunteer forces already in place. The southern government sought to secure the troops whose short-term enlistments would soon expire – in order to enlist them for new three-year terms. The act included all able-bodied white males ages 18 to 35, making them liable for three years of army service, (including those with enlistments about to expire). Three years later, with those terms about to end, the southern Congress passed a law requiring service for the duration of the war.⁵¹

North Carolina's role in the Civil War is a tale of two narratives. On the one hand, the state supplied the most soldiers per capita and the largest number of conscripts to the Confederate armies. At the same time, however, the state was also the scene of some of the most determined resistance to the draft, as well as to other war measures that citizens

⁵¹ Albert B. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), 13, 308. The Conscription Act of 1864, among other measures, retained for the duration all soldiers between the ages of 18 and 45.

felt were equally oppressive.⁵² Paul Escott wrote that while North Carolina “had only about one-ninth of the Confederacy’s white population,” it supplied “one-sixth of its fighting men.”⁵³ But, by 1863 there were thousands of individuals in groups throughout the state resisting the war and service in it. Some of these bands grew large and organized, and they often proved capable of opposing any attempts to subdue or arrest them. Some of these individuals were unionists, and some were opposed to secession, but most who joined these groups did so not due to their personal politics, but mainly because, as William Auman maintains, relatives had written to them in the midst of the privations of the war “imploing them to come home and take care of their families.”⁵⁴ Public relief was described as “totally inadequate,” and desertion and violence spread in the most affected areas.⁵⁵ Groups resisted conscription, kept possessions out of reach of Confederate officials, and worked to hide men who deserted from the army. This struggle, what Auman labeled an “Inner Civil War,” would continue until the end of the conflict.⁵⁶

Resistance in North Carolina was not centrally organized, nor was it confined to one area. While much of the resistance was centered in the mountainous west, there was

⁵² Moore writes that after the Second Draft Act, “public support vanished in some regions.” Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 126.

⁵³ Paul Escott, *Military Necessity: Civil-Military Relations in the Confederacy* (New York: Praeger, 2006), 42. Moore notes that North Carolina supplied 21,348 conscripts to the South, but also had 16,564 men exempt. Both are the largest totals in each category. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 107.

⁵⁴ William T. Auman, *Civil War in the North Carolina Quaker Belt*. (Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., 2014), 58. See also Horace Raper, *William W. Holden: North Carolina’s Political Enigma* (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 46-47.

⁵⁵ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 151.

⁵⁶ Many authors use this term. Auman utilizes it throughout his study. Auman, *Civil War in the North Carolina Quaker Belt*.

turmoil throughout the state. In the western part of the state, resistance was aided by contact with Unionists in neighboring states and made easier by the mountainous terrain. At one time eleven western counties were considered outside the control of the Confederate government. Historian John Barrett wrote that in this region of the state “the conscription act was the most detested” of all the wartime legislation.⁵⁷ There was also resistance in the central Piedmont, where what one correspondent labeled “the Quaker influence” kept the volunteer levels at less than one in five, making the draft particularly harsh.⁵⁸ There was also opposition to both the war and the draft in the eastern part of the state, especially in areas bordering Union-occupied coastlines. By 1864 many of the disaffected areas were outside government control, described by one sheriff as “overawed by deserters.”⁵⁹ This resistance was widespread and threatening, but it was not centrally organized. However, many of these groups did want an end to the war, many of their complaints were the same, and in this at least they had political allies. This evolving peace movement was increasingly represented by William W. Holden, editor of the *Raleigh Standard*, and in this he was opposed by the new governor, Zebulon Vance.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ John Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1963), 183. Barrett described the western counties believing themselves as being loyal to the South, sending units of volunteers to fight early, only to later be oppressed by the State in the same manner they would have expected of a victorious Union.

⁵⁸ Auman, *Civil War in the North Carolina Quaker Belt*, 31.

⁵⁹ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 82. Letter written to Governor Vance.

⁶⁰ Holden was pro-Union before the war, advocating a wait and see attitude, but supported secession after the attack on Fort Sumter. However, one biographer wrote that “his heart was never with the Confederates.” Raper, *William W. Holden*, 40. For anti-union feeling pre-war see 37-42. Holden never claimed to be the leader of the peace movement, arguing that meetings were due to the “spontaneous action of the people,” but his biographers and other historians of North Carolina in this period labeled him the leader of the “Peace Movement.” Quotation from William C. Harris, *William Woods Holden: Firebrand of North Carolina Politics* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1987), 113, 134.

Newly elected in 1862, Governor Vance had already served in the Confederate Army and first supported the war and also conscription, writing that he “acquiesced in it as a great measure of necessity.”⁶¹ But while he never wavered in his support for the Confederate cause, his support for conscription changed with the circumstances of the war. Shortly after taking office, Vance began a running battle with Jefferson Davis and the Confederate authorities over the institution of the draft in North Carolina, a dispute that would last until the end of the conflict in 1865.⁶² While Vance worked to enroll men who resisted the draft, and moved to disarm and arrest deserters where he could, he also later offered amnesty to men who would return to the ranks, also steadily increasing the number of men in the state who were outside the reach of conscription officers.⁶³ Eventually Vance argued almost every point of Southern draft legislation as it affected the state’s citizens – unit choices, exemptions, substitutions, even mistreatment of state anti-secessionists by army conscription personnel – but he did not argue that the draft itself was unlawful. Rather, Vance fully believed that the draft, by the *state* and for the state, was lawful and just. His argument was against the government in Richmond and their agents in North Carolina who were stationed there to oversee conscription.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Harris, *William Woods Holden*, 281. Holden was a critic of the draft from the beginning, writing that the measure would lead to a “military despotism.” Quotation from Harris, *William Woods Holden*, 113.

⁶² Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 279. Also, Escott, *Military Necessity*, 42-43. Holden and his newspaper supported Vance for the office of governor in 1862.

⁶³ Vance later placed even all employees making uniforms and equipment on the state officer list, exempting them from conscription. The issue lost much of its fire with the coming of the events leading up to the end of the war. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 291-292.

⁶⁴ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 279-296. Several correspondents with Vance argued that the men were loyal and would report for the draft on their own terms, often stated as “if allowed to join companies of their choice.” Frontis Johnston, ed. *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 1, 1843-1862* (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1963), 185. Vance writes to Jefferson Davis on this very point in May of 1863, stating that the directive of choice of regiments was unwieldy, in that

Popular support for the draft in the state, however, was a bit more nuanced, and often depended upon one's social status. When private citizens complained to the governor about desertion or resistance among their neighbors, there was often little he could do about it beyond ordering someone to arrest the deserters.⁶⁵ Those in the upper tiers had less to complain about, as the draft laws had been written with the state's welfare in mind, and no one in Richmond thought to draft the entire leadership of the states – lest the Confederacy collapse of its own weight. Still, there was pushback against conscription (and less the war), from influential men in the state besides the governor. Holden was the most prominent of these, but other editors and politicians decried the heavy hand of the draft, all the while being almost always exempt from call-up.⁶⁶ Most of these men publicly supported the war, but complained about the implementation of the draft, with its class centered structure of exemptions and substitutions, especially as the war turned more difficult for the South.⁶⁷

The southern draft soon extended beyond the retention of veteran soldiers. Like all previous drafts, substitutes were initially allowed, but by the “end of 1863 ... price soared to \$ 6,000 in Confederate currency (or \$600 in gold) and was thus clearly

regiments on active service were skeletons, and that Vance believed the units still “in the State would be full to overflowing.” Still, he ends with the comment that if the directive “is an order... I shall certainly comply.” Letter in Joe A. Mobley, ed. *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 2*, 1863 (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1995), 178.

⁶⁵ Johnston, *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 1*, 209-210. In this instance, the correspondent reports to the governor that there are “several” deserters, in addition to “young able bodied men” claiming exemption, and that the sheriff “positively refuses to apprehend any one.” Governor Vance directed that the Militia should arrest “all such.” Holden throughout argued that he never encouraged desertion.

⁶⁶ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 66.

⁶⁷ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 47, 74.

available solely to the rich.”⁶⁸ The Confederate government then prohibited substitutions, instead producing a long list of exemptions. These, like the ability to afford a substitute, were also viewed as class bound and available to the affluent only. Much of the professional and artisan class was exempt, including overseers on many of the larger plantations, in addition to those designated by state governors as holding exempt occupations. As noted, in 1864 the draft was extended to all white males ages 17 to 50, and eventually also even to black slaves, promised freedom if they fought for the South.⁶⁹ Southern states rights ideology seemingly clashed with enforced service, but the government in the South had a much smaller manpower pool to draw from, and thus became much more coercive and centralized with regard to the draft than the Union North.

It was through these more coercive measures that most residents of the South, and North Carolina specifically, experienced the draft. When Governor Vance complained that the state was suffering severe economic hardship from the draft, writing that conscription had taken many “whose labor was ... absolutely necessary to the existence of the women and children left behind,” he was supported by a large section of the populace.⁷⁰ Typical of the many letters he received from serving soldiers, one veteran wrote that “a mans [sic] first duty is to provide for his own household.”⁷¹ Vance and

⁶⁸ Moore gives a range between \$ 1,500 and \$ 3,000 but cites advertisements for as high as \$ 10,000. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 29-30.

⁶⁹ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, engages the issue of exemptions throughout his work, but especially 52-113.

⁷⁰ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 43.

⁷¹ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 46.

other leaders received numerous letters from soldiers asking that they be excused from service and allowed to return home to alleviate suffering.⁷²

This inequality in the draft fed the large and public resistance movement. Many public meetings were held in the Piedmont and in the counties of the west, some of which adopted resolutions urging a negotiated settlement to the war. Holden's newspaper published these resolutions, but he continued to use his newspaper to "discourage desertions and encourage volunteering."⁷³ And while there was in fact some Unionist thought in the state, most of the resistance was to service in the army, driven by conscription. Letters to Vance and Holden both mentioned widespread resistance to the draft, in many cases either tacitly supported or at least unmolested by the local and sometimes state authorities. Typical of these letters was one written in December of 1862, describing "callution [sic] between the Malitia [sic] Capt & some of his favorites" in order to elude conscription.⁷⁴ As the end of the war approached, one man summed up in a letter what he believed was the prevailing opinion of his neighbors. He wrote: "I have not known a man in the last two years [1863 and 1864] who would not willingly have given all he had and would have pledged all that his friends had to keep out of the army ... I tell you plainly that the people of the Confederate states would welcome with ovations any power upon earth that was able to deliver them from Conscription

⁷² Escott, *Military Necessity*, 53. See other examples in Johnston, *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 1*, especially 341, 399, and 425. Letters were written to Vance and anyone else the soldiers believed could assist them.

⁷³ Raper, *William W. Holden*, 47.

⁷⁴ Johnston, *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 1*, 442. Letter is from George Richards of Union County to Governor Vance.

impressments and taxation and the other ills imposed upon them by those who have deceived them.”⁷⁵

In addition to the resistance of the populace, Governor Vance himself continued throughout the course of the war to selectively defy conscription authorities in Richmond. As the war dragged on, in addition to the enlarged militia and civil service rolls, the governor had placed even those making equipment and uniforms for the army on the list of those exempt from service.⁷⁶ Still proclaiming support for the southern cause, he worked to exclude many from further service in the Confederate Army. North Carolina courts also challenged conscription authorities in Richmond on the matter of substitution, ruling that a man having once hired a substitute was not subject to the draft in the event his substitute became subject to the draft law.⁷⁷ Once again, the governor seemed to support the draft only when it suited the state.

Vance received numerous letters from citizens outlining their views on the draft, influencing his decisions on who should be excluded from conscription. By 1864 North Carolina listed some 16,564 men in exempt occupations throughout the state.⁷⁸ Many complained that the exemptions were hurting the ability of the state to provide soldiers, and thus able men who could be spared were exempt while others who would be sorely

⁷⁵ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 70-74. Quotation on page 74, letter from Letter from Emsley Beckerdite to editor and politician Marmaduke Robins.

⁷⁶ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 288.

⁷⁷ Mobley, *Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 2*, 154-156. The case in question saw a substitute hired become draft eligible because of the extension of the age range, and the Confederate Government therefore sought to draft the formerly exempt man. The ruling was made by the North Carolina Supreme Court.

⁷⁸ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 95-97. Escott, *Military Necessity*, puts the number at 14,675., 43.

missed were instead taken. One citizen wrote to Vance that “Our soldiers can’t understand why so many young magistrates are permitted to remain at home, and especially so many militia officers there being no militia and two sets of officers.”⁷⁹ Other counties reported that there were no more men to give to the Confederacy, writing to the governor that “(T)here are not now men enough in the County for efficient police duty” adding that “the correct minded men ... have already gone to camp.”⁸⁰ Nonetheless, Vance continued to publicly support the Confederacy, and explained that the war was worthy of support so long as the government in Richmond observed a “Constitutional war policy.”⁸¹ Historian Albert Moore wrote that Vance thought himself “the weather vane of the State,” and warned Richmond that not heeding his advice “may bring forth ‘the waters of insubordination.’”⁸²

After the war, Holden, the state’s foremost advocate for peace, was appointed governor by President Andrew Johnson, holding the post for only a short period. He was however eventually elected governor in 1868. Leading the state until his dismissal in 1870, Holden’s tenure as governor was marked especially by his troubles with the KKK, the issue that eventually led to his impeachment. But Holden also worked to cement the state once again as a member of the Union, casting the recent Confederacy as “one of the most corrupt and rigorous despotisms that ever existed in the world.”⁸³ He was

⁷⁹ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 67.

⁸⁰ Johnston, *Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance Vol. 1*, 200. Letter is dated 18 September 1862. Holden’s newspaper similarly printed many letters from citizens suffering due to the war. See especially Harris 128-129.

⁸¹ Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 283.

⁸² Moore, *Conscription and Conflict*, 282.

⁸³ Harris, *William Woods Holden*, 169.

impeached by a newly elected Democratic House in December of 1870 and returned to newspaper work, dying in 1892.

Holden's legacy as a supporter of resistance and campaigner for peace, however, was either consciously forgotten or largely ignored in the wake of the Civil War. The same could be said for the opposition and tacit acceptance of the desertion that existed throughout the state during the conflict. Some regions chose a selective memory, with the western counties justifying their challenge to the draft by citing the "unduly large portions of volunteers" who had previously joined, arguing that they had little else to give.⁸⁴ In the central piedmont the issue of resistance would wait until the next century for a scholarly investigation into the widespread discord, but a letter from the period describes the people as having assumed "a neutral position" as early as 1862, one that allowed a focus on the middle ground and not on the extremes of either side.⁸⁵ In the east, the population existed in what one historian labeled a "negotiated neutrality," alternately ruled by the Union detachments to the east and the Confederate forces from their west. As for Holden, one biographer writes that after his death the "general public continued to blame Holden for their [postwar] ... racial and economic trials," but his role in supporting the peace movement gets little mention⁸⁶ The eulogies at his death largely

⁸⁴ Careful recall of what Jeanette Keith describes as "the glorious Confederate past" is symbolic of public remembrance of the war. Keith, *Rich Man's War*, 34. Western counties routinely publicly expressed their patriotism and had Civil War veterans regularly participated in memorial activities and parades during the First World War and after. See, for example, *Brevard News*, 14 September 1917, 1.

⁸⁵ Escott, *Military Necessity*, 19.

⁸⁶ Raper, *William W. Holden*, 251. Holden biographer William Harris notes that Holden "never expressed regret for his role in the Civil War or in Reconstruction" but that his postwar stance would be to "take pride in his suppression of the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction and the protection he had given to the rights and liberties of all North Carolinians." Harris, *William Woods Holden*, 316.

ignore his dissent, instead describing a “life of service,” noting instead his “powerful political influence during the Civil War and Reconstruction Era.”⁸⁷ Ignoring the resistance in the recent war was the easier path for a citizenry that gained nothing through continued debate.

The Civil War, both North and South, sanctioned the right of the central government to draft a military force. While the familiar local / national format of raising armies remained, the national government now had the authority, duly sanctioned by the law and buttressed by successful court challenges, to compel men to serve at the president’s direction. In addition, the Union victory greatly contributed to the growth of nationalism in the North, and reconstruction legislation quickly established the primacy of the national government over the state government in many important areas of citizenship.

After the Civil War the army reverted once again to the small, volunteer, peacetime constabulary the nation was accustomed to. In this period of increased industrialization throughout the world, some thought the vast increases in international commerce would keep nations from war. While the U.S. Army was tasked with occupying the post-war South, battling the last of the belligerent Indians in the West, and occasional action in strikes and industrial disputes, politicians looked to keep army funding low and trust in the Navy to protect our shores. While most of the nations of

⁸⁷ Harris, *William Woods Holden*, 318.

Europe maintained standing armies of conscripted soldiers; the 27,000-man U.S. army atrophied.⁸⁸

There were those in the postwar years who sought a more European style conscription system for the United States. Ideas included Universal Military Training (UMT), which would make all males of a certain age liable for a short active stint in the army, followed by a subsequent attachment to a reserve force. Supporters argued that such a system would ensure both an adequate standing force and a trained reserve, controlled by the national government, for use in times of crisis.⁸⁹ Other proposals suggested the organized volunteer militia (now labeled the National Guard in most states) constitute the reserve force for the “Regular Army.” The compulsory militia, in decline before the Civil War, was now ignored almost entirely by the states.

The war against Spain in 1898, and the subsequent operations in the Pacific and the Caribbean brought the manning of the army once again to the center of the political debate. The flood of volunteers for this conflict (ten times the number seen in the first six weeks of the Civil War) meant that no discussion was needed as to how to raise a fighting force this time.⁹⁰ When the war ended the United States once again released the

⁸⁸ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, especially 253-292.

⁸⁹ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 120.

⁹⁰ Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 127. The War Department was once again overwhelmed and unprepared to equip and train such a large number of men, just as in the beginning of the Civil War.

volunteers, increased the size of the Regular Army, and looked to the oceans and the Navy to protect the country from an increasingly militarized Europe.⁹¹

The war did bring increased scrutiny to the War Department. While just as before, the country had won another war by resorting to volunteer citizen soldiers led by professionals, it was the inability to efficiently mobilize such a large group of soldiers that prompted Washington once again to request a national reserve force, eventually passing the Militia Act of 1903. This bill, also known as the Dick Act, designated the National Guard as the ready reserve, to be called to service before any volunteer formations.⁹² This act gave the federal government direction over the organized militia, and asserted that the primary role of the National Guard was national defense. Shortly thereafter the “federalized” Guard was authorized for use outside United States borders. Finally, the Volunteer Act of 1914 made some key changes to the system of inducting soldiers into the army, most importantly on placing individual soldiers into existing units and the exclusion of vital occupations from military service in time of war.

In the wake of the Volunteer Act, passed in April of 1914, the nation did not have to wait long to once again engage in a discussion of the responsibility of the people in time of war. While the U.S. watched the nations of Europe fight, military and political leaders in the country debated the country’s proper role in the war. While the conflict occupied the front pages, and military preparedness was debated endlessly in certain

⁹¹ European armies in this period, with the exception of Britain, were mostly conscript armies. Terms of service were different, and some elements of the populations were not liable for military service, but the major European powers maintained large standing armies and trained reserves of citizen-soldiers.

⁹² Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 140. See also Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 320-324.

circles, most Americans simply wanted to stay out of the fight. However, in April 1917 the United States declared war, and President Woodrow Wilson soon requested that Congress pass The Selective Service Act. History had furnished the precedent, most citizens believed in the right of the government to require personal service, and the government enacted their plan to do so.

CHAPTER III

MANHOOD AND SERVICE

North Carolina exhibited almost no support for the war before the U.S. entry into it, and little more immediately after. While state officials supported the Wilson Administration, the evidence shows that if support for the war existed in this early period, it did not manifest itself on the pages of the state's newspapers or in the correspondence of state officials or notable citizens. However, as stated previously, the war cannot be examined as a fixed event, and it is a misreading of the evidence to do so. Support for the war expanded as the U.S. war effort grew, and support for service grew along with it. As draft calls increased, and as more men were asked to serve, the support grew. As the singles became dozens and then hundreds, and especially as American troops began to engage on the battlefield, this support intensified.

The measure of this support was in full display on the pages of the newspapers and sometimes other places throughout the small communities scattered across North Carolina. Lists were published for everything pertaining to the war and an individual's contribution to it. War Bonds, War Savings Stamps, Red Cross Drives and other fundraisers, and even the names of potential draftees were often on public display. The men who would fight the war found their names listed for each step of the process, from registrant to enlistee, and from slacker to deserter. Just as their families had their lives in

the war played out in public, so too did the draftees. This overtly public accounting meant that the war was supported – or not – in the open, leaving the men and their families susceptible to a particular type of influence. Shame, honor, public reputation and community assessment all played a role in the war, and were throughout cited as the building blocks of one’s manhood and his devotion to service, available for everyone to see in this very public war.

The First World War affected North Carolina in many ways, especially the men who would eventually serve their country in uniform. These individuals, in addition to their families and the communities from which they came, experienced the war primarily through the efforts of the state and the nation to induce them to serve. Many of these men, civilians all, saw as their first duty the need to stay with their families. Their communities generally agreed with them and worked to exempt many of them from service. North Carolina had the highest percentage of dependency deferments in the nation. But the men who did not get deferments largely came forward when called, becoming a distinct second group, and thousands of them eventually served in uniform. Those that ultimately served often found equally compelling reasons to do so, joining a larger community of their fellow soldiers fighting for the nation. The local communities in the state would support both the soldiers and the “stayers,” thereby maintaining both the war effort and their own local homefront at the same time. The ability to steer this seemingly divided course was possible only by appealing to the principles the people held in common. These common ideals; the essential blocks of character expected of

everyone, honor, duty, service, virtue – guided these communities and individuals through the crisis of war.

This chapter contributes to the historiography of honor and duty in the South by exploring these same concepts, the notions of shame, duty and honor affecting the men who were potential soldiers in this conflict. It also necessarily examines the people who were connected to them and who influenced their decisions, the families and communities they were linked to, and how these ideas inspired them as they negotiated the draft in North Carolina during the war.

The draftees lived within a system of shared values and core beliefs where an individual's actions were greatly influenced by those of the community. Their standing in the community, their individual reputations, these were formed and shaped by their actions. Furthermore, Wyatt-Brown argues that one's manhood was intertwined with his sense of honor and shame, and that public perception of reputation and "humiliation played a major role in this period of southern life."¹ Negotiating the draft and service in the war, each of these men felt a unique pull on their individual sense of right and wrong, especially as it was perceived by those around them. When tested, they looked to fulfill their roles within the larger group, first to their families and the social order in their individual hamlets and hometowns, and in this instance eventually to the army and to the nation that asked them to serve. Appeals to their duty and honor, to their manhood - the concepts that made up their core values – confronted those who stayed and those who

¹ Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *A Warring Nation: Honor, Race and Humiliation in America and Abroad* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 126.

served with difficult choices. As sons, husbands and fathers, and eventually as soldiers, these men navigated the draft while attempting to keep their principles and place in the community intact, even as that community evolved around them. Where those deferred stayed home, with the sanction of the community, the drafted men went to war, also with the backing of their fellow citizens. Governed by the shared sense of principles and community each man held, serving in a way they believed worthy of their individual notions of manhood, these men could inhabit these distinctly different stations with their individual concepts of duty and honor intact.

Historians are increasingly more interested in exploring the United States and the First World War, but many of the essential works exploring the war and the home front understandably examine the South only as a part of the author's larger focus. Where these broader studies discuss conscription, even when critiquing the inequalities and prejudice of the draft overall, they conclude reasonably that the goal of the draft was to raise a fighting force, something the draft did in fact accomplish. As Jeanette Keith writes, the draft "indisputably did what it was designed to do: put an army in the field in France."²

The key work examining conscription and the South is Jeanette Keith's *Rich Man's War Poor Man's Fight*. This chapter disputes her overall conclusions. While I agree with her view that there was almost no support for U.S. involvement before the declaration of war, and that shortly following the declaration this changed very little, I argue that support for the war grew exponentially over the course of the conflict. As

² Keith, *Rich Man's War*, 57.

stated earlier, public support for the war cannot be studied as a singular event. It is wrong to measure public attitude at any single point in time over the course of the conflict and attempt to use that single appraisal as the sentiment overall. The war, and the nation's place in it, changed with time, and this evolving effort must be examined to get a true picture of public support of the war. The reasons that men registered or resisted, showed up for examination, reported for their induction – or not - all had to do with their individual views of honor and shame, of right and wrong, of the punishments and rewards and they perceived them. While actions early on may have been driven by fear of punishment, this was eventually replaced by a deep-rooted support throughout the state by the end of the conflict. Some of Keith's other assertions will be explored in later chapters. This chapter primarily attempts to examine the public nature of war and the draft, considering in detail how individual citizens of North Carolina experienced the draft, from draftee to board member, how they responded to the appeals from their leaders and communities, and how the expectations of duty and service evolved, for both individual and for their communities, over the duration of the war.

When Germany returned to unrestricted submarine warfare in February of 1917, and President Wilson asked for a Declaration of War, Congress quickly approved the measure even though some important figures were opposed.³ One of these was Claude Kitchin of North Carolina, Majority Leader in the House of Representatives. Kitchin

³ Unrestricted submarine warfare convinced the administration that war was inevitable, but the Zimmerman Telegram, the message from the German Foreign Secretary ordering the German ambassador in Mexico City to incite Mexico to "make war" on the United States, was the key to convincing the nation that Germany was a threat to the United States. Wilson's message to Congress in Congressional Record, 65th Congress, 1st session, April 2, 1917, 102-104.

made an impassioned speech in which he maintained that the U.S. had no compelling reason to go to war in Europe. Among other arguments, he posited that the country was not threatened by Germany, and that “nothing in that cause, nothing in that quarrel, has or does involve a moral or equitable or material interest in, or obligation of, our Government or our people,”⁴ The remainder of the North Carolina congressional delegation, however, had only one dissenter in their support of the measure, and the declaration passed easily, with only fifty voting against. However, David Kennedy maintained that some at the time “felt that those figures understated the true extent of congressional opposition to the war.”⁵ Kitchin’s no vote, which some of his friends feared might be “the ruin of his political career,” was hardly the first time the majority leader had defied the president and voted his conscience, but it was the final act in a long effort to keep the country from entering the war.⁶

Kitchin had been in Congress since 1901 and was initially delighted with the election of Woodrow Wilson in 1912. Historian Alex Arnett described the selection of Wilson as a “joyful event” to the congressman, writing that Kitchin possessed “an almost

4 Quotation is from Alex Arnett, *Claude Kitchin and the Wilson War Policies* (Boston: Little Brown, 1937), 234. Full speech pp. 227-235. Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi, a supporter of conscription, explained the low recruiting numbers by describing the war as “a very sacred fight, but ... for an abstract principle.” Keith, 43.

The key source for the national debate over the draft is John Whiteclay Chamber’s *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America* (New York: Free Press, 1987).

Numbers vary slightly depending on the source, but the U.S. Army of the time numbered some 180,000 men when the National Guard units were included.

⁵ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 23. Most of the local press in North Carolina favored the declaration. One newspaper described Kitchin’s opposition as opposed to the consensus but noted that “he thought he should vote his convictions regardless of the consequences.” *Roanoke News*, 12 April 1917, 1.

⁶ Quotation is from Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 225.

naïve faith in this prophet of the New Freedom.”⁷ Kitchin was a devoted friend of William Jennings Bryan, a man who also had high hopes for the Wilson presidency, and the congressman counted himself among the number of southern agrarian politicians whom Jeanette Keith described as “champions of the dirt farmers who made up the majority of the southern white population.”⁸ The two men believed in many of the same objectives regarding domestic policy, and in this early period agreed “more often than not.”⁹ This cordial relationship changed somewhat with the coming of war to Europe in August of 1914.

Throughout 1914 and into 1915 Kitchin worked to keep the U.S. as far away from the war as possible. Robert Zieger labeled him as a leading figure in the group of Americans that believed the nation “should turn away from Europe’s madness.”¹⁰ He opposed loans to all belligerent countries, backed Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan in his opposition to loans for France, and generally voted to remain as impartial as was possible regarding the warring nations.¹¹ He also voted against what he felt were overly large expansions of the military, writing to Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels that he supported “a wise and adequate naval programme,” not one automatically conforming to the wishes of some ardent Republicans.¹² John Milton Cooper writes that Kitchin also used his position to “stack the military and naval affairs committees with like-minded

⁷ Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 40.

⁸ Keith, *Rich Man’s War*, 17.

⁹ Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 42. See also Keith, *Rich Man’s War*, 24-25. Keith wrote “Southern agrarians in Congress were responsible for about half of the legislation that earned Woodrow Wilson his reputation for liberalism.”

¹⁰ Zieger, *America’s Great War*, 19.

¹¹ Zieger, *America’s Great War*, 137.

¹² Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 53-55. Quotation from 54.

representatives, who bottled up the administration's new defense program."¹³ He also opposed preparedness advocates like Theodore Roosevelt and General Leonard Wood, men he thought too close to the munitions industry and the banking houses of the "industrial Northeast," believing the preparedness movement would bring the nation closer to war.¹⁴

Wilson early on shared Kitchin's wish to maintain U.S. neutrality and keep the U.S. out of the armed conflict, but his reversal on the preparedness issue brought the two men into conflict. When Wilson offered his preparedness program in his annual message to Congress in 1915, Alex Arnett described Kitchin as "brokenhearted" over the president's reversal; an angry Kitchin labeled the measure "hysterical," and submitted that he would not guide the legislation through the House.¹⁵ Instead, Kitchin suggested that the focus be on solely defensive armaments that would not risk our involvement in the war, supporting increased numbers of torpedo boats and submarines for the navy, in addition to more naval mines and improved coastal defenses.¹⁶

Kitchin continued to vote his conscience whenever war measures appeared before Congress, even at the risk of alienating the people he was chosen to represent. One local editorial written in opposition stated that "Mr. Claude Kitchin makes a bitter mistake in

¹³ John Milton Cooper *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) 298.

¹⁴ Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 47, 52-54. Kennedy, *Over Here*, 107. Preparedness was a fluid idea which changed over time and depended upon who was defining it, but in general meant an expansion of the nation's military strength through men, equipment, and expanded training ability.

¹⁵ Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 68. John C. Crighton, *Missouri and the World War, 1914-1917: A Study in Public Opinion* (Columbia Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1947) 123.

¹⁶ Justus Doenecke, *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of America's Entry into World War I* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011) 149-150.

gauging the sentiments of his constituents... this neighborhood is strongly for a vigorous army and navy program.”¹⁷ Another writer offered that Kitchin “has probably known all along that the majority of his constituents do not agree with his expressions, but that has made little difference to him.”¹⁸ Elsewhere in the nation there was hostility to Kitchin’s failure to support the administration’s new position. When Kitchin voted against the Continental Army Plan in 1916, the *New York World* suggested he surrender “his claims to the leadership.”¹⁹ Besides his fears over treading too close to the war, Kitchin worried over funding any defense spending increases, fearing that they would appropriate scarce resources, and he labeled them motivated by “jingoism and manufacturers of war equipment.”²⁰ The act passed despite his opposition, and Kitchin opined that “many – a large majority – will fling away their convictions on this question to please the President.”²¹ Some thought his opposition to Wilson might cost Kitchin his seat in Congress, but his voters largely disagreed with the newspaper editors and returned him to Congress rather easily in 1916, winning election after defeating a selected challenger in the Democratic primary by a margin of “nearly five to one.”²²

¹⁷ *Pinehurst Outlook*, 11 December 1915, 8.

¹⁸ *Washington Daily News*, 26 April 1916, 2.

¹⁹ Quotation from Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 89. There were other calls in the press for Kitchin to support Wilson or step aside, including from the *New York Times*, 13 February 1916, 1. Kitchin did not vote against all bills which increased military spending, such as the aforementioned increases in coastal defenses and the National Defense Act of 1916, which made some organizational changes and allowed for a modest increase in the size of the military.

²⁰ Nancy Gentle Ford, *The Great War and America: Civil-Military Relations during World War I* (London: Praeger, 2008) 21.

²¹ *Twice-a-Week Dispatch*, 30 November 1915, 1.

²² Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 80. Kitchin was also returned to his seat in 1918 without difficulty.

It was in the wake of the recent election that Kitchin voted against the Declaration of War. However, this did not mean that he was unsupportive of the war effort. Kitchin, reported one newspaper, stated “that when war is declared he will unswervingly, unhesitatingly and unselfishly do everything in his power to bring it to a successful conclusion.”²³ Jeanette Keith writes that Kitchin, like many other southern congressmen who initially opposed the war, was to “put in long hours and loyal service to the Wilson administration during the war.”²⁴ As Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee he shepherded legislation to pay for the war through the House, indicating almost immediately his and Congress’ determination to fund the war by reporting to Wilson that first vote on the huge war loan of April 1917 would have been unanimous if all been present.²⁵ Throughout the war Kitchin sought to pay for the war as much as possible through increased taxes. He fought for increased corporate taxes, to install a progressive luxury tax, and eventually to raise postal rates and income taxes.²⁶ After all, Kitchin told his fellow members, “no man who has to pay a dollar of the tax in this bill who remains at home while the boys are at the front should protest against it.”²⁷

In the period just after his second inauguration, Wilson and his and his advisors began considering how the country would go about managing the war. While there was initially some question as to whether the United States would actually send more than a

²³ *Wilmington Dispatch*, 9 April 1917, 1.

²⁴ Keith, *Rich Man’s War*, 55.

²⁵ *Roanoke Beacon*, 20 April 1917, 1.

²⁶ Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 265, 259-261, 256-259. Kitchin would have chosen to fund the war as much as possible through taxes rather than war loans, terming the loans a “cruel and cowardly” burden upon future generations. However, he still determined to fund the war however needed, and he co-sponsored four separate Liberty Loans. See Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 252-254.

²⁷ Quotation from Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 253.

token force to Europe, the ever-changing political and military landscape eventually convinced the Wilson Administration to prepare for more than a symbolic military presence in Europe.²⁸ Wilson initially favored a volunteer force; as did the majority in the House of Representatives, but recruiting numbers fell woefully short. According to Frederick Palmer, the army signed up 4,355 men in the first 10 days after the declaration, and only 32,000 by April 24th, totals “poorer than ... in the Spanish War or the Civil War.” Clearly, volunteerism would not be enough.²⁹

Public backing for the war effort at this point was difficult to gauge in North Carolina, especially following the re-election of such anti-war figures such as Kitchin, but the press was largely behind the administration. However, there seemed little evidence thus far for public support of conscription. What support existed was for the volunteer force that was not forming quickly enough. H.Q. Alexander, head of the North Carolina Farmers Union, sent the entire state congressional delegation a letter condemning conscription.³⁰ Other letters in opposition reached them too. One North

²⁸ There were those in Congress and the administration that believed the United States may not actually have to send soldiers to fight in Europe. See Frederick Palmer's *Newton D. Baker: America at War, Vol. 1* (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1931), 108-109, 120, and Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 191.

In March 1917 the French ambassador in Washington described the aid needed from the U.S. as “mainly on the sea and with credits and supplies.” The only American soldiers needed were “a detachment for sentimental reasons.” Similar views were expressed by visiting British and French delegations in the early months of 1917. Josephus Daniels, *The Wilson Era: Years of War and After* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1946), 25, 52. The *New York Tribune* on 4 April 1917 voiced the opinion on their front page that a “small army” would suffice, as the allies were obviously winning the war. As late as May the discussion in Washington still centered on a small number of soldiers, Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 144-148. Both political and military factors would eventually change this equation.

²⁹ Palmer, *Newton D. Baker, Vol. 1*, 145. The army continued to accept volunteers until December of 1917, after which time all manpower needs were met by conscription. By wars' end drafted men made up over 2.8 million, or about 67% of the total of 4,185,220.

³⁰ Jeanette Keith, “Politics of Southern Draft Resistance, 1917-1918. Class, Race and Conscription in the Rural South.” *JAH* March 2001, 1336.

Carolina minister wrote to Congressman Edwin Yates Webb that the people of the region were “sad at having to go to war,” and Webb received numerous other examples in this same vein.³¹ Where newspapers weighed in on the matter, most expressed support for President Wilson, but the prevailing idea of any U.S. role was one of a small army and a small U.S. footprint in the war. Most were of the same opinion as the *Watauga Democrat*, which noted that it was “hardly probable that the United States would take a consciously active part in the war if war should be declared.”³² Cass W. Gilbert of the *New York Tribune* went even farther, writing that the thought of sending a large contingent of troops overseas was a “phantasy.”³³ But in the absence of a substantial number of volunteers, the Wilson administration moved forward with conscription.

Congress passed the Selective Service Act on May 18, 1917. Kitchin voted against it, hoping still to field a volunteer army, but reiterated his vow to support the war if Congress passed the measure.³⁴ Wilson stated publicly that conscription was the “most equitable way to raise a force,” a feeling echoed by others in the administration, most especially Newton Baker and Josephus Daniels, the secretaries of War and the Navy respectively. Wilson had avoided premature talk of a draft, but there was nonetheless a plan for such an eventuality. Secretary of War Baker knew of the army’s support for conscription, and had a bill ready when the president made his request.³⁵ The bill called

³¹ Keith, *Politics of Southern Draft Resistance*, 1338.

³² *Watauga Democrat*, 8 February 1917.

³³ Thomas Fleming, *The Illusion of Victory: America in World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 29.

³⁴ Congressman Edwin Yates Webb was the only other representative from North Carolina to oppose the measure.

³⁵ Palmer, *Newton D. Baker, Vol. 1*, 184-185. Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 180.

for an increase in the size of the Regular Army and the National Guard to around 900,000 men all told, to be obtained through the enlistment of volunteers. In addition, the act directed the army to raise a force through a selective draft, the new *National Army*, with 500,000 men authorized immediately.³⁶

With the passing of the Selective Service Act, the Wilson administration had the legal means for raising the army, and the plan formulated in Washington was initiated. As with anything of this significance, newspapers followed the debate in Washington and announced the decision. Some were more supportive than others. The *Wilmington Dispatch* headline read: “Selective Draft At Last Triumphs, Nation Will Now Raise A Great Army.”³⁷ The possibility of the bill, including language and details of some of the debates, had been public reading for some time, so the passage of the act was not really a surprise. Still, most reports were rather ordinary, primarily giving the specifics of the registration itself. These details, and the overall scope of the draft itself, were primarily the work of Judge Advocate General Enoch H. Crowder, soon to be appointed Provost Marshal General (PMG), the officer responsible for overseeing the draft from his headquarters in Washington D.C. John Whiteclay Chambers would later write that Crowder, “more than any other individual ... created the modern American Selective

There was some support for an amendment to try the volunteer system first, and then revisit the question of conscription if the response was lacking, but Wilson visited Congress and scotched the idea. Arnett, *Claude Kitchin*, 247-248.

For Daniels’ support of the draft see Daniels, *The Wilson Era*, 160-161.

³⁶ John Dickinson, *The Building of an Army: A Detailed Account of Legislation, Administration and Opinion in the United States, 1915-1920* (New York: The Century Co., 1922), 57-58. The 500,00 was soon changed to 687,000 for the first call.

³⁷ *Wilmington Dispatch*, 29 April 1917, 1.

Service System.”³⁸ Simply put, the plan was to catalog and examine all the men within the given age group, select the men to be drafted, and ship them to camp for training.

The first step was to register the estimated 10 million or so men in the nation that fell within the ages of twenty-one to thirty.³⁹ Newspapers carried details of the upcoming registration to the communities throughout the state.⁴⁰ In North Carolina election precincts were used to register the men at some 800 sites across the state, after which registration boards were set up either by county or for units of population of 30,000 or above where needed.⁴¹ The broad outlines were relayed from Crowder’s office in Washington, which assigned quotas, forwarded directives, and sometimes interpreted the finer points of the draft legislation to pertinent officials. The legwork, however, was largely left to the states, represented by the state governor on one side and the local boards on the other. This effort to draft an army, to harness the state’s scattered communities, required at its head someone with a special mix of administrative energy and rhetorical charm, a post suited for North Carolina’s recently elected governor, Thomas Bickett.⁴²

³⁸ Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 180.

³⁹ Population estimates were derived both from the Census Bureau and from statistics provided by private insurance companies. See example of table in U.S. Provost Marshal General, *Second Report to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System*. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919) 181. (Hereafter PMG 2nd Report)

⁴⁰ Details regarding who, where, when and how were printed in newspapers before the event. See for instance *Brevard News*, 25 May 1917.

⁴¹ North Carolina formed 109 boards in her 100 counties. *PMG 2nd Report*, 562-565.

⁴² For a brief summary on the general makeup of the local boards see Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 181-182. See also U.S. Provost Marshal General, *Report to the Secretary Of War on the First Draft Under the Selective Service Act, 1917* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917) 6-9. (Hereafter PMG 1st Report) Most of the registration details were in place before the act became law, so much so that the PMG stated in his report that the registration could have taken place as early as 25 May 1917. The PMG estimated that nationwide the boards themselves comprised 12,000 members with a supporting staff of some 125,000. The first registration of men aged 21-31 inclusive; saw 9,586,508 (later amended to

Bickett, elected into office in 1916, was a skilled orator and speechwriter who took to the task of supporting the war, and conscription itself, with enthusiasm.⁴³ Bickett recognized the role of the public sphere in harnessing support for the war effort, and many of his public statements are studies in how to use the language of duty, honor, and shame to persuade men to serve their country.⁴⁴ His particular style is in evidence in early on, where he draws upon the state's historical memory, writing "I appeal with confidence to the patriotic manhood of the State; and I expect a response worthy of the sons of the fathers who laid down their lives in order that we might be free."⁴⁵ His address to the state before the first registration, titled "The Day and its Duties," describes a "day whereon a mighty nation is to register its consecration to selfless service in the cause of universal justice and abiding peace. The day is destined to loom large in history, and will be forever linked with a world wide acceptance of the rights of men first declared at Philadelphia and made secure at Yorktown." He continued, noting that men who registered would record their names as "champion[s] of justice to all men and of peace for all time."⁴⁶ Bickett remained a constant presence in the public support for the war, always filling his addresses with the notions of duty and sacrifice.

9,925,751) registered across the nation and territories, with 208,430 in North Carolina. PMG 2nd Report, 396.

Bickett elected in 1916 with roughly same margin as Wilson – 58%.

⁴³ Bickett privately argued against expanding the draft in September of 1918 to the ages of to 18 and 45, stating that the "country was asking for boys..." Publicly, however, he never wavered in his support for what he called "full sacrifice." Bickett, *Public Letters*, 348.

⁴⁴ Bickett's use of shame as an influence is perhaps best illustrated in the later episodes of desertion in Ashe County in the Summer of 1918.

⁴⁵ "A Proclamation by the Governor." May 21, 1917. Sarah Lemmon, *North Carolina's Role in the First World War* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1975) 19.

⁴⁶ "The Day And Its Duties. An Appeal By The Governor." May 26, 1917. Military Collection, WWI # 3, Box 5, Folder 14, NCSA.

Governor Bickett's support for the war, and for the "selfless service" he advocated, heightened his interest in conscription. Throughout the war he kept up a regular correspondence with draft officials in Crowder's office and other individuals in the War Department, both making suggestions and occasionally asking for judgements or clarifications of the parameters of the draft. From 1917 to 1919 scores of telegrams were exchanged between Bickett and various officials and officers.⁴⁷ In addition, Bickett made dozens of public pronouncements supporting the war and the draft, corresponding regularly with national newspapers, especially the New York Times and the New York World.⁴⁸ His support for the war was such that he eventually wired Crowder to ask that his son be called to active duty.⁴⁹

The preparations for the first countrywide registration, scheduled for June 5, 1917, saw articles printed in every newspaper, as well as posters distributed throughout the state by county sheriffs. While both sometimes mentioned registration as a man's duty, most of the newspaper entries were simply informational. All very similar, the articles mentioned the need to register and informed the public of the punishment should they fail to do so. The notice from *The Lexington Dispatch* is typical, copied from the same script, "All Men 21 – 30 Are Required To Register," followed by details of the registration and a warning that "Failure to do so will result in One Year in the

⁴⁷ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 323-390. Several others not published are in the National Archives, RG163, NARA.

⁴⁸ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 346.

⁴⁹ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 342.

Penitentiary.”⁵⁰ Another piece from a Scotland County newspaper urges eligible men to “see to it that nothing keeps [you] from the registration booths.”⁵¹

The posters were more distinct. Designed locally, most reminded readers of the upcoming registration, describing who had to register, when, and the penalty for failing to do so.⁵² Some posters named the members of the local registration board, some listed registration addresses, and some had other details, but while the placards all varied, the overwhelming majority did not emphasize a patriotic need to spread democracy, nor did they encourage bravery and sacrifice. Rather, the thrust at this early stage was on the need for conforming to the letter of the law. The notice from Stanly County is representative of the tone of most: “Registration is a public duty. For those not responsive to the sense of this duty, the penalty of imprisonment, not fine, is provided in the draft act.”⁵³ Every man of draft age was to register on the given date at a given place.

The fact that these early notices focused primarily on the legal aspects of conscription and not on the cause for which these men might eventually have to fight is hardly surprising.⁵⁴ After all, none of these men, neither the officials tasked with implementing the draft nor those men who were within the range of eligibility had experienced anything like this before.⁵⁵ Reminders of the penalty for not registering,

⁵⁰ *The Lexington Dispatch*, 31 May 1917, 1.

⁵¹ From *Scotland County Gazette*, Military Collection, WW1 #3, Box 5, Folder 24, NCSA.

⁵² Some posters described registration for the “Selective Draft Act,” some for “The Army,” and a couple for “The War.” Military Collection, WWI # 3, Box 5, Folder 20, NCSA.

⁵³ Registration Day Posters, Stanly County, Military Collection, WWI # 3, Box 5, Folder 20, NCSA.

⁵⁴ The posters, designed by the sheriffs, nearly all note the punishments more prominently than do the news announcements.

⁵⁵ As noted earlier, there were of course some who remembered the draft in the Civil War, but Crowder and his staff had done everything they could think of to make the two events different.

rather than endorsing the much loftier notions for which the president requested the country to go to war, would certainly have a better chance at achieving the desired result of a successful registration. Registering was the first of many steps. In order to field an army, men first had to be assembled, and the newly appointed draft officials were focused primarily on that task at this point. Convincing the draftees that they were fighting for the right cause could wait until later.⁵⁶

In practice, registration was a voluntary procedure. Besides publicly noting the punishments and informing these men that they must register with their local boards; the government really had no practical way to force them to do so.⁵⁷ Failure to register was punishable by imprisonment, but as long as the boards were still able to fill quotas, tracking down those who failed to register was low on the priority list at this point, and due to circumstances would remain so.⁵⁸ The success of the process hinged upon whether these scattered communities and the people within them obeyed the directives issued from Washington and announced by the responsible state and local authorities. In his proclamation before the sign-up, Woodrow Wilson described June 5th as “nothing less than the day upon which the manhood of the country shall step forward in one solid rank in defense of the ideals to which this nation is consecrated.”⁵⁹ The local board for Anson County echoed the sentiments of both Wilson and Bickett with a statement before the

⁵⁶ Registration Day Posters, Military Collection, WWI # 3, Box 5, Folders 20 – 23, NCSA.

⁵⁷ Seemingly every newspaper carried numerous articles on the first registration.

⁵⁸ Chapter 5 of this dissertation will further explore the issue of draft resistance.

⁵⁹ E. David Cronon, ed. *The Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965). Quotation is from statement penned on May 18, 1917, regarding upcoming first registration for draft.

registration: “Let us see to it there shall not be one single dodger, shirker, or slacker in Anson County, June 5 1917.”⁶⁰ Still, no one knew for sure what the response would be.

When the results were tabulated from this first draft, the boards in North Carolina, like those across the nation, reported that their local registrations occurred largely without incident. This initial step, as Jeanette Keith writes, “went marvelously well in the rural South as it did throughout the nation.”⁶¹ Newspaper accounts echoed this, with the *Wilmington Dispatch* reporting that registration was completed “without a hitch.”⁶² The board from Beaufort County, later recorded that “(w)ith a very few exceptions, men registered willingly and gladly at the first registration.” Another wrote that the “registration passed off quietly ... lines quickly formed at all registration points.”⁶³ The newspapers, posters and public declarations had done their jobs, and the easier part was complete.

Drafting an army from the first registrants was a massive effort. The men had to be examined, classified, and either sent to camp or deferred from service. The local men who made up the boards were of course key to this, but they often needed temporary help during the rush of registration and classification. The draft boards were compensated for their service, but citizens were asked to donate their time to assist the boards, to

⁶⁰ Craighead-Dunlap Chapter DAR, *Anson County in the World War 1917-1919: A Compilation of the Various Activities and Services Performed During This Period of Stress* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1929) 326.

⁶¹ Keith, *Rich Man's War*, 59.

⁶² *Wilmington Dispatch*, 7 June 1917, 1.

⁶³ Local Board Questionnaire, Beaufort County, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 1, Folder 10, NCSA. See also *Anson County in the World War*, 326.

North Carolina eventually counted 208,430 registrants in this first attempt. *PMG 2nd Report*, 396. The number given in the *PMG First Report* was 197,481. The difference accounts for late registrants, tabulating errors and the like. *PMG First Report*, 78.

“patriotically [offer] their services free of charge.”⁶⁴ The boards at this first registration were charged with examining each registrant and deciding as to whether the man was fit to serve or had grounds for deferment. Serving on the board, or on the supporting clerical staff, could take a great deal of time. After the war, the board chairmen reported that time spent dealing with board work was considerable. One chairman replied that he devoted “Every day during week about six hours while board meetings were held.” He added that “frequent Sunday trips ... were necessary.”⁶⁵ The other respondents gave similar replies. Members of the boards, the support staff, and all the auxiliaries felt compelled to do this to support the overall effort but choosing which of the registrants to send to camp was a challenging, made especially so by the varying exemption appeals from families of the would-be soldiers. After weighing these various appeals, the board would either call men to be inducted or allow their (temporary) exemption.⁶⁶

For these men, the process of negotiating the draft was a public endeavor. Their lives, once they became registrants, were followed by their communities using newspapers and other public lists, and little was private once men registered – or failed to register – for the draft. Requests for exemption, reluctance to join National Guard Units being called up, even the status of physical examination before the board, all were

⁶⁴ Bickett informed Crowder that in North Carolina this registration was “practically free of charge” as most volunteered their time to the task. Bickett, *Public Letters*, 342. Quotation from Circular # 2, April 28, 1917, Adjutant General’s Office, WWI #3, Box 5, Folder 13, NCSA. The chief secretary of the Winston-Salem local board estimated that to register 10,000 men in a single day he would need a clerical support staff of 266 to assist in the process. Local Board Questionnaire, Forsyth County, p. 2, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 2, NCSA.

⁶⁵ Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA. Other replies from questionnaires align with this.

⁶⁶ At this early stage all deferments were treated as temporary.

reported for public consumption. One example from *The Lexington Dispatch* under the headline “Very Few Men Secured” lists the men passing their physicals, those applying for exemption, and even a man who failed to turn up because the board “did not secure his right address.”⁶⁷ The war, for most of these men, was fought in public, where the notions of honor and shame were fully evident. Wyatt-Brown notes that in the South at least the two concepts were contradictory, writing that “honor, and the reprisal for its violation was the opposite: the stigma of shame.”⁶⁸ The open nature of the draft made personal notions of honor and shame subject to public opinion, and the draftees and their communities conducted themselves accordingly.

Many of the men felt a responsibility to stay with their families, not to go off to war, and the exemption boards and the locales they served often made every effort to exempt them from service in the army and keep them home. Local papers dutifully listed exemption requests just as other steps in the process were reported.⁶⁹ The largest group deferred at this stage was husbands requesting to stay and care for wives and children, and in some cases extended family also. In North Carolina married men made up over half of the total number of registrants, and of these over 90% were initially deferred from the draft because the boards had determined that removal of these men would cause undue hardship on those who were dependent on them.⁷⁰ Most draft boards did

⁶⁷ *The Lexington Dispatch*, 8 August 1917, 1.

⁶⁸ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 400.

⁶⁹ See for example *Brevard News* 28 July 1917, and *Cherokee Scout* 2 August 1917.

⁷⁰ The question of dependency will be explored further in the following chapters. While the majority were in fact deferred because they had a wife and/or children, potential draftees could be deferred by the local board because any relative depended upon them for financial support. PMG *Second Report*, appendix, 401. Crowder’s instructions were that none become a charity case if their provider was taken for army service.

everything they could to defer married men if they thought them deserving. Some were even able to exempt all married men under their jurisdiction. The board of Franklin County, for example, noted proudly that “In no instance did the ...Local Board send a married man with dependent wife [and] children to camp — even when pressed between Washington and the District Board.”⁷¹ Questionnaires completed for the PMG by local boards after the first draft stated essentially the same thing: husbands who support wives, and especially wives and children, should be deferred from service whenever possible. Able to fill their given quotas, the boards used the power given them to keep husbands at home.⁷²

Many boards saw these deferments as essential to the community support of the war effort, and newspaper reports seem to confirm widespread support for the practice. Newspapers recording the first registration note the claims for exemption mostly without editorial comment. The earlier cited article from *The Lexington Dispatch* notes that from a group of thirty-five men, “most ... have exemption claims.”⁷³ There was no stigma attached to exemptions given for the “right” reasons. As Jennifer Keene notes, “rather than disrupting the family as they raised an army, local draft boards tended to use conscription to reaffirm it.”⁷⁴ One board reported to Washington that they were holding

⁷¹ Local Board Questionnaire, Franklin County, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 2, NCSA. Most boards could not exempt every husband, but almost all answered yes to the query “Did your Board discharge virtually all married men?” asked on the Local Board Experience Questionnaire. The written explanations are all the same, that husbands needed at home should be taken last – if at all.

⁷² The state quota was set by the PMG, and the number was apportioned throughout the local boards by the governor, assigning local quotas based upon numbers already in the service, exempt occupations, etc., so that the burden was theoretically spread evenly throughout the state.

⁷³ *Lexington Dispatch* 8 August 1917, 1.

⁷⁴ Keene, *Doughboys*, 18.

married men from induction “for harmonious adjustment to the prevailing uniformity of actions by other boards,” rather than “send out a greatly dissatisfied soldiery, as well as a disturbed community from whence they came.”⁷⁵ That the boards wanted to fill the ranks with single men should not be surprising. The boards were, after all, reflections of the overall populace, and an unhappy citizenry held no benefit for them whatsoever. The boards themselves heard from draftees, family members, volunteer helpers, and each other, and their duty as they saw it was to supply men for the army while also harnessing support and keeping the community as tranquil as possible amid the war. Where able to supply single men, the boards did so. Later, they chose men without children, and those with children last. And while in hindsight we know there were to be further calls for draftees, neither the boards nor the communities they served knew this at the time. For all they knew, the boards had fulfilled their requirements for numbers, and may not be asked again.⁷⁶ The boards made it their primary goal to supply the men needed while not upsetting the community, and they worked to accomplish that.

After the first call-ups, Washington surveyed the local boards, asking for their input on certain issues. Regarding mobilization, the PMG’s 1917 questionnaire simply asked for “recommendations ... as to method of mobilization of men into cantonments” and how to treat individuals “who report tardily.”⁷⁷ The question regarding late replies

⁷⁵ Chatham County Local Board Experience file, p. 5, States File, Records of the Selective Service System, 1917-1919, Box 35, Record Group 163, NARA. (National Archives, Washington D.C.). (Hereafter RG 163).

⁷⁶ As previously noted, the first call was eventually 687,000 men, and the first registration was enough to reach that number. In general, each local board had to call for examination twice the number needed to supply their quotas, reducing the pool through deferments for dependency, physical defects, etc. PMG *First Report*, 38.

⁷⁷ Question from section XI. “Mobilization”, Local Board Experience file. Copies of these questionnaires are found throughout the States File, RG 163, NARA.

netted many responses, all telling essentially the same story, that where tardy men existed they were few in number: “Have had no willful tardiness” answered one response, and “very few violations” reported another.⁷⁸ From inside the local draft boards, the appeals to duty and patriotism, as well as the promise of punishment, seem to have worked. Most of the respondents told the same story: while some of the men called to serve were less than enthused, they performed their duty. The statistics of the first call-up supported these responses. Some 63,599 men were asked before the boards in the state and of that number 3,122 failed to show up when called – making them delinquents. Of the men called to camp, North Carolina had less than 5 percent fail to appear, solidly near the bottom in the country.⁷⁹

When men did fail to appear, almost invariably the local boards explained the reason for this as ignorance.⁸⁰ Attempts to reach these men was likewise conducted publicly through the newspapers, as well as through official channels. The 1917 questionnaire asked boards to respond to the question “How can the Government best reach registrants who fail to appear for physical examination?” Most responses provided specific advice related to recommendations for reaching absentees, but those that mentioned numbers almost uniformly stressed the fact that the amounts were negligible, attributing the absenteeism to poor communication. “We have not yet found a man who

78 Polk County Questionnaire, Stanly County Questionnaire, Local Board Experience File, Box 35, RG 163.

79 PMG *First Report*, Appendix Table 4, 81. In draft parlance there were three categories of resistance: slackers, men who failed to register; delinquents, men who registered but failed to show up when called before the board for examination or failed to show up for induction; and deserters, men who were enlisted and abandoned their units.

For this first registration the percentage of no-shows (delinquents) for North Carolina (4.91%) was behind only Iowa (3.67%), Missouri (4.80%), Rhode Island (4.47%), and Nebraska (4.79%).

⁸⁰ Resistance, willful or otherwise, is explored more fully in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

was willfully absent,” wrote one chairman, stressing that “they have invariably come immediately upon receipt of notice, and their absence is caused by ignorance.”⁸¹

Newspaper accounts largely echoed these sentiments, as did the postwar questionnaires.⁸²

The chairman for Halifax County described an atmosphere in which some men had migrated in search of war work and could not be reached by examination notices. He reported that “we believe that this can be accounted for on grounds of ignorance, rather than pre-meditated evasion.”⁸³ Officially, these men were delinquent, but to reporting officials most failed to show up because they did not know to come in, not because of willful resistance. While this may seem a convenient explanation, nearly every draft jurisdiction had similar situations, and many were resolved when these missing individuals eventually reported.

Accepting late registrants for service was the simplest form of resolving the issue of delinquents. While the public nature of the draft may have assisted in bringing delinquent or reluctant men forward, administratively it was still simpler to accept their excuses and forward them to camp without penalty.⁸⁴ Their names were often listed in the newspapers in full view of the readers, prompting those who “supported” the war effort to at least question why these men had not come forward. The official policy of the War Department, duly passed on by Governor Bickett, was still to “report the name to the

⁸¹ Local Board Experience File, Columbus County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

This theme, of men not showing up due to ignorance, is found throughout the official reports of the draft.

⁸² Early on, some no-shows were due to wrong addresses for registrants, some men were simply late in coming, and still others answered that they had not received notification from the board. See for example *Wilmington Dispatch*, 29 May 1918 (Late Showing), and previous entry from *The Lexington Dispatch* regarding wrong address, 8 August 1917.

⁸³ Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA.

⁸⁴ *Franklin Times*, 21 June 1918.

nearest United States attorney or Marshal, and the delinquent will be arrested at once.” However, the same notice stated that men “whose failure to register is due to inattention or to lack of information or of understanding shall be released as soon as they have registered.”⁸⁵ Local boards continued to be lenient, and men reporting with almost any viable excuse were almost always accepted as a matter of course.⁸⁶ By the end of the draft late registrants were noted on official reports just as any other category.⁸⁷ This “gentle” and public treatment was the most effective method of both filling quotas and of clearing the records of delinquents, and from a “shame” standpoint was the easiest course for all concerned parties.

Public perception and the notion of community pride and shame also influenced the attempts to catalog and record local effort in the war with regard to conscription. The chaos accompanying the draft made it easier for local officials to view participation from an overly positive angle when they chose to do so, and this was especially true in the postwar reports.⁸⁸ While the official records of the War Department cited a number of deserters in the state, the reports from the draft boards themselves asked readers to imagine that there were almost no deserters at all. The 1917 questionnaires speak little to the issue of deserters, as relatively few men had been inducted and accurate tabulations at

⁸⁵ Letter from Governor Bickett to county sheriffs, 1 June 1917. Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 5, Folder 13, NCSA. Newspapers printed versions of these same instructions. See *Smithfield Herald* 3 June 1917.

⁸⁶ One report from the *Wilmington Dispatch* notes that one man failed to respond to a call from the board, claiming ignorance of the “rally point” when he reported late. *Wilmington Dispatch* 3 October 1917.

⁸⁷ Local Exemption Board Report, City of Winston Salem, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 2, NCSA.

⁸⁸ Several local boards describe the frantic nature of the early process. The Caldwell County Local Board Questionnaire describes his experience as akin to “the boy the calf ran over.” Local Board Experience File, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

this point would have been impossible, but the post-war reports addressed the issue of desertion directly. The third section of the query contains questions about deserters, resistance, attempted evasion, and enforcement of the draft laws. The respondents were of one mind about this issue. The reporting counties replied universally that there was no open resistance, and where deserters were mentioned, the number was either “few” or “a few.” Of the 17 respondents to the post-war questionnaires, 10 answered “no” for open resistance, one answered “none,” and two answered “never,” while the other respondents left this question unanswered. Regarding deserters, the answers range from “no deserters” to “only five deserters” on the nine questionnaires which gave a reply.⁸⁹ Moreover, according to the respondents, deserters were often simply ignorant. One chairman labeled the deserters in his county as “ignorant men whose prejudices had been played upon and inflamed by people even more ignorant than themselves.”⁹⁰ With the expectation that each community wished to describe their war service in a positive way, and without accompanying evidence, these assertions should of course be received with some reservations.⁹¹

This shared and openly public interest in the fullest participation made community members the primary means for convincing delinquents and deserters to change their minds, and the shame of being labeled a shirker proved to be a primary tool. Lists of draftees and delinquents in the newspapers was the largest piece of this effort, but

⁸⁹ The Local Board Questionnaires are found throughout the Military Collection, WWI #3, NCSA.

⁹⁰ Quotation is from Local Board Questionnaire, Beaufort County, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 1, Folder 10, NCSA.

⁹¹ Local papers were also guilty of positive assessment without evidence. The *Franklin Times* describes an “almost perfect entrainment record” for local draftees on the same day that it runs a story on the “trouble” in Ashe County. *Franklin Times*, 28 June 1918.

officials also sought out other prominent individuals in the draftees' lives. The Chairman of the state Council of National Defense, D.H. Hill, highlighted this public shame when he asked that the parents of these men be informed by the board chairman, or better yet by "pastors and family physicians... assuring them of the friendly interest of their fellow citizens ... to urge them before it is too late, to save their sons from disgrace and punishment."⁹² These efforts netted what the council applauded as the "Fine results ... reported in the counties as to deserters and delinquents." The official argument was that appeals from within the community, from people they knew, would have the greatest effect. If they clearly knew what they were fighting for, it was reasoned, these men would do their duty and either return to the ranks or appear before the board as ordered, whichever was the case. If everyone made the effort, writes Chairman Hill, "Such activity ... will soon free our State of all these men, and will save many a good father and mother from the shame of having a son sent to the penitentiary."⁹³ The honor of the individual was inextricably wedded to the honor of his family and community, "accorded" wrote Wyatt-Brown, "on the basis of community decision."⁹⁴ Neither individual honor or community sanction was likely in the presence of willful desertion.

Desertion, whether willful or otherwise, was present in the newspapers on a regular basis from the time of the first inductions in the fall of 1917. The accounts were varied, ranging from true ignorance to armed resistance. Some were persuaded with the

⁹² Letter from North Carolina Council of Defense, 16 July 1918. Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 6, Folder 17, NCSA.

⁹³ Letter from North Carolina Council of Defense, 30 July 1918. Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 6, Folder 17, NCSA.

⁹⁴ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 114.

receipt of a delinquent notice in the mail, and occasionally there was a visit by a board member, or sometimes a local constable or policeman, resulting in the return of a reluctant draftee.⁹⁵ However, by the spring of 1918 there were several examples of larger bands of deserters throughout the South. The first of these was in Alabama in early May, followed by others in Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia and North Carolina. Judith Sealander writes that at times there was a “depth of hostile emotion...roused in some sections of the country.”⁹⁶ These situations became armed standoffs, usually resulted in several deaths, and led to public trials and denunciations of the war effort. These instances were duly reported in the press, as were their resolutions, violent or otherwise.⁹⁷ In these resolutions lie the differences in the approaches of various states regarding groups of deserters, and the fairly peaceful result in North Carolina when faced with armed deserters. This result was made possible through the use of public communication and the use also of the community as a tool to convey honor and shame, and to communicate the possible removal of the threat of force as the primary means through which to end the problems.

North Carolina was later the scene of two separate large groups of deserters. The handling of these instances says much about the public aspect of service and obligation, and the use of both pride and shame in the resolution of these events. In both cases, these deserters eventually responded to very public appeals made to them, and most were

⁹⁵ Deserters arrested by local policemen and returned to camp. *Wilmington Dispatch*, 26 May 1918, 2 March 1918,

⁹⁶ Judith Sealander, “Violent Group Draft Resistance in the Appalachian South During World War I.” *Appalachian Notes*, Vol. 7, 1979, 1-11.

⁹⁷ Essentially every paper in the state carried reports of these instances of desertion, some engaged later in Chapter Five.

allowed to return to the ranks.⁹⁸ The first of these took place in the spring of 1918 in Mitchell County, where thirteen deserters and nine delinquents were hiding in the mountains, successfully resisting attempts to capture them. Official accounts describe the men returning to the army after an appeal by the local draft board chairman and the assistance of an agent from the Department of Justice. When one of the deserters surrendered himself voluntarily, the county board chairman, John McBee, communicated through this deserter to the rest of the group that he would attempt to get them “lenient treatment in view of their voluntary surrender.” McBee commented that this was a community effort, and that “Sheriff Burleson and many citizens of the county aided greatly in inducing both deserters and delinquents to come in.”⁹⁹ This plea, according to the chairman, eliminated all such men in the county “except one” and “Several outside of county and State.”¹⁰⁰ The option of lenient treatment had the desired effect, and these men eventually surrendered, having been given a path which allowed them to escape punishment and rejoin the army.¹⁰¹

The second example of a larger group of deserters occurred in the June of 1918 in Ashe County. Governor Bickett too made a personal appeal directly these men’s sense of

98 Just as the local boards enjoyed a great deal of leeway in dealing with delinquents and slackers, army officers in charge of the training camps also had a large measure of discretion in how they handled deserters. Draftees from North Carolina were assigned to the same camp, and National Guard soldiers assigned to another. In each one of these instances the governor contacted the camp commanders and asked that the men be allowed to rejoin their units.

99 United States Provost Marshal General, *Final Report on the Operations of the Selective Service System to July 15, 1919*. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920) 288. (Hereafter *PMG Final Report*).

100 *PMG Final Report*, 287-288.

101 *PMG Final Report*, 287-289. McBee’s report on the incident mentions that each of these men was returned to camp at their own expense and rejoined their old units where those units were still in camp, or eventually rejoin units who had already shipped out. The specific appeal used to encourage the deserters to return was unrecorded.

honor and duty, as well as their possible shame should they fail in this duty. When efforts to bring the men in by force were met with gunfire, the governor traveled to the county seat in Jefferson and spoke to a large assembly which included friends and relatives of the deserters. In a speech lasting over two hours, the governor narrated an account that as a history lesson wove in the Revolution, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and the genius of Woodrow Wilson and the Selective Service Act. He painted America as a reluctant belligerent that fights because it had no choice. "Peace is entirely too dear when it comes at the price of honor," stated the governor. According to Bickett, in keeping with the overt narrative regarding men forsaking their duty, men desert because "they have not been told the truth about this war ... Ignorance and misinformation are at the bottom of all this trouble and all this shame."¹⁰² The governor, too, thought that North Carolina men, when they knew understood the reasons behind and importance of the conflict, would show up when called.¹⁰³ Records show that the governor was successful, as the PMG later reported that "in less than two weeks

¹⁰² Bickett, *Public Letters*, 174-175. Entire address and description of incident on pages 172 - 181. The North Carolina Council of Defense also sent a letter to each county, dated 16 July 1918, to the effect that each deserter who now gave himself up voluntarily would "be included in the number of those whom the Governor has asked to treat as leniently as possible." Copy of the letter in Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 17, NCSA.

¹⁰³ The numbers compiled by the PMG seem to support the views of the governor. On the eve of the last registration, North Carolina had registered 228,844 men and deserters in the state averaged 2.67%, the lowest percentage in the South. *PMG 2nd Report*, 460. The *Final Report*, after accounting for men enlisted elsewhere and those wrongly labeled as deserters, has North Carolina with a percentage of 1.20% against the number of men registered. The only southern state with a lower percentage is Texas with 1.11%. *PMG Final Report*, 52, Table 18.

practically every deserter known to be in Ashe County surrendered and returned to camp.”¹⁰⁴

The official accounts of the bands of deserters in Mitchell and Ashe Counties are interesting in their contrasts and have much to say about the public nature of the draft. While the response to Governor Bickett’s address may have been, in the words of Sealander, “almost revivalistic,” the true reason the men came in probably lies more with the threat of punishment than with the “duty and honor” appealed to by the governor.¹⁰⁵ Clearly the men were always aware of the possible punishment and had taken their chances even in the face of possible jail or hanging. The catalyst that brought them in was probably the lenient treatment they would receive even considering their actions, in addition to the promise that force was off the table - at least for now. In the absence of personal accounts, we can only speculate, but the peace offering as relayed through family and friends is likely the reason they returned.

As the United States became a more active participant in the war, the message of shared sacrifice and duty in the eyes of the local community began to evolve into one based also on the duty of the individual within a national group. William Breen comments that “in the South the effect of the war was to act as a powerful solvent of narrow, parochial attitudes.”¹⁰⁶ While the local tenor did not disappear, as evidenced by the Mitchell and Ashe County events, the war had certainly expanded beyond the

¹⁰⁴ PMG *Final Report*, Appendix C, 288. See also Sealander, “Violent Group Draft Resistance in the American South During World War I,” 7.

¹⁰⁵ Sealander, “Violent Group Draft Resistance in the American South During World War I,” 7.

¹⁰⁶ Bruce Clayton and John Salmond eds. *The South is Another Land: Essays on the Twentieth-Century South* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987) 69.

“narrow attitudes” Breen described. American soldiers, including some from North Carolina, were now fighting and dying in the war, and their letters carried the news home to their families. Newspapers often printed copies of local soldier’s letters, and lists of men serving were posted in store windows throughout the towns.¹⁰⁷ The early quota of 687,000 soldiers was long passed, and by August of 1918 there were over one million U.S. soldiers in France.¹⁰⁸ The German offensives of the spring of 1918, coupled with the huge allied losses over the winter of 1917-1918, saw the need for “the largest possible American contingent” in France, and the PMG was planning for an additional two million men.¹⁰⁹ By the advent of the third major draft call of September 1918, much of the “official” rhetoric was centered on the concept of a larger group, the nation and the army. Some of the best examples of these were the instructions to the public speakers known as “Four Minute Men.”¹¹⁰ Issued in the summer of 1918, the talking point suggestions reflected the increasing awareness that American men would recognize their duty.

¹⁰⁷ The *Brevard News* regularly printed letters of soldiers from their subscribers and lists of men serving were posted in store windows beginning in the Spring of 1918. See *Brevard News* 22 February 1918.

¹⁰⁸ Quota from first call in PMG *First Report*, 38. Monthly table of soldiers in U.S., France, and elsewhere in Dickinson, *The Building of an Army*, 116.

¹⁰⁹ PMG 2nd Report, 23-24.

¹¹⁰ George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920) 84-98. The Four Minute Men were products of the Committee on Public Information (CPI), also known as the Creel Committee. Among other initiatives, the CPI began a campaign of sending men into the country to appear at public events, theaters, fairs, etc. These men were volunteers, typically chosen from the community where they would be speaking whenever possible.

The most recent publication on the Creel Committee is Alan Axelrod’s *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 2009). The CPI memoranda and instructions sent to the state are the sources I have especially drawn from for this section.

The September 1918 call was the last of the war, taking younger and older men than the previous drafts. There are references throughout the instructions from the PMG about precedence for such a move, and much is included in the Four Minute Men instructions for use in rebuttals of citizens questioning the “right” of the government to make such a request. Registration on 12 September 1918 would be for ages 18 – 45 inclusive and numbered over 13 million men throughout the nation. More on this final call in Chapters 3 through 5.

“Americans will hear the call and meet the test like men,” reads one pamphlet. Another notes, “[The recruit] offers everything. No man can do more.”¹¹¹ Another passage suggests the phrase: “Trust American manhood to come forward and identify itself.”¹¹²

These instructions were not unique to North Carolina, but state bodies also adopted similar language in their own communiqués to local organizations. Red Cross drives and War Bond sales were advertised directly to the people on the pages of local newspapers.¹¹³ The public was appealed to directly by the Four Minute Men, who stated that the nation was “relying upon the conscience and manhood of the American people ... to inspire every man with the resolution ... to come forward and do his duty.”¹¹⁴ The larger community now included the local organizations many belonged to, and for the soldiers certainly included the army. Where before the men felt their duty was to the local community, now that duty was amplified by the pull from the nation and the army, from the men who had gone before them and were already serving and in some cases fighting in France.¹¹⁵ While this sort of appeal did not exist early in the draft when the army was not yet engaged in active combat, it was in full evidence by this stage in the war. As soldier Paul Eliot Green wrote from Belgium in August of 1918: “Let me enjoy

111 The instructions warn to “(c)ut out ‘Doing you bit.’ ‘Business as usual.’ ‘Your country needs you.’ They are flat and no longer have any force or meaning.” Four Minute Men instructions, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 17, NCSA.

112 Military Collection WWI #3, Folder 17, NCSA.

¹¹³ As a weekly paper, *The Brevard News* had some issues where nearly every one of the six or eight pages was devoted to war news. See for example edition of 22 February 1918.

¹¹⁴ Letter from PMG “To All Four Minute Men” August 16, 1918. Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 17, NCSA.

¹¹⁵ Letter from Paul Eliot Green to mother, 25 August 1918, 12. Letter Collection, NCWW1, www.ncdcr.gov.

you at home to realize the sacredness of our duty... [we] must have your support for the grand cause.”¹¹⁶

Postwar questionnaires suggested that these latest appeals to Green’s “grand cause” worked. Local communities had not been replaced but had been enlarged and reinforced with the emotional pull of a nation fully at war. Newspapers catalog the sacrifices of the people, and the willingness of the men to come forward. Men were still attempting to join before they were called, entrainments were getting steadily larger, and parades were often held for departing soldiers.¹¹⁷ The local reports described an upbeat population and a more willing soldiery. Nearly every respondent answered in the same manner, that local opinion “grew more popular as the war progressed.”¹¹⁸ Perhaps the most telling was the response from Halifax County: “A decided change took place during the spring of 1918 ... [A]pplications made frequently to the board to advance date of call without reaching order number ... the percent of [exemption] claims filed was very small and it became necessary for the board to defer men who presented no claim.”¹¹⁹ Another described this group effort by writing that the draft “increased the patriotism of the community 100% and has made all of the people look upon the flag as the symbol of Americanism.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Paul Eliot Green, Letter Collection, 15.

¹¹⁷ Newspapers occasionally carried accounts of draftees attempting to volunteer for earlier entry into the army. One article picked up from another paper gives an account of two twins who are “anxious to go,” and flip a coin. The “loser” would stay home. *Cherokee Scout* 17 August 1917.

¹¹⁸ Local Board Questionnaire, Robeson County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 4, Folder 14, NCSA.

¹¹⁹ Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA. The passage regarding advancing the date of call refers to individuals whose lottery numbers have not yet been reached who wish to volunteer for service before their call-up. In general boards were only allowed to add one or two men to the number called, lest the process be upset by too many inductees.

¹²⁰ Local Board Questionnaire, Robeson County, Military Collection, #3, Box 4, Folder 14, NCSA.

The Local Board Questionnaires provided some of the best examples of these accounts of the fitness and ability of the state's men and communities in terms of their responses to the draft. One respondent asserted that "men have heard the call and responded with unanimity [sic] never before approached."¹²¹ Another described "a sincere desire to serve the community, the state and the nation, in any way possible."¹²² In general, all portrayed a populace that was more than willing to respond to the nation's call, the direct effect of the draft in this case, something only made possible by the war and the request from the government. One respondent stated that the uniting of the community "would have been impossible under any other conditions; it has taught the community that it owed a debt to the Government which seemed hard for the people to understand at the start," adding credence to my claim that attitudes toward the war changed – became more supportive – over time.¹²³ And finally, the questionnaire from Halifax County used language more succinctly than any of the others, and thus is worth quoting at length: "The effect of operation of selective service system in connection with the world war has give[n] this generation in America a larger vision of personal relation to Government The opportunity came, and America was found fit."¹²⁴ These opinions, recounted in the summer and autumn of 1920, a full year after the Treaty of Versailles, are evidence to the lingering effect that the war had on these men, and also to the extent to which the war shaped their respective communities.

121 Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA.

122 Local Board Questionnaire, Beaufort County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 1, Folder 10, NCSA.

123 Local Board Questionnaire, Guilford County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 8, NCSA.

124 Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA.

The possibility of conscription eventually touched all North Carolina men between the ages of 18 and 45. Most did not serve in uniform and even fewer saw combat. Whether they served or received a deferment to stay home, each step in their service was exhibited in public. The principles of duty and sacrifice were set by their local communities, shared in print for their neighbors to see and for everyone from the governor to their draft board chairman to judge. This period in society placed a premium on one's deeds, and the sense of duty, of shame, and of honor, based on the responsibility they felt to their family, their community, and eventually, their country, shaped the way that these men responded to the draft. The public scrutiny they experienced no doubt influenced them in many ways, but the course of service and support for the war was the easier and more honorable path in light of this broadly communal effort, and this was the route most often chosen.

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN AND THE WAR

The First World War was contested by armies of course, armies filled almost exclusively with ranks of men. But the armies were supported by their home countries, by their governments, and to varying degrees by the communities from which they were drawn. In North Carolina, this community support was largely organized and delivered by women. Women in the state, besides being wives and mothers, came together to support the war effort, the conscription apparatus, and on occasion the families of absent soldiers, in just about every conceivable way. From the active support on the front lines to food conservation and war loan drives, women supplied the energy and often the organization to undertake these efforts. What began in a rather ad hoc fashion, by the end of the war included several highly professional organizations, giving women a power and a presence in public life that they seldom enjoyed before the war. The support of these women, as both organizers and workers, as well as family members, was essential. The war would have been quite different without this support.

The national and local organizations which would eventually harness the energy of the state's women often existed in some form before the advent of the First World War, but the crisis of war expanded both the membership and mission of these organizations beyond anything most had undertaken before. From international bodies

like the Red Cross to the women's relief committees of the smallest rural churches, these groups developed into an energetic and often coordinated mass to support the war effort in the state. As the war progressed, new organizations would be generated by both the federal and state governments, adding thousands of private citizens to their membership rolls. And while the Red Cross and other bodies like it had experience in the types of things eventually asked of it, the scattered church groups and garden clubs would be venturing outside of their normal operating area in supporting the soldiers, their families, and the state's communities in the midst of war. Nearly all these establishments, especially the smaller ones, were all volunteer, were run by and directed by women, and were invested in the war through the men who they supported in the ranks. While the war did not create women's organizations, it certainly expanded both their number and their reach into the population. As the war widened, so too did the involvement from the community, especially – as the evidence shows, for the women in the community.

The principal assistance effort from women at this early stage, and indeed throughout the war, was by the Red Cross. Initially the thrust was toward assisting civilian refugees, but soon the task expanded also to supporting allied soldiers through various medical efforts in Britain, Belgium and France. The Red Cross overcame early challenges raising both money and volunteers, and eventually sent substantial aid, including a hospital ship loaded with supplies and staffed with doctors and nurses to assist with their primary mission of civilian relief.¹ The national effort was directed from

¹ "History of the Red Cross," 2-3. After the entry of the U.S. into the war the mission of the organization listed four key objectives, one of which was aid to "civilian victims of war, with an emphasis on the children." <http://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/National/history-wwi.pdf>

Washington, and the countrywide organization at this early stage was still comparatively small. Even though the Red Cross was at the forefront of the relief effort, their footprint in the state was small. In 1914, the number of Red Cross chapters in North Carolina was only five.²

In addition to the Red Cross, other organizations involving large numbers of women soon became involved in relief efforts as well, almost from the outset of the war. This was especially true with religious groups. Various religious denominations, especially the Quaker and Methodist churches, had extensive links with their counterparts in Europe. Their members contributed funds, various goods like foodstuffs and blankets, and volunteered personal help to relieve the suffering of the refugees or to support their associated institutions in England and throughout the United Kingdom. Relief measures by the Christian community were well-coordinated by the time the U.S. entered the war, and their day-to-day work, like the Red Cross, was performed by women volunteers.³

These emerging efforts would get their first test supporting U.S. forces with the coming of the Mexican Expedition in March of 1916. Members of the North Carolina National Guard, in addition to guardsmen from dozens of other states and a large part of the Regular Army, were deployed at this time to deal with the Mexican “bandit” Pancho

² Numbers vary as to Red Cross chapters in North Carolina before the war, but one early study lists five chapters which were in existence before 1914. Robert W. Winston, “Red Cross and the War,” [Raleigh, N. C.: The Author], 1918., accessed October 5, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/winston/winston.html>.

³ The literature on religious relief efforts in the First World War is extensive but focused primarily on Europe. After the entry of the U.S. into the war the church relief effort was eclipsed by the national, state and local initiatives, but still existed and contributed to the overall.

Villa.⁴ Militarily the expedition was quite small compared to the coming war but useful as a test of the ability, especially of the Red Cross, to support soldiers deployed somewhere far afield. The Raleigh Chapter, formed during this time, articulated what would eventually become the primary mission to “consider ways and means of contributing to the comfort and health of American soldiers then stationed on the Mexican Border,” in addition to their attempts at civilian relief in Europe. Other chapters in the state were formed during this same period to support local Guard formations, establishing a rough template for the test that was soon to come.⁵

The Declaration of War in April of 1917 brought forth more questions for women than it provided answers. While many of the questions as to how the nation would go about participating in the war were yet unanswered, for the wives, mothers, sisters and cousins, the possibility that they might now have a fighting man in their family was added to the role of relief volunteer. The women involved in the emerging relief and support efforts could now conceivably be a larger part of the U.S. war effort, through the means of their relationship to the men who would possibly go and fight the war. This community of those involved, through relief or otherwise, would certainly grow with the

⁴ Jessica Bandel, *North Carolina and the Great War 1914-1918* (Chapel Hill, UNC Press, 2017), 16-17. Villa had attacked towns in Texas and New Mexico and was pursued by U.S. Army troops. National Guard soldiers were called to federal service for this punitive expedition, but while army units crossed the border, the guardsmen never ventured into Mexico.

⁵ History of the Red Cross, NCDR Chapter Histories, <http://ncdr.gov/cdm/search/collection.p15012coll10>.

involvement of U.S. forces in the war. However, the question at this early point, for both men and women, was still a personal and *volunteer* matter until the passage of the Selective Service Act.⁶

The draft brought the possibility of personal service into the public sphere, and while it involved the men who would possibly serve, it also necessarily involved the women connected to them. If in fact every man in North Carolina between the ages of 21 and 30 could be compelled by the government to serve in the army, then there was a definite change in the political calculus within each of these families. These women could still volunteer, could still be involved in various relief and support endeavors, but the probability for participation, as members of a family of a possible draftee, expanded far beyond the unofficial roles that existed for them before conscription became the means to raise the bulk of the army.⁷

The actual logistical process of the draft also brought additional women into the war effort. The two key pieces of the draft apparatus at this early stage were the registration boards, and shortly after, the draft boards themselves.⁸ While the draft boards would throughout the war be made up of men only, the support staff and attached clerical help, even at this early stage, were often women. Registration boards, based on

⁶ Soldiers recruited through the usual mechanisms could also draw a support system with them, but peacetime soldiers of course had a different experience. The pieces of what would become a massive civilian support network in the First World War had its roots in previous American wars, especially the Civil War, but a comparison of these is outside the scope of this chapter.

⁷ Recruits could of course also utilize this quasi-official support network as well, but the support system really grew with the potential pool of draftees. The idea of sending a volunteer army before drafting one is discussed previously in chapter two, and elsewhere throughout this dissertation.

⁸ Draft boards and exemption boards were the same thing, and the language is used interchangeably throughout the source documents. See *2nd Report*, 44, 71.

local voting precincts and some 800 in number, had “large numbers of women” as registrars, bringing a new cluster of participants into contact with the budding war effort.⁹ At this point the footprint of the war was still relatively small, the course of the war was anyone’s guess, but women were there in large numbers at this initial stage of the process.¹⁰

The scope of women’s involvement expanded once again when the state Council of Defense established women’s auxiliaries on June 8, 1917. Meeting in Raleigh just after the first registration, this body was assigned to, among other things “record the names of women who were willing to give all or part time to the war need of the country.” The mission of this organization was broad in scope, from “provid[ing] names of women ... to replace men going into service” to “placing the machinery of the committee at the command of various organizations such as the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A.”¹¹ The state council oversaw some 18 departments, responsible for numerous tasks from “registration” to “educational propaganda,” and at this initial meeting would list over 80 representatives from towns and counties throughout the state. Moreover, there were representatives from over 50 already existing entities, from the Daughters of the American Revolution to the United Farm Women. This single meeting brought the

⁹ PMG *Final Report*, 123.

¹⁰ Unknown nature of the U.S. effort at this opening stage discussed throughout this dissertation, but especially in chapter two.

¹¹ History of the North Carolina Council of Defense, Military Collection, WW1, Box 1, Folder 1, 83, NCSA.

memberships of nearly the entire collection of ladies' clubs into the war effort, engaging their members in support of an effort only recently getting underway.¹²

The women of the state would begin to ship their men off to camp in the summer of 1917, adding another role to the volunteer function many already held. Some relatives would come to see the men off to their encampments, but the number of men in uniform was still relatively small when compared to the raw numbers involved in the overall support effort. The army's eventual settlement on the number of 687,000 meant that North Carolina's quota in this first call was in the range of around 22,000, and the numbers requested from individual counties were still fairly small. Some boards supplied quotas of just over a dozen men, often sent in smaller groups and stretched out over the entire summer.¹³ This could, of course, be a trying event for the women either related or somehow attached otherwise to one of the draftees. One local newspaper described the entrainment as a scene of "broken mothers ... and crushed sweethearts."¹⁴ This private piece of their personal war effort would soon be joined by a further effort on the public support side.

The mobilization of men for the army was accompanied and surpassed by the further recruitment of women for the war effort. Throughout the summer and Fall of 1917 the Red Cross was particularly active. Appeals through public media and word of

¹² History of the North Carolina Council of Defense, 83-92.

¹³ 687k number discussed in chapter two, and will also be examined in more detail in later chapters. North Carolina numbers from PMG 2nd Report, 80-81, 396.

¹⁴ N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Online Collections, NCWW1 Letters, Correspondence of Thad Mangum to mother. <http://gov/resources/digital-collections-online-NCWW1>.

mouth more than quadrupled membership in local chapters throughout the Fall of that year. By the end of the year the group listed over 50,000 volunteers.¹⁵ The organization, in conjunction with the Council of Defense, attempted to co-opt existing efforts where possible, taking over canteens, fund raising, citizen awareness and education, and other operations.¹⁶ This was in addition to traditional roles for the Red Cross of medical and relief support for soldiers and civilians. The ladies of this organization would continue to add many more roles to their mission as the war effort expanded both in the U.S. and overseas.

But some duties were taken on by other organizations. Soldiers in camp, and their families too, were assisted by the War Camp Community Service. Typically, under the purview of the Council of Defense, this organization sought to “surround (soldiers) with the influence of home while in ... training camps.”¹⁷ The WCCS attempted to provide recreational facilities and other useful diversions outside of the newly created encampments, without alcohol or other unhealthy or “immoral choices.” Staffed primarily by young women volunteers, the organization provided books, letter writing materials, card games, and other activities and diversions for the often homesick soldiers. In addition, sometimes the friendly faces in civilian clothes were relaxing to the young soldiers, and a welcome contrast from training camp. Some WCCS chapters also

¹⁵ NCCD Report, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 2 Folder 12, NCSA.

¹⁶ Some further examples include Home Demonstration Agents, Relief for Belgium and growing food themselves as “Farmerettes” at some of the schools in the state. McKinley and Sabol eds., *North Carolina's Experience*, 252-256.

¹⁷ Lemmon, *First World War*, 40. For a full history of the WCCS see Robert Bertrand Brown, *War Camp Community Service Calls*. (New York: War Camp Community Service, 1919).

provided facilities for families to stay overnight while visiting recruits, something of immeasurable value to many of these often-homesick young men.¹⁸ The importance of this goes without saying, with the majority of the young men having never been so far away from home before, let alone facing the possibility of going to war. Once again, the war created a space filled ably by an organization staffed and run by women, otherwise outside the “official” machinery of the conflict.

By December of 1917, the mechanics of the draft were changing somewhat, and the pool of potential draftees, along with the civilian support effort - both public and otherwise - was adapting. These changes would necessarily affect both the men and the women operating within the broad scope of the war effort. Some of these adjustments were made in Washington to streamline the conscription process itself, while other changes were aimed at netting a larger number of men for the army. Crowder’s office hoped to make the initial steps made at the local level move along a bit more efficiently, especially regarding the classification of potential draftees. This was amid the realization that the U.S. effort, in terms of troop numbers, had to increase. American troops actually in France at this time only numbered 176,000, while allied casualties during the winter of 1917-1918 were estimated at over one million. If the war continued in this manner, mused Navy Secretary Daniels, the “U.S. Army may someday be the chief in the field.”¹⁹

¹⁸ Elizabeth Griffin Hill, *Faithful to Our Tasks: Arkansas Women and the Great War* (Little Rock: Butler Center Books, 2017) 100-105. Many of the soldier’s letters mention homesickness. See especially NCDR NCWW1 Blogs November 15 and October 10, 2018.

¹⁹ Exact casualty numbers vary greatly depending upon the source, but Italian casualties alone were over 500,000 for the period since the U.S. had declared war. Overall war casualty figures available at <http://www.centre-robert-schuman.org/userfiles/files/REPERES%20-%20module%201-1-1%20->

The troop levels discussed thus far in Washington were obviously nowhere close to covering the losses on the allied side in the same period.²⁰ The draft officials under Crowder examined the available manpower, and knew that whatever course the war was to take, the U.S. would have to prepare to provide more troops if needed. So, while the volunteer support apparatus bent to the changing requirements, the selection process too was re-evaluated, and alterations subsequently made. The expanded numbers would simply mean more husbands and fathers would have to be taken from their homes and drafted into the army.²¹

The changes to conscription by 1918 directly affected the wives and families of potential draftees, as well as the legions of supporters that continued to form around both the draft machinery and the overall war effort. The first adjustment would re-examine the deferments already granted to those fit enough to serve, through the implementation of the long questionnaire. To be completed by all physically fit registrants not yet in camp, and in an effort to improve on both the speed and accuracy of the process, the new form would take the place of the potential draftee's sometimes lengthy personal interview before the board. Draft officials hoped the additional information would allow local boards to better choose men whose absence from their homes would "least disturb the domestic and economic life of the nation."²² This evaluation of families through the

[%20explanatory%20notes%20-%20World%20War%20I%20casualties%20-%20EN.pdf](#). Quotation is from Daniels, *The Wilson Era*, 164.

²⁰ There were 1,325,000 men in the U.S. army as of January 1, 1918, most still in stateside training camps. Dickinson, *The Building of an Army*, 116.

²¹ Analysis of the extent of husbands and fathers deferred in the initial draft calls examined in chapter two, PMG 2nd Report, 168-172.

²² PMG, 2nd Report, 2.

prism of a 16 page survey of life at the most basic level also brought the wider, but still local community (in addition to the national government) in contact with many formerly isolated pieces of the population, especially poor and rural residents.

Accurately completing a query of this length was beyond the ability of many of the rural poor in North Carolina, and the surrounding community rallied to assist these residents in accomplishing this.²³ The accuracy of the questionnaire would determine not only whether men were eligible to be placed in Class I – and thus drafted – but also could determine the level of support they would receive from the government through allotments to which they were entitled if their men were in fact drafted. In a December letter the state Council of Defense sent a request to their local branches asking for help in filling out the questionnaires. The letter described the boards as “nearly swamped with work in getting the questionnaires properly filled out,” and asks for volunteers to assist the boards in this matter. Requests from the governor were also sent to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for teachers to volunteer their help. Further appeals were channeled through church groups, extension agents, and local Red Cross Chapters.²⁴ Many of the learned women of the local clubs also helped, as did young women and students in some areas, once again sweeping more of the community into the overall and weaving social contacts otherwise unlikely without the crisis of war. The cities of the state felt the same effects. The Chief Clerk of the Winston Salem board wrote that “help

²³ Soldiers letters sometimes refer to family members who need to be “read” to, and at least one North Carolina soldier returned from leave late by showing a pass to an MP who couldn’t read it. NCDR NCWW1 Blog, letter dated February 27, 2018.

²⁴ Quotation from NCCD Letter dated 29 December 1917, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 2, Folder 3, NCSA. See also, Box 6, folder 17.

from the Local Board was wholly important” in assisting many “poorer residents” in completing the questionnaires in the requisite period.²⁵ For a number of the women reliant on men drafted into the army, the help they received with the questionnaire led to the allotment payments which were essential to their support while their men were away.

For many of these women, their allotments were the first time they had been empowered to gain financially simply by having a relative inducted into the army.²⁶ Most allotments were advanced without difficulty upon entry of the draftee into the army, but there were occasionally problems. Sometimes issues were dealt with through official channels, with some requests going directly to the PMG’s office, to be dealt with first by Crowder’s staff. With concerns about the possible effect on local morale, these matters were generally dealt with quickly and efficiently.²⁷ But for many wives, the first place they went with questions about their deserved payments was the same place their men had gone for induction, their local draft board.

The local boards often acted as a first stop for the families of draftees, so those with allotment issues often went there first. The boards, after all, were made up by men that they often knew, and by 1918 were also surrounded by a typically sympathetic support staff. The local board for Madison County forwarded a note from Mrs. Fletcher

²⁵ Local Board Files, Winston Salem, Box 2, WW1 #3, WW1 Papers, NCASA, 170.

²⁶ All soldiers’ eligible dependents received allotment payments; the program was not limited to draftees. The previously mentioned article by Hickel is the most comprehensive treatment of the allotment and War Risk Insurance as it relates to the draft. For a full description of the act see The War Risk Insurance Act, <https://archive.org/details/jstor-1822411/page/n1>.

²⁷ Crowder’s office took these inquiries seriously, detailing an officer to pass on the requests and follow up to ensure the request was investigated. See Dickinson, *The Building of an Army*, 149-150. See also Kastenber, *To Raise and Discipline*, 106. Letters to PMG Crowder, Box 34, RG 110, NARA.

Martin, wife of a drafted soldier, to Crowder's office in Washington in October of 1918. Her note states that her husband was inducted in August and she had so far "received no amount [sic]," further that she was "in need and will appreciate your help very much." The board typed a letter to the PMG with the man's service number, unit and camp location, and forwarded the note as well, and the matter was taken care of.²⁸ The board in Halifax County also reported that they "answered many questions, from Army Camp locations to ...allotment requests."²⁹ Through this process some of these women were able to fix allotment problems themselves, a form of empowerment new to many, management of their own financial security in the absence of their husband.

Most women, though, were not due to receive allotments, were not asking for help from their communities, but chose rather to give back where they could. As the war effort expanded and more men were drafted, so too did more women volunteer to assist their own local soldiers. Items fashioned or donated by local women could be earmarked for men from their own districts, something made easier by the army's custom of typically posting men from similar areas into adjoining units.³⁰ Seemingly every small town had a Red Cross chapter, as well as attached groups tailored to support their own men while away. Items listed by one chapter for shipment to local soldiers included "surgical dressings ... comfort bags ... hospital garments ...Christmas packages and

²⁸ Letter from Madison County Local Board, Box 34, RG 163, NARA.

²⁹ Local Board Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 3, Folder 9, NCSA.

³⁰ As mentioned previously, the vast majority of men from the state served in the 30th and 81st divisions. History of both units at <https://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/lest/lest.html>.

knitted articles” completed and shipped “during the winter of 1917 and 1918.”³¹ In addition to care items shipped to training camps, troops heading to camp or toward embarkation to France also encountered local support efforts. Train stops throughout the state were increasingly organized with more diversions for troops. The Raleigh train station supplied troops with “cool showers in the Summer heat... with lemonade and watermelon.”³² The growing camps and the increasing pace of mobilization in this period reminded everyone that the war was no longer at arm’s length. Wherever possible these growing groups of volunteers looked to make the men more comfortable in their service, whether they were just beginning training or were preparing to ship overseas to join the fighting.

By the spring of 1918, the army was beginning to join the battle in some measure, and the soldiers wrote letters to mom’s, sisters, aunts, and others. And just as the war camps brought the war closer for some, the letters from soldiers reminded many at home of the seriousness of the front lines, often while stating their belief in the worth of what they were fighting for. One soldier, lamenting the tediousness of army life, ends his letter with “but, then, should one have a higher aim than that of helping win the war? Could any sacrifice be bigger than yielding one’s individuality to the need of the whole?”³³ But even at a distance, the same soldier recognizes the contribution of his mother and others,

³¹ History of Rockingham County Red Cross, Military Collection, WWI #6, Box 2, p.3. All of the local chapters have lists of the same types of items throughout this period.

³² History of Wake County Red Cross, Military Collection, WWI #6, Box 3, Folder 20, NCSA.

³³ Letters from Camp Sevier, March 1918. Paul Eliot Green, “Paul Eliot Green Papers (#3693). Selected Letters, 1917-1919.” UNC-Chapel Hill, Southern Historical Collection, accessed October 4, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/greenletters/greenletters.html>.

writing: “I could not doubt that the women of the world play as important part in this war, and will play. As the men ... every little thing you do – comfort bags, ... cakes ... brings the war nearer to its end.”³⁴ His recognition that work done by relatives on the home front - and material goods from home - served a need outside their given purpose, was high praise from a soldier facing the prospect of battle.

The war also required that women at home, in some cases, adopt their male kinfolk’s role of running the family farm. North Carolina was primarily an agricultural state, and the farm was the place where husbands and fathers – and occasionally sons – were missed the most.³⁵ One letter written from training camp and received by the local board for Rowan County states that “my mother having recently been through a very large storm, cannot keep up with the farm work as my father is dead and she has no hired help, asks that I be excused from camp for two weeks to assist her in getting the farm running again.” The letter was forwarded to the soldier’s commanding officer at Camp Sevier, but no evidence exists that the leave was granted.³⁶ Similarly, as inductions became more frequent, women were asked to fill other occupations, releasing men to serve in the army. By January of 1918, the government had begun to reclassify some of the occupations previously deemed essential, and women were asked to fill these jobs. “Arrangements are being made to fill numerous positions with women,” stated a Council

³⁴ Paul Eliot Green Papers, letter dated October 1917.

³⁵ The need for farm labor was often cited in complaints to state and draft officials during the Civil War, when women wrote asking for the return of their menfolk lest they starve. During the First World War this was much less of a problem, as many fewer men were taken from their homes. See chapter one for more detail.

³⁶ Letter to Local Board, Folder 6, Box 35, RG 163, NARA. The soldier notes in his letter that “I would just as likely stay in Camp.”

of Defense press release, “including clerks and office help, ticket sellers of all kinds, and attendants.”³⁷ These measures were deemed necessary due to the “crisis of war,” and presumably men would return to these occupations when they returned home.³⁸

But any return to things as usual would have to await the end of the war, and the conflict simply became a larger burden on the country as time wore on. By the early spring of 1918 the German ‘final push’ had begun and the allies were losing troops that they could not replace. The only real reservoir of soldiery left for the allies was in the U.S., and Crowder’s manpower pool as it currently stood was fast reaching an end. As the U.S. looked toward a war that many were predicting would last until 1920, draft officials would once again re-examine dependency deferments, industrial deferments, war marriages, and possibly enlarging the age range of draft eligible men to secure the men needed to finish the war.³⁹ This would mean even more sacrifice by the women of the community. While letters which describe the willingness of the soldiers to see the thing through are of course one sided, their relatives at home read the language and were surely affected by it, and much else besides.⁴⁰ The growing U.S. casualty lists beget a more determined population, not the opposite. More men were serving, and more women were “signing up” to support the men in uniform. As the summer of 1918 approached,

³⁷ “History of the North Carolina Council of Defense, 1917-1920, 265-266. World War I Collection,” accessed June 28, 2017, <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/ref/collection/p15012coll10/id/4597>.

³⁸ There were eventually limited releases for the harvest in the Summer of 1918. Kastenber, *To Raise and Discipline*, 133. See also PMG 2nd Report, 144.

³⁹ Crowder’s calculations regarding the manpower needs of the army described in chapter two, along with references to long war in official and soldier’s letters. Both governor Bickett and members of the N.C. Congressional delegation opposed lowering the draft age to 18. Bickett, *Public Letters*, 355-357.

⁴⁰ Soldiers seldom kept letters written to them, having better things to do when on the move, but a few do exist in the archives.

the number of women in support of the war effort dwarfed the number of men serving, in uniform or otherwise.⁴¹

The major portion of this ever-growing support was still coordinated by the Councils of Defense and the ever-expanding Red Cross, but the informal contacts between members sometimes proved to be just as important as the organized activities. By June of 1918 the Red Cross had chapters in every North Carolina county, as did the Council of Defense. The Red Cross was increasingly involved locally with the care operations which sewed and knitted garments and blankets for soldiers, as well as other cloth goods, while Council of Defense was beginning to spearhead additional efforts to support the war. War Loan drives, measures to support food conservation for the Food Administration, recruiting new nurses and teachers, assisting the governor in “getting the word out to the public,” all this and more came under the purview of the Council of Defense.⁴² There were the placards, flyers, and newspaper articles, but just as important was the informal contact between the ladies in these organizations. Wrote one Red Cross volunteer from Randolph County: “we knitted, traded recipes, and kept each other company.”⁴³ So, while the official narrative held to the need to conserve food, sew hospital goods and the like, the local and neighborhood level gatherings cemented the importance of the overall sacrifice and support.

⁴¹ Every one of the organizations staffed by women grew exponentially as the war effort increased and the number of men in uniform grew larger.

⁴² NCCD Letter, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 5, Folder 14, NCSA. 2nd Liberty Loan Drive history at <https://www.ncdcr.gov/blog/2017/10/31/north-carolina-and-2nd-liberty-loan-drive>. Food Administration Records WW1 #8, NCSA.

⁴³ Letter to Local Board of Randolph County, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 2, Folder 5, NCSA.

Besides relief missions and fellowship to other volunteers, women were highly present in numerous other important war aims. One of the biggest, and most far reaching of these tasks, were the War Savings Campaigns and Liberty Loan Drives. Women charged with assisting these campaigns were vital to their success. The official history stated that a “large majority of the of the War Savings Societies was organized by women,” and that “they all fell into the work, heart and body.”⁴⁴ War saving assistance, like all tasks undertaken by women during the war, grew exponentially over the course of the conflict. In Orange County, by the time of the Third Liberty Loan in the summer of 1918, there were women chairs in every township, and the report states that the “Woman’s Committee obtained over half of the amount subscribed ... and over two-thirds of the county allotment.”⁴⁵ That this work was important to these individuals was evident in a resignation note penned by Florence Swindell, Hyde County Chairman of the Woman’s Liberty Loan Committee. She wrote: “Giving this work up was one of the hardest things ever had to do. God understands.”⁴⁶

Amid the volunteer work, there was a further push during this period for women nurses. While scores of women from the state were employed as nurses already, in August of 1918 Governor Bickett addressed a letter “To the Women of North Carolina” outlining the request from Washington that the state supply some 460 additional nurses to

⁴⁴ Francis Henry Fries, “History of War Savings Campaign of 1918 in North Carolina,” Barber Print. Co., 1919., 39. Accessed October 4, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/fries/fries.html>.

⁴⁵ Annie Sutton Cameron, “Record of the War Activities in Orange County, North Carolina. 1917-1919,” 64. Transcript of the manuscript, UNC-Chapel Hill, Southern Historical Collection, accessed October 4, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/cameron/cameron.html>.

⁴⁶ History of the Women’s Liberty Loan Committee, Hyde County, “WWI: Women Volunteers, accessed February 1, 2018, <https://www.docsouth.org/wwi-women-volunteers>.

the war effort. Attached to an appeal from the Mrs. Claude Barbee of the Red Cross, the letter cited the nation's need for "25,000 women of character, intelligence and education... one of the best ways women of strong bodies and steady minds can serve."⁴⁷ Both strong bodies and steady minds would be required in France. Elizabeth Herbert Smith, a nurse from Scotland Neck, described conditions as variously "cold... ill... miserable [and] rushed," all the while expected to care at one point for "over 800 patients each."⁴⁸ Members of what Mrs. Barbee described as one of the "noblest professions open to women" had to serve and make sacrifices at the front just as the men did.⁴⁹

And further sacrifice was in fact soon to be required, as the army was continually asking for more and more men. With the battles of the spring and summer of 1918, the U.S. was taking a larger role in the fighting, and more fighting meant more casualties, and more replacements.⁵⁰ The expanding roles of women, both volunteer and official, would necessarily grow larger. The Red Cross knew the challenges it faced with the growing number of troops overseas and the requisite need for, among other things, more nurses. "The normal sickness among five million men, not including wounds in battle, is 100,000... Add to this a large casualty percentage, and we can ship all the trained nurses in the United States and still have too few to meet the need."⁵¹ But the war continued in

⁴⁷ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 138.

⁴⁸ Excerpts from diary on separate days throughout October of 1918. "Elizabeth Herbert Smith Taylor Diaries (#4994). Transcript of the manuscript, UNC-Chapel Hill, Southern Historical Collection, accessed October 5, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/taylordiary/taylordiary.html>.

⁴⁹ Quotation from Barbee letter included in Governor Bickett's call for nurses. Bickett, *Public Letters*, 138.

⁵⁰ By September of 1918 the U.S. army had almost 1.3 million men in France, close to 800,000 arriving in the months June – August alone. Dickinson, *The Building of an Army*, 116 - 118.

⁵¹ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 138.

spite of the nurse shortage, and the legislation to expand the draft to younger and older men was passed, the registration date set for 12 September 1918.⁵² This call was designed to create a manpower pool from which, in addition to the previous drafts, the army estimated would produce some 6 to 7 million suitable draftees from an available group of about 24 million men – almost one quarter of the population of the United States.⁵³

The September 12th registration would be the biggest of the war, and by this time the registration and draft boards were heavily supported by a volunteer element, increasingly composed of women. Registration work was “ably and cheerfully assisted by the young lady schoolteachers ... and other volunteers.”⁵⁴ Teachers, students from the state’s women’s colleges, secretaries and others were asked once again to assist potential draftees in filling out questionnaires and draft cards, to help with transportation to and from registration sites, and to help tabulate and record accurately all the information. The contrast in efficiency between this registration and the first one in June of 1917 was striking. Whereas even small boards took weeks to fully complete and ship the assembled records to Washington for the first registration in June 1917, in this instance one of the largest jurisdictions in the state, in Winston-Salem, could this time collate, assemble and ship the entire grouping of registration forms to Raleigh within 24 hours of

⁵² The supply of men in class I was not going to be enough to build a force of 6 to 7 million, the estimate with which Crowder was working at the time as being large enough to take the war into 1920. PMG *2nd Report*, 25-28.

⁵³ Up to this point the 21-30 age group had supplied around 2 million draftees, and Crowder was against taking men from anywhere other than Class I, so the option was to take more men and enlarge the overall numbers, creating a larger class I. PMG, *2nd Report*, 309-311.

⁵⁴ *Anson County*, 327.

the end of registration, and women volunteers were essential to this undertaking. The Chief Clerk of the Winston-Salem Board wrote that this would have been impossible without “the entire clerical forces” of the two largest companies and three largest banks in the city, and that the result would speed others throughout the nation, “saving the lives of our men and those of our allies associated with us in this great World War.”⁵⁵ This support would continue throughout the classification and mobilization of this final complement of soldiers.

That this would be the final call on the nation’s manpower was implied, but not known, and the size of the women’s support network continued to grow. And while the tenor of the letters received from the soldiers saw at least an optimism on the front, not all saw the end of the war coming too soon. One soldier wrote “It seems that the allies are doing good business now it’s very encouraging. I hope it won’t take us long.”⁵⁶ Another soldier, however, was more cautious. In a letter to his aunt in August 1918, James Lane wrote “it is not expected here that we can spend next summer at home, but everybody fully expects to spend the next one (1920) at home.”⁵⁷ As the classification of this last group of over 13 million men proceeded, the recruiting for nurses and other volunteers continued unabated. That the war required the full expansion of the community, and their support otherwise, was accepted by the citizens of the state.

⁵⁵ Report of the Winston Salem Local Board, Military Collection, WWI #3, Box 2, 80-81. In the event the drive from Winston-Salem to Raleigh took six hours to complete. The group took a second vehicle just in case they had mechanical troubles.

⁵⁶ Letter written 22 July 1918, by Earlie Smith. NCDR NCWW1 Blog, April 28, 2018.

⁵⁷ Letter from James G. Lane to aunt, August 1918 – from excerpts in author’s possession.

And this last call was especially apt as a measure of community support. While previous call-ups had simply placed men into their respective classes and subsequently drafted them according to their lottery numbers, this time the army wanted the young men first. Having decided that younger men comprised the best “raw material” for soldiers, the army instructed local boards to classify the 18 to 20-year-old group first.⁵⁸ These men and boys, were the sons and grandsons of the state. This concentration of such a specific part of the population conceivably going off to war, to be followed eventually by men older than those taken previously – might have given their mothers and sisters pause, but the support effort was already saturated with women - and the local narrative still was to finish the job for a worthy notion. As one local chronicler would record it in 1920, “a noble cause answered by a noble call.”⁵⁹

The call to war that these men and women responded to, however, would be over before any of the soldiers registered in this last round ever made it to France. But importantly, as described previously, none of these men or their families knew this at the time. Indeed, the letters they daily received from their men in the army described a war that would probably continue for some time. The mothers and wives saw not the rapid end of the conflict, but rather the possibility of their menfolk fighting in France, and the support given them, both personally through letters and materially through the sewing

⁵⁸ Dickinson, *The Building of an Army*, 110-111. Also PMG 2nd Report, 311.

⁵⁹ Craighead-Dunlap Chapter, *Anson County*, 368.

circles and other activities, gave the soldiers strength in the field and the community strength on the home front. The end of the war in November 1918 surprised many.⁶⁰

The last of the fighting did not end the work for the thousands of women in North Carolina (and elsewhere). Most of the soldiers did not return until 1919 and 1920, and many were still recovering in hospitals in France and England, some from various wounds, and some from the influenza epidemic. The Red Cross still supplied care packages and hospital supplies, and men still received letters from home. When the troops did return their trains were still served by canteens staffed with volunteers, returning units were greeted by parades, and these measures once again were typically both organized and staffed by women. By the end of 1920, most of the extra support groups had been disbanded. Red Cross auxiliaries were shuttering, the War Camp Community Service closing along with the camps it served, and the Women's Committee of the Council of Defense was disbanded with its parent organization in 1921. Many of the local clubs and church groups of course remained, but the individuals in these clubs soon reverted once again to their pre-war roles, supporting themselves and their families.

That community support was vital to what many labeled the "crisis" of war effort is without question, and women in North Carolina were essential to the overall effort. It is beyond guesswork to imagine how the war would have been fought, the draft managed and supported, men supplied to the army either through recruiting or conscription, or a

⁶⁰ Many soldiers thought the war would last longer. Writing from France, several mentioned that they expected the war to last until the Summer of 1919 at least. See letter from Calhoun Batts to mother, http://newbern.cpclub.org/research/wwi/batts_calhoun.htm.

combination of both, without the overt support of these women. There is no question that without the support of the wives, mothers and daughters, the task would have been next to unmanageable. Indeed, even with passive support, the task of fielding and supporting an army, over such a short space of time, would have been almost impossible. The support of these women was not only through giving their men to the military, but giving support to them after they left, wherever they were needed. These women mirrored the thoughts of their men, worried over their safety, and did what they could to give to the war effort. By the war's end, the number of women serving in some way or other dwarfed the number of men involved in the war, including those in uniform. Had this conflict been fought without the active support of this community of women, it would have been a very different war.

CHAPTER V
RACE, CLASS AND THE DRAFT

Racism and classism existed in the South before the draft, and the war did little to alleviate it. In fact, by the end of the war the white elite that managed the draft in North Carolina was more firmly entrenched at the apex of the power structure than they had been before, and conscription helped make this possible. There is evidence of racism and prejudice throughout the war by local draft boards, but the motivations behind it were not sinister; rather, they were products of the social and racial precepts of the time. The army asked for soldiers, and state draft officials sought to provide them. The evidence shows that local draft officials felt the crisis just as sharply as those in Washington and worked to supply the numbers expected of them. From a state with a large black population, and an even larger population of poor whites, North Carolina was simply going to have to supply these men as the majority of their contribution. However, within the local boards, the decisions made with regard to poor men, and especially black men, were obviously biased. When measured against the decisions made for middle-class white men, there is no question that these less affluent men were more apt to be drafted because of their economic status. Still, the decisions regarding draftees largely conformed to regulations, were viewed as fair by board members, and appeals were usually decided in favor of the boards. The army at war was not a social experiment, and calls for soldiers were not expected to remake society, but simply to produce men. Within the customs and societal

structure of the time, this is exactly what happened. The army was racist and classist but also a mirror of the state from which it was rendered.

There are several important works on race and the war, although most studies of black soldiers in the war concern not their encounters with the draft but their experiences once they were in uniform. As mentioned in the introduction, many of these books contrast the excellent combat records of black units serving with the French Army, while examining why the U.S. Army never fielded a black combat unit under its own flag during the war.¹ The classic work on black soldiers is Arthur Barbeau and Florette Henri's *The Unknown Soldiers: African American Troops in World War I*. This book outlines the discrimination and treatment of black soldiers in a white army, and their return to a still racist country which afforded them little respect for their sacrifices. A more recent scholarly examination is Chad William's *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era*, which gives some insight from the soldiers about how they viewed their service. Another book which explores the black experience and the war is Nina Mjagkij's *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience during World War I*. She looks at all aspects of black support for the war, from the leadership to the soldiers, and also explores the racism and repression which the black population experienced even in light of this broad support.² There are other works dealing with black soldiers too, including Jeffrey Sammon's *Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American*

¹ Black combat units from the U.S. served with the French Army during the war.

² Nina Mjagkij *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience during World War I* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011).

Quest for Equality, which also explores racism on the home front, but is mainly a history of black soldiers in combat.³ All these works examine the exemplary record of black combat troops, but none of these books deeply examines conscription, except to mention that most black soldiers found their way into uniform through the draft, and at a higher percentage than the white population amongst which they lived.

Other scholars who have examined race have done so within the confines of their larger studies of the war. Mark Ellis' *Race, War and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I*, investigates the mistrust of blacks during the war, efforts to both keep the black population from becoming subversive and disloyal, and the complete lack of understanding of this segment of Americans by most of the government and the white population.⁴ Adrienne Lentz-Smith also explores racism in the war era in *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I*. The previously mentioned works by Capozzola and Kennedy also both examine racism to some degree; Capozzola writes that that "few black people openly questioned whether they owed military service to the state."⁵ Kennedy mentions black soldiers only briefly, but maintains that "the Selective Service System did treat blacks unfairly," limiting his discussion of the matter to only a few pages.⁶

This chapter primarily deals with registering, classifying and drafting a soldiery from North Carolina within the confines of the selective service system as it evolved

³ Jeffrey Sammon *Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2014).

⁴ Mark Ellis *Race, War and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

⁵ Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 33.

⁶ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162.

through the course of the war. It will also examine some of the broader support for the war within the black community, especially where it affected service in the army and support of the men who had been called up to serve. Mostly, though, it is about how race and class figured into the choices made by draft officials. Local boards generally picked poor men, and a higher percentage of black men than white.⁷ Theodore Kornweibel writes that “despite official denials, the enforcement of the Selective Service Act was riddled with racial bias,” and the evidence shows that this was true.⁸ But, the racism experienced by the draftees was institutional racism, not something new brought about by the draft itself. One result of the decentralized process erected by Crowder and his staff meant that local prejudices were in full play during the conscription process. Crowder may have, as described by David Kennedy, “earnestly tried” to create a fair and just system, but the realities of 1917 America impacted decisions more than did the broad outlines of the Selective Service Act.⁹ There was a large degree of both racism and classism, especially in the South, but directed to supply men whose removal would cause the least disruption, the boards chose their largest population segment, poor farmers and laborers. Draft legislation gave them the tools with which to discriminate and their bias surprised no one, including black community leaders.

Before the U.S. entry into war, according to Nancy Gentle Ford, “the majority of African Americans supported U.S. neutrality and saw the war as an outgrowth of the

⁷ PMG *Second Report*, 192. Nationwide blacks made up 10% of the population and 13% of those drafted. For further numbers see Mjagkij, *Loyalty*, 79 and Kornweibel, *Investigate Everything*, 87.

⁸ Theodore Kornweibel, *Investigate Everything: Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I* (Bloomington, IN : Indiana University Press, 2002), 86.

⁹ Quotation from Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162. Jeanette Keith agrees that the regulations as written were not purposely biased. See Keith, *Rich Man's War*, 75.

colonialism that subjugated the ‘darker people.’”¹⁰ But after war was declared, many black leaders urged support of the war. This change was not due to patriotism, but the notion that there was nothing to gain from dissent and much to lose with it. Many, including W.E.B. DuBois, hoped to gain attention for what he termed the “special grievance” of the blacks in the country after the war, and saw war service as a payment toward that end.¹¹ Other black leaders supported this view, and as historian Chad Williams writes, “most African American political leaders and much of the black press vigorously proclaimed the patriotic fidelity of the race.”¹² Officially at least, the war had the support of most of the country’s black leadership.¹³

The first component of both racism and classism began with the draft boards. Tasked with providing men, they would prey on the most plentiful and those least equipped to argue that they were of better use at home. Williams writes that the makeup of the boards “ultimately had negative repercussions for African Americans and working-class whites, particularly those in the South, who represented the majority of the region’s population and eligible inductees.”¹⁴ The makeup of the boards has been described previously, but it is worth mentioning again that these men came from the existing power structure. Always white, always male, never representative of the majority in any jurisdiction, the boards retained the same basic profile even when personnel changed throughout the course of the war. The Local Board for Winston-Salem, for instance, had

¹⁰ Nancy Gentle Ford, *Americans All: Foreign-Born Soldiers in World War I* (College Station : Texas A & M University Press, 2009), 55.

¹¹ Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 75.

¹² Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 26.

¹³ The issue of popular black support for the war is addressed more fully below.

¹⁴ Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 54.

four chairmen and eleven other members variously in the makeup of a three-person board and attached support staff through the 17 months that the board was in existence, and all were drawn from the privileged white elite.¹⁵ Other boards in the state experienced similar changes in personnel, but even where the staff changed, the makeup stayed largely the same throughout. The boards and the attached agencies and volunteers wanted as little disruption to the status quo as did the Provost Marshal General (PMG), who oversaw the draft from Washington. Within the regulations set down by the army, they worked toward this end.

The Local Boards were given huge amount of discretion in the process of selecting draftees from the registrants, and their decisions were almost always final. Indeed, the majority of the boards felt that only they were qualified to make what was always to them a local issue, the careful removal of a man from their jurisdiction to serve in the army. The district boards placed between the local boards and the draft officials in Raleigh ostensibly had the ability to overturn local decisions, but this hardly ever took place.¹⁶ This was the process that the PMG wanted, the original argument being that only a local entity would have both the legitimacy and flexibility to actually carry out the task assigned to them.¹⁷ The soldiers chosen from the registrants were those men who would

¹⁵ Bound report, Local Exemption Board, City of Winston-Salem, 24. Military Collection WWI #3, Box 2, NCSA.

¹⁶ The local boards had little use for the district boards, complaining that the members of the district boards knew little about the men they were asked to judge, and were not fit to overrule the local boards. Nearly all of the feedback stated that the industrial and agricultural deferments that were handled at the district level would be better placed with the local board. Examples in Local Board Experience Files Gates, Johnston (#1), and Lee Counties, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹⁷ Much of the internal correspondence from Crowder to the state adjutants, and the internal correspondence between the PMG and the inspectors sent to assess the system emphasize the fact that a top-down federalized institution could not have functioned with the same elasticity as the local boards,

almost always eventually make up the army Crowder wanted.¹⁸ For the entire period between civilian to draftee, these men were under the discretion of the board, and after induction into the army, they were under military orders and out of local hands. To describe the local boards as powerful within their jurisdictions is not an exaggeration.¹⁹ There were, however, some matters that were outlined for them by the legislation.

One of these matters was automatic exemption from the draft. These were almost exclusively for posts held by white men. Besides those already in the military awaiting orders, men in the state and federal governments, the civil service, customs officers, even some postal employees, and a few other positions, were exempt from the draft. These positions were nearly entirely male, and especially throughout the South, these posts simply could not be held by black men. These exemptions were largely accepted by the boards in the early stages and revisited in the discourse of the draft only later when an enlarged age range was being considered. For the first call, the only objection to these positions was as to why some of these jobs could not be held by men outside the draftable ages. After all, asked one board chairman, "Could not an able man in his 40s deliver the

many of which changed members, locations and staffs throughout the war. For example, see Kastenbergh, *To Raise and Discipline*, 101-106.

¹⁸ Some selectees were rejected at camp by army doctors. Examples in Local Board Experience File, Randolph County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA. See also *Defects Found in Drafted Men. Statistical Information Comp. from the Draft Records Showing the Physical Condition of the Men Registered and Examined in Pursuance of the Requirements of the Selective Service Act.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919).

¹⁹ In the event, hardly any appeals to the district board were overturned and even fewer by the president. In North Carolina only one appeal in nine was upheld by President Wilson, and nationwide only 436 appeals were made to the president throughout the course of the draft. *PMG 2nd Report*, 52, 90. Crowder's office was asked for clarification of key points countless times, and while they would occasionally rule on finer details, normally they simply referred the local board to the relevant orders or legislation and directed them to act as they thought best.

mail to free up a [qualified] single registrant to go fight?”²⁰ But, with much else to deal with, the issue of exempt occupations was never revisited, and these men remained outside the reach of the draft for the duration.

The first registration was rather hurried, but the state registered 63,599 men.²¹ As noted previously, the registration was conducted at voting precincts under the direction of the newly appointed registration boards. White citizens operated the voting apparatus where these men registered. Mjagkij argues that even this first step was discriminatory. She writes that “for the majority of black men, most of whom lived in the rural South, registering for the draft must have been a daunting ordeal.”²² She speculates that these mostly illiterate men were anxious over the possibility of angering white employers, taking time they could hardly spare from their own small plots, and were especially worried by the fact that polling sites were places these men “usually avoided for fear of attracting the wrath of whites.”²³ Nonetheless, both white and black men generally registered as ordered, and the numbers of no-shows at this point were only slightly higher for the black population in the state as for the white. Janet Hudson writes that “black Carolinians responded as required and often with enthusiasm.”²⁴ Crowder knew some men would slip through the cracks, either by design or through complacency, but most registered and awaited the call for examination.

²⁰ Local Board Experience File, Chowan County, Box 35, RG 163.

²¹ The number of black registrants for this first call was 19,502 in North Carolina, 9.88% of the state’s registrants. First Report, 82.

²² Mjagkij, *Loyalty*, 74.

²³ Mjagkij, *Loyalty*, 74.

²⁴ Downs and Ryan Floyd, eds. *The American South*, 146. Statistics from PMG 2nd Report, 147.

Examination, at least initially, meant first a physical exam. There were no separate facilities for black or white soldiers, but for the state's 114 draft boards the examiners were all white men. In general, black registrants were found by board doctors to be more fit than their white counterparts, placing them in Class I and making them physically eligible for service. Mjagkij notes that some 75 percent of black men were found to be fit to serve, commenting that this was a "surprisingly high percentage" considering the lives that most black Southerners led in the period.²⁵ Physical requirements in general were not excessively stringent, and local board doctors sent men on the outer edges of acceptability, with one board chairman capturing the sentiment of the many when he wrote that "the board always decided marginal cases in favor of the government."²⁶ Local boards later adopted a more exacting examination, reasoning that it was more difficult to send alternates in the place of a man rejected at camp than it was to ensure that the selectee would be accepted by army doctors, but the disparity in numbers remained.²⁷

Men who passed the physical could request deferment, but these were less likely for the poor and almost nonexistent for poor blacks, at least when left to the discretion of the board. Registrants could be granted a vocational or an agricultural exemption if their occupation "require[d] their continued service in civil life rather than in the Army," but

²⁵ Mjagkij, *Loyalty*, 75-76.

²⁶ Local Board Experience File, Montgomery County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

²⁷ Ibid. Eventually the army relaxed standards for height, weight, and teeth, the three things most often cited as things the local boards wanted to change. The height eventually reached a minimum of 5 ft, the weight minimum was 100lbs, and the minimum number of teeth was 14 – eight molars and six incisors, opposed so that they could chew their food. *Defects Found in Drafted Men. Statistical Information Comp. from the Draft Records Showing the Physical Condition of the Men Registered and Examined in Pursuance of the Requirements of the Selective Service Act.* (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1919), 8.

there is no evidence of a black man either requesting or receiving either an industrial or agricultural deferment. Official records show that even in a primarily agrarian state like North Carolina, less than five percent of the population received an agricultural exemption, and even fewer got industrial exemptions, where the figure was below one percent.²⁸ While there were some instances where industrial concerns in the state received deferments for their workers, this was almost never true for small farmers.²⁹ The vast majority of the deferments in the state were for dependency, those men who were allowed to stay home since their removal “from society” may cause “undue disruption.”³⁰

Dependency deferments, writes Theodore Hickel had “clear class based and racial inflections.”³¹ While boards examined men throughout the summer of 1917, they would later report that the numbers of draftees called at this early stage were manageable, and most had little difficulty certifying enough men to meet their numbers.³² There were, however, some indications that the deferment issue would become more difficult as the war progressed - if indeed more men were needed. Up to this point, most of the local boards were able to defer all husbands with children, and some, as noted earlier, were able to defer all married men.³³ The resulting pool of draftees consisted mainly of men

²⁸ PMG, *Final Report*, 264, 266. Most agricultural exemptions were given to large production farms, not to smaller subsistence plots.

²⁹ See for instance Bandel, *North Carolina*, 3, 36-37.

³⁰ PMG, *2nd Report*, 168.

³¹ K. Walter Hickel, "Justice and the Highest Kind of Equality Require Discrimination": Citizenship, Dependency, and Conscription in the South, 1917-1919." *The Journal of Southern History* Vol. 66, No. 4 (November, 2000), 751.

³² Numbers from Dickinson, 94-96.

³³ This is described in detail in the previous chapters.

from the lower strata of the economic scale, mostly single, and primarily those whose loss to the community least affected the overall prosperity of the local jurisdiction – as determined by the local board. If this first quota had been the only call, then some of the difficult choices of the future might have been avoided. This proved not to be the case.

A second issue at this early stage was that almost all the early inductees were white men. There were plenty of draftable black men, and the boards had certified them as such, but the army had not yet decided what to do with large numbers of black soldiers, and camps to train them were not yet ready. Additionally, white leaders could not agree on what to do with black troops and had yet to decide even where even to train them. Williams writes that black soldiers “symbolized the possibility of violent resistance to white supremacy,” to leaders in the South, noting that Mississippi senator James Vardaman warned that introducing black troops to the region would “inevitably lead to disaster.”³⁴ What the army did know was that white men would be sent to France first, they needed white soldiers, and priority was placed on white draftees.³⁵ All army units were segregated and would remain so, therefore black men selected were simply kept from entrainment until such time as the army was ready for them.³⁶ Especially for the boards in the South the delays in taking black draftees would be a matter of concern.

³⁴ Williams, *Torchbearers*, 31.

³⁵ Crowder knew that Pershing would command a segregated army but had not received full instructions as to what to do with black draftees. Pershing was the sole arbiter as to how the AEF would fight and had the backing of Wilson and Baker regarding employment of black soldiers.

³⁶ The riot of black soldiers in Houston in August 1917 was the primary cause of the initial reluctance to train black men in the South, but eventually this would change, and black men would train at some of the same camps as white soldiers. The larger issue was what to do with black soldiers once they were in the service. The overwhelming majority eventually became service and supply troops, although two black combat divisions were eventually formed, to see service in France fighting with the French Army. Both units fought with distinction. See previously listed works by Williams, and Sammon especially.

Some boards held half their quota in black men, and subsequently had to examine more white registrants to meet their quotas. But, as stated earlier, the numbers were still relatively small, and enough men were available, even without the black draftees.³⁷

However, when answering the early queries regarding mobilization, many of the boards expressed their irritation to the PMG on the subject of black draftees, describing the disruption of so many young black men who expected to be inducted who were “simply idle as they have mostly left employment in anticipation of the call to camp.”³⁸ Interestingly, only a few of the boards expressed anger about white soldiers being sent before black soldiers, but most were concerned that they would have trouble retaining the black selectees in light of the fact that so many had ceased employment, and might possibly be more difficult to reach when their notices were eventually sent to them.³⁹ Furthermore, in the absence of an induction notice, many of these men once again began to look for work, and what Kornweibel describes as a “massive migration out of the South” began. Many of these economic migrants would prove to be out of reach later, further complicating the issue of delinquency regarding black draftees and registrants.⁴⁰

Another concern for a few of the boards was the transient nature of black selectees even within the state. The chief clerk for the Winston-Salem board reported

³⁷ More than 21,000 black men from North Carolina served in the war. Downs, *American South*, 147.

³⁸ Bladen County Local Board Experience File, RG 163, NARA. Many of the early questionnaires describe the same situation, that black men who had been certified for service expected to be called; many had quit their jobs in order to be ready and were now more simply waiting on the army.

³⁹ Pitt County reported that there were more blacks than whites in their pool of draftable men. Pitt County Local Board Experience File, RG 163, NARA.

⁴⁰ Kornweibel, *Investigate Everything*, 113. Carl Degler wrote that “in the seven years after 1916, it has been estimated that as many as a million negroes migrated northward.” Carl Degler, *Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America* (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1959).

that “with the large factories in the city we find that the Negro population is constantly changing, with many coming and going” in search of employment opportunities in the cities factories and warehouses.⁴¹ The same problem was noted by the board in Charlotte.⁴² While this would eventually prove disruptive to state conscription officials, many were simply, as Kornweibel describes, “taking advantage of the booming economy and pursuing their own self-interest.”⁴³ This made keeping up with registrants especially difficult, as even the men who came in and registered as required would often return to their hometowns when they lost jobs or went to visit families, but busy draft boards would not see this as a major issue until the actual induction of black troops.

It was in the wake of the first call that the local boards were surveyed across the nation about their individual experiences in the draft thus far, prompting the first major changes in the process.⁴⁴ By this point the boards across the country had classified, but not yet inducted, the full first quota of 687,000 men. The new camps were not quite ready for the full amount, so that by the time the board questionnaires were filled out and returned to Washington only some 495,000 soldiers had actually entered the army.⁴⁵ The draft boards knew only that more men from their existing pools were scheduled to be drafted, but only knew specific numbers about a week before the men were to be

⁴¹ Report, Local Exemption Board, City of Winston Salem, 83. Military Collection WWI #3, Box 2, NCSA.

⁴² Charlotte #1 Local Board Experience File, RG 163, NARA.

⁴³ Kornweibel, *Investigate Everything*, 116.

⁴⁴ These are the Local Board Questionnaires first introduced in Chapter 2.

⁴⁵ Monthly inductions listed from first to last. Dickinson, *To Build an Army*, 92. Formula for state and county quotas in Dickinson, 93-96. By 20 December about 527,000 soldiers, or around 76% of the first quota, had been delivered to training camps.

mobilized.⁴⁶ As the boards awaited the call from the state adjutant general, they reported on their activities, returning their questionnaires to Washington in November of 1917. As Crowder's staff began the process of evaluating how the system had functioned thus far, a few things were readily apparent. First, classification would have to be performed differently. The personal physical examination of each registrant was time consuming, and registrants who were hurriedly examined were often later rejected by army doctors at camp.⁴⁷ The need for soldiers made the army change the physical requirements periodically throughout the war, but the boards still tended to pass men who existed on the margin of the physical requirements, especially regarding their weight, arguing reasonably that army food and exercise may solve the problem for a man close to the minimum requirement. At any rate, men who were deferred needed no examination, and the questionnaire would remove many from the possibility of being drafted, at least for the time being.

Second, the two-tiered classification system that the boards had been using was proving too inflexible, and furthermore some boards in the state were using the system to discriminate against black registrants by not issuing deserving men deferments and placing them in the draft pool, “for the reason that there was no immediate danger of these colored registrants being sent to camp”... resulting in the deferments of white men “in over four hundred cases.”⁴⁸ The state Adjutant General wrote to Crowder outlining

⁴⁶ Mobilizations were varied, from one person to 220,000 men. Throughout the course of the war there were 1,708 separate calls made from the PMG. PMG, *2nd Report*, 5.

⁴⁷ Richmond County, Local Board Experience File, Box 35, RG 163, NARA. Several of the Local Board Questionnaires mention this, that they often certified men on the margin of army regulations. Many would later become eligible anyway with changes in weight and height requirements.

⁴⁸ Letter from Adjutant General to Crowder, 12 August 1917. Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

his concerns on the matter. These deferments were not necessarily permanent, but the men who received them often went on with their lives as if they were, and draft officials worried that they would be more difficult to reach later. Besides being biased, the current method was cumbersome and inflexible. To ensure the best use of the nation's manpower, there would need to be a more specific classification system.

Third, the method of determining dependency had to be revised. If the local boards did not infer that a larger number of husbands and even fathers might eventually need to be called, Crowder certainly suspected it. Once the boards moved past their ability to exempt most husbands and fathers, they would need a method to measure dependency which did not require each registrant to appear before the board.⁴⁹ While the original method had supplied the men needed up to that point, it was far too unwieldy to use moving forward. Appearing before the board in every instance - sometimes with supporting affidavits, with family and work colleagues or employers, or simply not appearing at all and causing the board to detail someone to contact you - all were potential disruptions to the "social and industrial" lives of these communities. This situation was exactly what draft officials were trying to prevent. The entire process needed updating, and Crowder and his staff in Washington undertook to change it.

By December of 1917, the new format was largely in place. Gone were the two designations of available for service or deferred, replaced by the five new classes and

⁴⁹ Some boards expressed the view that too many were given dependency exemptions, with one chairman writing "if the parents or grand-parents" of a father "are disposed and can take care the dependent or dependents," the exemption should not be allowed. He writes simply, "the Country is at war, and the Government wants men." Letter to N.C. Adjutant General from Chairman Wilmington Exemption Board, 18 July 1917, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

their various subdivisions.⁵⁰ Also gone was the physical exam for every registrant. In the words of one board member, “we had no need to examine a man with one hand lost to a farm accident. A reliable statement to that effect would remove him from the possibility of service.”⁵¹ Lastly, Crowder tackled the issue of deferments. While the local boards were doing exactly as he asked, there had to be in place a method to more accurately determine a man's need to be deferred against his ability to serve. More men were needed, and Crowder wanted the right men for the army, those “most easily spared from civil life.”⁵²

To this end the army instituted the questionnaire. By any measure, the questionnaires made the draft even more discriminatory. While historians tend to agree that the official policy from Washington was not inherently biased, Jennifer Keene notes that the draft was at least “complex and unpredictable,” and any additional step was more apt to affect the lower strata of the state in a negative way.⁵³ The questionnaire was a sixteen-page survey that investigated every circumstance of a registrant’s life, and was outside of the ability of a large portion of the population to complete. Many of the registrants were functionally illiterate, and the questions regarding income, investments, land, marital status, children, other dependent relatives, divorce, occupation, health, all were beyond an accurate accounting by many of the registrants. David Kennedy notes that in the South levels of education in years was 6.9 for “native whites” and “2.6 for

⁵⁰ PMG *2nd Report*, 45. These are the five classifications first mentioned in Chapter two.

⁵¹ Washington County, Local Board Experience File, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

⁵² PMG, *2nd Report*, 6.

⁵³ Quotation from Keene, *Doughboys*, 90. For historians and “fair” draft regulations see Keith, *Rich Man’s War*, 75, and Kennedy, *Over Here*, 162.

southern blacks.”⁵⁴ Many registrants struggled with the questionnaires, but some also simply didn’t bother to fill them out, causing problems later.⁵⁵ After examining the questionnaire, the board determined the registrant’s status and some were scheduled to appear before the board for a physical examination.⁵⁶ This allowed the board to cull the men who were obviously unfit or unable to leave their homes without the occupants being "subject to public charity."⁵⁷ Equipped with this information, and with the power to request supporting evidence, the boards theoretically made more informed decisions, but the process was actually made more difficult for the registrants, especially those on the margins of society, the poor and illiterate.

The questionnaire expanded the community footprint of the draft, but the form itself made the draft even more biased toward the less advantaged population in the state. The questionnaires were lengthy and detailed, and as mentioned previously, for many registrants and their families were outside of their ability to complete correctly. David Bettez comments that “illiterate or semiliterate southern farmers of both races would have found it impossible to fill out the complicated forms; nor would most have had documentation of their annual income.”⁵⁸ While some registrants may not have understood some specific details of the questionnaire, there was also that sizeable group

⁵⁴ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 188.

⁵⁵ Men who did not return questionnaires were considered delinquents; a matter examined more closely in the following chapter.

⁵⁶ The new method meant far fewer physical exams and netted many more Class I registrants. PMG *2nd Report*, 46.

⁵⁷ Letter from PMG to Adjutant General of North Carolina. Military Collection WWI #3, Box 2, Folder 5, NCSA.

⁵⁸ David Bettez, *Kentucky and the Great War: World War I on the Home Front* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016), 341.

who were simply illiterate and unable to cope with the questionnaire itself. At first, many simply approached the board for help in filling out the forms. The state Council of Defense observed later that local boards were “nearly swamped with work in getting these questionnaires properly filled out.”⁵⁹ Eventually Legal Advisory Boards were established throughout the state to help registrants complete these new forms. In addition, calls were made for teachers, clerks, and anyone else who could help complete the forms, enlarging the body of persons somehow directly connected to the draft.⁶⁰ However, for most of the state’s citizens the questionnaire did not usher in equal treatment in the draft.

Also significant was the army’s overhaul to the classification system. Gone were the two basic designations of either held for service or deferred, but here again the tools remained in place for boards who were so inclined to discriminate against their charges. In place of the two-tiered structure came the system which placed men into one of five classes, the first class being immediately available for service and the last was wholly exempt. The intervening classes had different degrees of draftability, but Crowder’s office had already made known that they planned to call only those in class I. In the event seemingly all black men not deferred thus far were moved into Class I, making them eligible for induction.⁶¹ White men deferred by this time, however, retained that status pending re-examination of their cases. This mattered little for black registrants for

⁵⁹ Letter from NCCD to county chairmen, dated 29 December 1917. WWI #3, Box 6, Folder 14, NCSA.

⁶⁰ Letter from NCCD to local board chairmen. Military Collection WWI #3, Box 6, Folder 14, NCSA. See also Craighead-Dunlap, *Anson County*, 327.

⁶¹ Buncombe County, Local Board Experience File, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

the time being, as the army had yet to call black draftees, but in general calls were becoming increasingly more frequent.

In conjunction with the other changes, the army also stopped taking volunteers in December of 1917, ending the only way that black soldiers could enter the army. Crowder felt that the ability to recruit men “played havoc ... with the orderly process of selection.”⁶² Now all men entering the army would do so through the selection process as carried out through the local boards. Something long wanted by Crowder, this would make the “scientific selection” of men easier, even if the Navy and Marines were still able to accept volunteers. This would alleviate a number of issues with the local boards in the state, as many of the boards had reported registrants delinquent, only later to find that they were, in the words of one chairman, “enlisted elsewhere and already serving.”⁶³ Once again, when the boards were rushing to examine or induct men early in the war, they did not have the resources to be anything but reactive. The ability to classify all the registrants, secure in the knowledge that they could not volunteer, made the numbers more easily manageable.⁶⁴

Where black soldiers did serve, they typically served with distinction even in the face of the racism that existed throughout the army.⁶⁵ Janet Hudson writes that black

⁶² PMG, 2nd Report, 6.

⁶³ Local Board Questionnaire, Pender County. Military Collection WWI #3, Box 4, Folder 4, NCSA. Many of the questionnaires from other jurisdictions report the same.

⁶⁴ Crowder had to wait until the summer of 1918 before the entire manpower of the country was under his purview, as the Navy and Marine Corps could still enlist men until August of 1918. With the coming enlargement of the registrant group and projected expansion of the army Congress changed the law and made all eligible men subject to the draft and only able to enter the military through the selection process.

⁶⁵ One North Carolina stationed at the Charleston Navy Yard describes a minstrel show in blackface while in training. James G. Lane to mother, Undated Letter, Box 3 Folder 3, NCSA.

soldiers from North Carolina “made their mark. They were among the first American combat soldiers, black or white, to arrive in Europe ... among the early stevedore volunteers ... the recipients of military awards and honors ... and among the last returning soldiers.”⁶⁶ Black soldiers were also acutely aware of their position in the society, even while in the army, serving only as service troops or in combat in what Williams describes as “a Jim Crow division,”⁶⁷ However, with most black newspapers and leaders demanding that blacks be allowed to serve, and especially later in the war when the need for men became more urgent, some described positive aspects to serving, even in a racist country. As Williams describes, “with improved health, education, and self-confidence, many African-American soldiers saw themselves as better men.”⁶⁸ Even so, the draft remained biased against poor men, and especially against blacks.

The key piece in measuring a registrant’s ability to receive a deferment was the allotment paid to a soldier’s wife or other dependents. In conjunction with an available insurance policy for soldiers should they die in the army, the allotment quite literally put a price on a man’s service. Congress had enacted the system of payments to dependents of men serving in the armed forces in November of 1917. Put in place while the PMG was sorting through the early questionnaire responses, these funds sought to ensure that families were provided for while the men were away fighting. The allotment paid \$30 to each wife who had a husband taken for service, \$15 from the soldier and \$15 from the government. In addition, families with children could receive as much as \$65 per month

⁶⁶ McKinley and Sabol, *North Carolina’s Experience*, 73.

⁶⁷ Williams, *Torchbearers*, 68.

⁶⁸ Williams, *Torchbearers*, 98.

for those receiving the highest amount. The checks were paid directly to wives or other dependents, and enlisted soldiers were required to advance the requisite portion from their pay, unless they could prove a compelling reason not to do so.⁶⁹ With the institution of the allotment came a benchmark against which a man's worth could be measured, a simple formula determined whether he was worth more at home or in the army. While established to create an environment where families were not left destitute, the allotments also made possible even more institutionalized discrimination regarding race and class in the selection of draftees, especially in the South.

Establishing a dollar amount as the standard against which to measure dependency had far-reaching consequences for the draft in North Carolina. The wage of \$30 a month was a significant amount for a laborer in the South of the period; in 1913 a farm laborer in the South could expect to earn around \$20 a month. Even with the increased wages of a war economy, this number would have to increase by one-third to reach the army's lowest benchmark, something most contemporary sources indicate had not been done up to this point.⁷⁰ The \$65 that was paid to a large family was more money than many of these families had ever seen in a month. This measure, replacing marriage as the de-facto dependency requirement, put many more North Carolina men within reach of the draft, and made it easier for local boards to justify drafting them.

⁶⁹ Hickel, *Justice*, 761-762. Soldiers paid only the \$15, the balance was paid by the government. Soldiers could arrange an allotment for anyone who was proven dependent upon them, although most payments went to wives. Officers were expected to "do their duty" and take care of their families and charges and were not compelled by the regulations to advance anything from their pay.

⁷⁰ Hickel, *Justice*, 763-770.

North Carolina was largely a rural state, and many of the potential draftees lived on small farms throughout the state. Many of these men were subsistence farmers, earning only small amounts of cash each year and putting them squarely in Class I if they were to pass the physical. The fact that small farms would be more difficult to operate without a father or older brother present did not go unnoticed by either the PMG or the state adjutant general, and Crowder was sympathetic in his correspondence regarding releasing men for harvests or delaying induction of a man until after a harvest – at least in the cases appealed personally to his office.⁷¹ But most men tapped for Class I did not appeal anywhere beyond the district board, and Washington still felt local authorities were best to rule in these cases.⁷² As a result, many of these men were eventually drafted, and appeals made directly to the army for the release of soldiers due to hardship at home were either ignored or denied.⁷³

The allotment also changed things for those in the middle of the income scale. While many of the white middle-class did in fact earn more than the full allotment entitled them to, the tendency thus far had still been to take men who were single, then men with no children, and men with families last. But now that the government had made the overriding calculation a financial one, more poor men with children found their way into Class I. Men in the middle class who sought deferment, nearly all of whom

⁷¹ Kastenber, *To Raise and Discipline*, 122.

⁷² Crowder did not want too many men removed from any single family and stated so on numerous occasions. Also, there are numerous letters and replies to local boards where he encouraged them to allow men who had been placed in Class I but not yet inducted to harvest crops before entrainment to camp. Crowder had no real authority over the men, who were under the jurisdiction of the board until inducted, when they would be under the authority of the unit into which they were inducted.

⁷³ McKinley and Sabol, *North Carolina's Experience*, 204-206.

were white, almost always received it. The allotment essentially allowed for a single socioeconomic class of draftees.

Within this single class there still existed a stratification system. If a man's wife worked, contributing to the family income in some way, that amount was considered when measuring a registrant's ability to serve. Poor women were almost solely the only wives who worked outside the home, and black women more than white. While wages were often very low, there were a number of instances where black men earned little to nothing as laborers, and the allotment paid them amounted to much more than the family's current income. Under such conditions, it was difficult for a man to argue with his local board, a board furnished with a complete questionnaire, that he should not be placed in class I. By the end of the war the disparity of black men to white men, when accounting for population percentages, was remarkable enough to receive a mention from the PMG.⁷⁴

By the time of the second registration in June of 1918, the war situation had changed.⁷⁵ The Central Powers were making the big push to end the war before American forces could make a real difference, and the British, French and Italian armies were steadily losing ground. In addition, the Allies were once again losing men faster than they could replace them, and there was some doubt as to whether they would be able

⁷⁴ PMG, *2nd Report*, 192-193. Crowder explained much of the difference as being due to the higher enlistment numbers of white men.

⁷⁵ This second registration had been scheduled some months before, to register the men turned twenty-one in the past year. In addition to a supplemental draft conducted on 24 August 1918 there were added 912,564 registrants. PMG, *2nd Report*, 24.

to make good on their losses at any rate.⁷⁶ Appeals were made to General Pershing in France to put more American troops at the front, and calls were made to the United States to speed the shipment of troops to France. Inductions increased, shipment schedules to France increased, and by August of 1918 the U.S. Army had about 1.3 million men in France, with over 970,000 having arrived in the previous three months.⁷⁷ But the manpower pool in the U.S. was shrinking fast, with Crowder predicting that by September of 1918 “the effectives available would number only 100,000, and perhaps less.”⁷⁸ For Crowder, these events were troubling. The time was approaching when the men from Class I would be depleted and the draft system as currently structured would have no more to give.⁷⁹

The decision was made to enlarge the pool of potential draftees, and the third registration was scheduled for September 12th, but the war would end before any of these men saw France. This legislation simply expanded the ages eligible to eighteen and forty-five inclusive, making millions more subject to the draft.⁸⁰ The registration and classification would be carried out by the same bodies and often the same people who managed the first call some fifteen months before, with the addition of the volunteer groups and the new legal and medical advisory boards put in place over the course of the

⁷⁶ The European Allies were fast approaching the point where their respective populations would not be able to supply the men needed to replace losses. The French Army averaged 893 men killed and 2,745 wounded per day.

⁷⁷ Dickinson, *To Build an Army*, 116.

⁷⁸ Numbers predicted after troop shipments of July and August and enlistments from potential pool of draftees into the Navy and Marine Corps. PMG, *2nd Report*, 25.

⁷⁹ Crowder steadfastly refused to contemplate taking men from anywhere besides Class I, unless he had no choice otherwise, something he was never forced to do.

⁸⁰ Details of this call are explained in chapter two. This final registration netted over 13 million registrants in a single day.

previous year. The draft by now had become part of the landscape, simply something that existed and increasingly touched the lives of more and more of the state's residents. The discrimination and racism which previously existed at the local level was now cemented by the draft. When viewed from the boards perspective the inequality seemed not much different than what had existed before the draft and would surely be thereafter. The boards sought to supply men for the war while preserving the status quo and were able to do exactly that.

CHAPTER VI

RESISTANCE, DESERTION AND PACIFISM

There is some level of resistance to every war, and there was of course resistance to the war in North Carolina. But while resistance to the war and to service in the war existed until the very end of the conflict, the scale of this opposition declined as the country became more deeply involved. While unrecorded sentiments are difficult to measure, I posit that official numbers and reports, supported by newspaper articles and some available correspondence support the assertion that opposition decreased as the war continued. Cases of desertion as a percentage of men in uniform shrank, instances of delinquency shrank, and public resistance to the war effort itself largely disappeared into the background. While the eventual absence of public opposition was the result of government oppression of dissenting voices, the declining opposition to service has its motivations somewhere else. Partly, I believe, it is due to the ever-expanding reach of the war and the very public aspect of service, support of the war, and the connection to reputation outlined elsewhere in this dissertation. But the other piece I think lies in the state's rather unique and evolving response to the deserters where they did exist. Rather than continuing to hunt down deserters, especially after the armed standoffs of the spring and summer of 1918, the leniency gestures made by Governor Bickett offered forgiveness to resisters, giving these men and their families an "honorable" way out. Under these circumstances, with a chance to possibly erase the shame of being labeled

deserters, almost all the men chose to report in. By focusing on the draft and the drafted soldiers, as well as by evaluating the machinery of conscription and the expanding support apparatus as the war endured and grew, we can gauge the shrinking resistance to the war over time.

Any examination of resistance in the war must necessarily be divided into categories, as there were differing degrees of resistance to the draft, and to the war overall. Men who chose not to register were typically judged as somehow less of a resister than the men who did register and failed to return to the local board for their examination, or occasionally for their entrainment to camp. Furthermore, an individual who was inducted into the army and later left camp or his unit was liable to a higher level of punishment and occupied the lowest strata of resister, that of deserter. There were men of all three categories throughout the state and exploring the way in which the state and local authorities dealt with them says much about the individual men, the people in North Carolina, and the resistance to the draft and the war itself.

Resistance was not confined to any single group, either political, racial or otherwise, but was normally linked to personal motives. Those who chose to resist almost always stated their reluctance to serve or their wish to stay with their loved ones. The highest number of deserters were white, although blacks had a higher level of deserters and delinquents in North Carolina within their own racial category. Most resisters, white and black, were typically from rural areas, but towns and cities had their share as well. But while reasons for resistance were not always clear, and local communities had an interest in portraying themselves as absolutely loyal, what is known

is this: as the war continued, all categories of resisters became smaller, fewer men failed to appear before draft boards, and smaller percentages of men deserted.⁸¹

The most recent work dealing with resistance in the First World War is Michael Kazin's *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918*. This work is a broad overview of the peace movement in the U.S., including the anti-preparedness and anti-imperialist movements that functioned in the country in the early part of the 20th Century. However, this work examines mostly the political stance of anti-war groups against U.S. entry into the war, a movement which lost most of its energy and political juice after the declaration of war in April of 1917. Where Kazin investigates resistance through desertion and delinquency, he largely accepts other author's accounts, most notably Jeanette Keith, whom he quotes at length. His conclusions, not surprisingly, are much the same as Keith's, that the South was rife with resisters and that many in the region opposed the war.

Keith's book, *Rich Man's War Poor Man's Fight*, is the most important work in the field of resistance to the draft in the First World War. Keith looks at the rural South as a whole, asking why men, usually assisted by their families or communities, would disobey their call to the army, or perhaps desert afterwards. Her thesis centers on the idea that the war was fought by the lower classes, and that resistance existed for many reasons – worries over family, seemingly heavy-handed draft regulations, and a tendency for local boards to defer the wealthy or middle class and draft the poor. Gerald Shenk

⁸¹ Short summary of the overall in PMG, *Final Report*, 10-12. See also statistics for deserters 52-53. How authorities treated delinquencies described also in Chapter 2.

examines resistance to the draft in four particular counties across the country, but only one of his studies focuses on the South, his appraisal of Coweta County, Georgia. Both books are important, and there is truth in their respective arguments, but my interpretation of resistance is that it must be measured as an arc, examined across the entirety of the war. Neither of these works attempt to quantify change over the course of the conflict.

In addition to the books by Keith and Shenk, there are many works about the war that address resistance and desertion, but most concede that while there was some individual resistance, organized opposition to service in the war was slight and that overall the draft was successful. In *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America*, Chambers describes the overall conscription and war effort as a success, as does Kennedy, Robert Zeiger, Robert Schaffer, and many others. To these authors, conscription was meant to raise a fighting force, and this was certainly accomplished, but none of these works focuses on resistance or desertion in any substantial way.

In the absence of conscription, it was difficult to find vocal opponents to the practice of drafting men for the army. The peacetime U.S. had only a small standing army, a volunteer force, the majority of which was stationed in the West and Southwest, with some overseas due to the recent ventures into the Caribbean and the Philippines.⁸² The numbers were small compared to the overall population however, and placed little hardship on the nation overall. When asked to contribute troops from state militias or the

⁸² For example, the Regular Army had only 28,100 men enrolled in April of 1898. *U.S. Army Center of Military History*.

National Guard, state governors normally complied. Many Guard units, also volunteers, served long tours in the service of the nation, most especially in the Philippines.⁸³

In fact, in the early twentieth century military service as a vocation was seen in a positive light by most citizens of the state. Volunteer service in the army or navy offered a career to many, the chance to travel and take advantage of some benefits of social welfare – the possibility for a pension and available medical care - that few beyond the government offered in this period. The National Guard too offered men the opportunity to serve part time and receive regular pay. Moreover, with the Civil War in living memory, and the recent history of volunteers from the state in 1898, military service had a positive reputation in North Carolina, possibly aided by the fact that the state did not have to endure camp towns and their accompanying activities, and also that this service was seen as an individual endeavor chosen by the citizen, not imposed upon him.⁸⁴ So, as the world approached the war in 1914, service in the military was seen, at the very least as a profession chosen like any other, while soldiers as a group remained somewhat typecast.⁸⁵

However, as the war continued in Europe and elsewhere, the conversation about soldiery in the U.S. moved away from the somewhat harmless debate of individuals and

⁸³ A handful of National Guard units served extended tours in the Philippines, prompting several questions as to the status of the Guard in the overall structure of the nation's military, the role of state governors in this regard, and the right of individual Guardsmen to refuse overseas service. See Kastenberg, *To Raise and Discipline*, 34-35.

⁸⁴ The refashioning of military service and the Civil War in North Carolina examined in more detail in Chapter 1.

⁸⁵ Much of the later effort in the war to keep soldiers away from "vice" was prompted by the experience of longtime garrison towns and their surrounding businesses, as informed by Secretary of War Baker and his experience running a large city. See Dickinson, *To Build an Army*, 204-207.

service toward the more political debate of just how deeply the U.S. might become involved. Wilson's neutrality was still the official policy, but with the conflict expanding in both size and scale, there followed the preparedness debate, the ongoing issue of Universal Military Training, the army and navy budgets, and other worries over how best to prepare for the future. While Wilson was committed to staying out of the war, he also believed in freedom of navigation as an essential right of a democracy, and German missteps in their policy toward U.S. merchant vessels, along with the publication of the Zimmerman Telegram, forced Wilson's hand. With the declaration of war, came the discussion as to how to use the enlarged army, and how to man it.

With the passing of the Selective Service Act in May of 1917, a drafted army became a reality. While the administration from Secretary Baker on down worried about possible civil unrest based on some of the "violent opposition" to the measure in Congress, the political leadership of the country signed on to the war, as eventually did most newspapers and other official organs of communication. There were protests and speeches in some parts of the country after the passage of the bill, with larger gatherings in Los Angeles, Cleveland, Kansas City and New York.⁸⁶ In New York City mass protests on the day before registration saw speakers describing the draft as "immoral, un-American, and unconstitutional."⁸⁷ Elsewhere, there were smaller protests in Georgia, Oklahoma and Texas, but registration went ahead nonetheless. As described by author

⁸⁶ H.C. Peterson and Gilbert Fite, *Opponents of War, 1917-1918*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957) 23-25.

⁸⁷ Peterson and Fite, *Opponents*, 25. Even authors who describe conscription as contentious concede that the June 5, 1917 registration was orderly and peaceful.

Gilbert C. Fite, “on June 5 most young Americans registered for the draft. It was a remarkably peaceful day.”⁸⁸

The peaceful registration was a relief to the administration, and to many state officials as well. Robert Zieger writes that “the response ... exceeded the most optimistic hopes of Baker and his military advisers.”⁸⁹ What conclusions can be drawn from this? The most important points about registration are these: first, registering did not make you a soldier. Descriptions of the Selective Service Act had been circulated in newspapers since the passing of the bill, and the men registering knew that there was a further process before they might actually be called to serve in uniform. They would still have a chance to go before the board and ask for deferment before being called-up, should that eventually be the case. Second, as described previously, the prevailing belief both officially and unofficially was still that a large U.S. force was probably not going to be sent to France, so for many this conceivably was not their primary concern.⁹⁰ Finally, and probably most importantly, registration was the law. Especially at this early stage it was not probable that they would risk both fines and jail.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Peterson and Fite, *Opponents*, 27. Newspapers throughout the state carried stories of the “patriotic nature of the registration” See *Wilmington Dispatch*, 7 June 1917.

⁸⁹ Robert H. Zieger, *America’s Great War: World War I and the American Experience*. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000) 60.

⁹⁰ After the first men were detailed to camp, their letters seldom mentioned the draft. One common subject was food. Most wrote of the abundance of food available to the men, describing the variety and for some the “strange” offerings on the mess table. For example, “Letter: Lonnie T. Graham to Family, September 17, 1913 [1918]: World War I Collection” n.d. NCSA.

⁹¹ This first registration was the only one of the three major registrations that was accompanied by posters reminding men of the punishment should they fail to register. The later registrations had ample newspaper and public announcements, but no statewide poster campaign. See Chapter 2 for discussion of the posters.

Since registration was the first step in the process of conscripting an army, the practice of “draft resistance” can be described as having begun here. The first opportunity to note any resistance to service by individual draftees came as the men filled out their draft cards, the small two-sided yellow cards that had to be filled in individually by each potential draftee when he reported to his local registrar. In addition to the personal information on the card, the men were asked “Do you claim exemption from draft,” and were required to “specify grounds.”⁹² In this first registration, the men mostly left this section blank or simply wrote the word “no.” Where men did state a reason, as noted previously, it usually described a family situation that the man felt should keep him home.⁹³

Those men who did not sign up in this first registration have a particular place in the historiography of resistance in the First World War. While historians interpret the motivations of these early slackers and draw meaning from their failure to register, the evidence makes conclusions difficult to support at this early stage of the war. What is not disputed is that many did fail to register. Keith places the national number at around 3 million, a figure supported by Provost Marshal General Crowder in his 2nd Report.⁹⁴ However, by the time of the Final Report, Crowder wrote that “many of the men carried on the rolls of their local boards as delinquents... were not, in fact, such.” Crowder

⁹² Draft Card, question 12, 1917. Copies of cards found at NARA website. www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1/draft-registration

⁹³ Much of this is described earlier in Chapter 2. With over 200,000 registrants in North Carolina, I have read only a sampling, but this assertion has held true throughout.

⁹⁴ PMG, 2nd Report, 199. Other authors cite the same number from the 2nd Report, including Chambers and Kennedy.

attributes this to the chaos of the institution of the draft, citing instances of soldiers enlisted elsewhere and missed by their local boards, registrants who changed residence, and some who through “mistake, ignorance, or mishap,” had not received notice that they otherwise would have obeyed.⁹⁵ Moreover, boards continued throughout the war to accept late registrants “with reasonable excuses.”⁹⁶ Anecdotal evidence from the local boards supports Crowder’s assertion of confusion at the local level.⁹⁷

In any event, the early slacker issue was largely set aside while the draft machinery focused its energy on building an army. For the local boards, the concern was on the immediate mission at hand. If quotas were filled, the slackers could wait.⁹⁸ Following the first registration, boards and their staffs arranged medical exams, men assigned to the boards sometimes quit jobs or professions or secured leaves of absence, assistants and equipment had to be procured, quarters found and furnished with desks, typewriters, telephones, etc., newspapers contacted and communication channels to Raleigh and Washington established, all with the unknown of the war ahead of them. The Chairman for Halifax County, writing after the war, described the number of hours spent on board business as “six hours a day while the board was in session,” and after January 1918 as “the entire time.”⁹⁹ Other reports describe much the same. Again, their

⁹⁵ There is a two-year interval between the 2nd Report and the Final Report. The Final Report was published in 1920.

⁹⁶ PMG, *Final Report*, 10. The boards were largely independent in this matter, and a “reasonable excuse” was whatever they determined it to be.

⁹⁷ More on the challenges of exact record-keeping in this environment in Chapter 2.

⁹⁸ Early newspaper articles on slackers sometimes just asked the public to notify these men that they were expected to report to the draft board. See for example *Brevard News*, 31 August 1917.

⁹⁹ Postwar Questionnaire, Halifax County, Military Collection, WWI # 3, Box 1 Folder 17, NCSA.

task was to provide a given number of able-bodied men within their local jurisdiction. If they could do so, they could worry about slackers later.¹⁰⁰

Since quotas were being filled, Washington was also not overly concerned about slackers at this point either. Part of the reason was that like the Local Boards, the PMG was simply trying to build a fighting force, to get men into training camps. Crowder wrote later that the first group of draftees was “hacked ... out with a broadaxe because there was time for no greater refinement.”¹⁰¹ And just as local boards were hurried, so was Washington. In addition to answering questions of the state officials and the local, district and medical boards, the Provost Marshall General’s office had to establish camp sites, select destinations for troops, manage entrainment and mobilization schedules, consider numbers in draft pool and available skills, worry over recruiting certain men from the civilian world for special tasks, and many other duties, also with the unknowns of the war ahead of them. Therefore, slackers were low on a rather sizeable list of concerns.¹⁰²

The other part of the reason that the PMG didn’t worry at this point about the delinquent issue is that they were truly a local board problem. While it is a rather slim distinction, men who failed to register had not yet come under the jurisdiction of the army. That is, until actually called to serve, the men *had* committed an offence against

¹⁰⁰ Early questionnaires ask for suggestions on dealing with slackers. Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹⁰¹ E. H. Crowder, *The Selective Service System: Its Aims and Accomplishments: Its Future* (Washington D.C., 1917) 4.

¹⁰² Kastenber, *To Raise and Discipline*, 11-42. There are descriptions throughout the book that describe the scope of the PMG’s responsibilities, but especially as listed here.

the government, but their transgression was a civil one, they had disobeyed the law that stated they had to register. Any charges had to be leveled by a civil authority, namely a U.S. Attorney. The complications with this are obvious, notwithstanding the fact that like the Boards and the PMG, these men were busy with other – usually much more pressing – matters, and were not apt to go after slackers, not yet anyway. Moreover, most draft officials simply believed that men who hadn't signed up were somewhere between lazy and ignorant, and they set about trying to reach them and sign them up. When asked about these men on the first questionnaires, the replies of most local boards were similar to the one from Chatham County, which posited that the men simply had not been informed somehow. The Board Chairman suggested “regular continued inquiry by mail and otherwise.”¹⁰³ To most of the boards, this was simply a matter of communication at this point, so with the notices in the newspapers and through the mail they were doing what they could.

When the first selection of soldiers for the new National Army was held in Washington on 20 July 1917, and “invitations” were extended to individual registrants, the second category of resister, the “delinquent,” was established.¹⁰⁴ Strictly speaking, delinquents were men who had registered, but had failed to report to the board when ordered. These men therefore had not undergone either physical or personal examination, and so were unable to ask for deferment officially, something granted to nearly half of all

¹⁰³ Local Board Questionnaire, Chatham County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹⁰⁴ Eventually, in official correspondence, all who avoided service became labeled “slackers,” with subgroups to identify delinquents and deserters. See chapter two for formal legal classifications as described in the Selective Service Act.

the men appearing before the board, including almost all the fathers.¹⁰⁵ But while the board's energy was focused on the production of men for the army, most boards continued their practice of listing the names of no-shows in local newspapers. Occasionally these notices were aggressive, but typically rather less so. The notice from *The Mount Airy News* was fairly representative, warning that registrants "must report in or face the penalty set forth in the draft law."¹⁰⁶ But generally, boards handled no-shows in the same way that they dealt with deferments, by simply calling more men for examination until their quota numbers were reached. As described previously, for the early call-ups, very few boards reported problems reaching their prescribed quotas.¹⁰⁷

Once before the boards, men were able, as noted previously, to ask for deferment from service. These requests were met differently by each board, and for many of the boards more than half of the men asked for deferment in this first round of examinations. These requests were reported in local papers and met with the same encouragement usually as they were with the draft boards. These almost blanket deferments for fathers, and many childless husbands too, were in line with President Wilson's wish for mostly single men in the army. While one board chairman described so many requests for exemption as "passive resistance," keeping husbands home where possible was supported by everyone from the national to the local level.¹⁰⁸ But, even though the deferment

¹⁰⁵ As discussed in detail earlier, many of the boards in the state were able to defer all the fathers in their jurisdictions, and nearly all the husbands. See chapters 2 and 4.

¹⁰⁶ *Mount Airy News*, 4 October 1917.

¹⁰⁷ As noted earlier, boards had to call about twice the number of men they needed for induction. None of the boards in the state failed to make their quotas early on, and none described any real difficulty in doing so. See for example *The Brevard News*, 3 August 1917.

¹⁰⁸ Local Board Questionnaire, Tyrell County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

requests were broad, Crowder supported the local boards and asked that they use their best judgement in the matter. Still, the quotas were low enough that boards were able to supply the numbers requested.

But, even with sufficient numbers, the boards had to somehow deal with the delinquents. Most of the local boards reported some delinquents, but they also described their jurisdictions as having men who were ignorant, not necessarily resistant.

Newspapers printed lists of names, and some did call some men deserters, but this depended upon the paper. National and state notices were more apt to use more aggressive language. For instance, in an article carried in numerous papers outlines “a reward of fifty dollars” for delinquents, but also states that if “it appears to military authorities that their delinquency is not willful they will be forwarded to mobilization camp.”¹⁰⁹ The boards still officially treated the problem as a matter of communication. The chairman of the Brunswick County board wrote that “only ignorance keeps this board from carrying out its duty,” and that “some select individual ... should be empowered by the board to locate and apprehend” the men who had failed to report.¹¹⁰

The aim of the boards was not necessarily to jail these individuals, but to find them and ascertain the reason they were delinquent. Those with good reason could be advanced to camp with little or no punishment, while the others would be reminded of their duty and sent to the army anyway.¹¹¹ None of the boards felt that jailing a man who could make a

¹⁰⁹ *Smithfield Herald*, 2 October 1917.

¹¹⁰ Local Board Questionnaire, Brunswick County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹¹¹ The Selective Service Regulations allowed for a great deal of leeway in how to deal with delinquents and slackers, and men with good reason – as determined by the local board - were simply forwarded to camp in almost every case. Men sent forward were one less to call.

good soldier, regardless of his reason for avoiding service, was in anyone's best interest, and all of Crowder's official correspondence with state officials and local boards emphasized this point.¹¹²

During the Fall of 1917, men officially categorized as delinquents continued to trickle in to their draft boards, events almost always recorded in local newspapers.¹¹³ The numbers were small, but still enough to either convince the boards that these men *were* ignorant, or rather for the boards to possibly convince themselves that their official reports were true. In any event, these late arrivals were almost always sent advanced to camp with little to no punishment.¹¹⁴ It was in the midst of these late entrants that the early questionnaires were returned to the PMG. It is no surprise then that the answers given to the queries on slackers and delinquents were colored by this seeping through of men who strictly speaking were criminals, but busy exemption boards heard the excuses and sent the men to camp, better late than never.¹¹⁵

Amid all this, the first shipments to camp were usually accomplished without much fanfare.¹¹⁶ One draftee simply notes in his wartime diary: "I reported to the local

¹¹² Crowder believed in filling the ranks first, believing potential soldiers should only be dismissed only when they no longer "had the capacity for military service." Kastenber, *To Raise and Discipline*, 44.

¹¹³ Newspaper accounts continually listed men coming in late, in addition to listing enlistees and deserters.

¹¹⁴ Punishment at the local board for a late arrival did not happen. Men were advanced to camp with record of events as to his movements, and occasionally these men may have been officially punished, but I have found no records indicating as much. The army, after all, needed soldiers, and men in the stockade could not train or fight.

¹¹⁵ Concrete numbers are hard to pin down, but for nearly every board that lists delinquents, there are instances of men who came in (late) "when they finally received the notice." Local Board Questionnaire, Jackson County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹¹⁶ Many entrainments were public events, but the majority of the early occasions were small gatherings of family and sometimes board officials. See for instance *Brevard News*, 14 September 1917.

board at Concord N.C. and rec'd orders to go to Camp Jackson Columbia S.C.”¹¹⁷

Shortly after these first entrainments the local boards returned their questionnaires to the PMG. Regarding draftees who failed to show up for mobilization, the local boards viewed the matter in much the same way as they had the non-registrants. That is, they reported that the men had failed to get the word, and subsequently had missed their call-ups. Nowhere at this point is there language as to resistant individuals as such, rather this issue has to do with communication and logistics. Most boards still reported “very few” or “almost none,” in their respective districts. Left to the local board, over half suggested that the men be contacted by mail, although a number suggested that a personal visit would be better.¹¹⁸ But, there were enough men still belatedly arriving that the boards were convinced that eventually most would do so.¹¹⁹ Once again, the numbers were not such that this issue was urgent in any way, and the board reports reflected little worry in this regard.

But resisters did exist, and they were reported in newspapers, as well as by local boards and state authorities. Rewards were offered for apprehension of these men, variously labeled either deserters or delinquents, and their capture was sometimes reported.¹²⁰ However, there are two important points to be remembered. The first is that,

¹¹⁷ (“Thomas P. Shinn’s Wartime Diary: World War I Collection” n.d.), NCSA.

¹¹⁸ Language from boards focused on ignorance. Local Board for Cherokee County suggested “some friend who understands the object of the selective draft system” to approach delinquents. Local Board Questionnaire, Cherokee County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹¹⁹ “Very few” quotation here from Macon County questionnaire, but at least half suggest contact by mail. Local Board Questionnaire, Macon County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹²⁰ Rewards of \$50 per man were offered for the apprehension of men listed as deserters. See for instance *Mount Airy News*, 9 August 1917.

at the time, these men were typically individuals or in pairs, not yet the larger groups that would come later in the war; second, that in a rural state like North Carolina hiding was actually quite easy, especially when one had the help of friends or relatives. This was demonstrated by one episode where a county sheriff and his deputy spent two days attempting to apprehend a single delinquent. In an affidavit filed sometime later, the sheriff noted that they knew where the man lived and approached his family at the same place of residence. The family, testified the sheriff, seemed “very unconcerned” about the man’s whereabouts. When asked if he knew the location of the draftee - his brother – one of the family replied that he “had not spoken to him for three years” despite the fact that the two lived at the same address. Considering situations like this, energy was more easily focused elsewhere for the local and national draft officials.¹²¹

Local boards, in fact, were far quicker to label certain others within their jurisdictions as “resistant” before they would apply such a stamp to the delinquents in their area. One of these groups were those seeking deferment as “Religious or Conscientious Objectors.”¹²² Anyone in this group who was not either a minister, or in some cases a “divinity student,” was almost always labeled by local boards as a shirker. While local draft boards could exempt those in this category if they wished, they almost never did, instead viewing the men who requested this deferment as individuals attempting to circumvent their duty. The statute gave preference to religious groups which were “against war,” but local boards - in the absence of large groups of organized

¹²¹ Testimony from Chowan County sheriff, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 6 Folder 18, NCSA.

¹²² This is the category from the Local Board Questionnaires.

parishioners – saw these men as individual draftees and treated them as such.¹²³ The response from Caldwell County is representative of the attitude of the boards towards these men. The chairman answers the query by replying “let them dig trenches.”¹²⁴ Most of the other questionnaires relate a similar tone, conveying a marked difference in perception between this group and the “late” delinquents, even though the number of men seeking deferment through this means was actually quite small.¹²⁵

In fact, the evidence shows that many local boards primarily wanted simply to enlarge the pool of single men available for the draft. While the local boards definitely thought Religious and Conscientious Objectors should not be exempt, they also weighed in on the (thus far) automatic deferments of exempt professions.¹²⁶ While few boards asked for the removal of the exemptions, a number did answer that men outside the draft age could occupy these jobs, freeing the single men holding exempt positions to fill local quotas.¹²⁷ Also, an enlargement of the age ranges subject to the draft was supported by many boards, correspondingly in the interest of keeping “family men” home and sending single men to the army.¹²⁸ When surveyed, most of local boards seemed fairly satisfied

¹²³ There were pacifist sects in North Carolina, including the Quakers and Moravians, but both groups supported the war, and did not discourage their draft-age men to resist. Rather, the men were simply to ask for non-combat work once in the army. See Chuck Fager, *Progressive and Liberal Americans Face World War One* <http://afriendlyletter.com/progressive-liberal-american-quakers-face-world-war-one/>

¹²⁴ Local Board Questionnaire, Caldwell County, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹²⁵ Numbers from the local board questionnaires show only 29 men formally asking for RO or CO status. Local Board Questionnaires, Box 35, RG 163, NARA.

¹²⁶ Exempt professions included most civil employees. See chapter 2 for a complete list.

¹²⁷ Only six suggested removing the exemptions, but twenty-three boards answered that non-draft age men could fill some of these positions instead. Mail delivery received special attention, as several boards wondered why someone outside the draft contingent could not deliver the mail.

¹²⁸ While the boards supported the age enlargement, it should be recalled that Governor Bickett did not support adding younger men to the registration. Bickett, *Public Letters*, 361.

with the functioning of the draft up to this point, and replied accordingly in their reports back to Washington.

Armed with the responses from the local board questionnaires, the PMG pondered how the draft had functioned thus far and enacted a few changes. Regarding slackers, there were almost no changes. Men who reported late were still given the benefit of the doubt and nearly always sent to camp with a “good excuse” although occasionally with a reprimand.¹²⁹ The primary changes affecting local communities had to do with dependency rules and requirements. In December 1917 the army instituted the personal questionnaire to be filled out by potential draftees and their families. This would place men in one of the five eligibility classes, a move designed to streamline the conscription process and create a system closer to the equitable scientific selection that Wilson and Baker had touted since the U.S. war began.¹³⁰ The questionnaire was implemented mainly to speed up the process, but it would also take some of the objective decisions away from the local boards and make it easier for them to both identify and examine men who warranted deferment. Crowder wanted to ensure that the manpower pool as currently constructed was sufficient to supply the draftees for the War Department’s projected timeline, and the added level of detail was designed to help boards make the hard decisions. The calls for men continued, and the PMG worried that there might not

¹²⁹ Section 50 of the Selective Service Act states that “If the Local Board finds that the offense was not willful ...the board shall forthwith send him to the proper mobilization camp.” None of the men who reported on their own seem to have suffered any punishment.

¹³⁰ Crowder wrote that “(n)othing has done more than this measure (the classification system) to establish in popular conviction the equity of the whole draft system.” PMG, *2nd Report*, 47.

be enough men to supply the army's eventual need – at least not without a change in the parameters of the draft.¹³¹

The manpower pool available to the army could only be expanded in two ways. The first method was to expand the age range of men eligible for the draft, making either younger or older men (or both) available for conscription. The second way to was to select from one of the deferred classes. As of the spring of 1918, Crowder reported to the War Department that “it was apparent that the yield of effectives in the first registration would not suffice for the increasing demands of the military program.”¹³² There were still men in class I, but the army had earmarked all but around 400,000 for induction by September of 1918. Furthermore, Crowder wrote that this number would be depleted “within three months.”¹³³ If American losses approached anything close to those of the Allies, this number would not even cover the expected deaths in the U.S. force.¹³⁴ As for invading another class, the PMG would not consider it, citing the possible disturbance to the economic life of the country.¹³⁵ In the absence of a change in the draft laws, this left only re-classification of *some* of the deferred men to class I, or an attempt to corral the shirkers still at large and subject to the draft. Regarding the deferred men, mostly men

¹³¹ Crowder monitored the shrinking pool of men as they were enlisted in the Navy and Marine Corps, employed in various war industries and agricultural entities, and the Emergency Fleet Corporation. Some 1.2 million men of draft age were estimated to be outside the reach of the draft due to their employment in these areas.

¹³² PMG, *2nd Report*, 22.

¹³³ Crowder, *Spirit*, 169.

¹³⁴ There were still many black draftees in the Class I pool, many of which had already been drafted but not yet shipped to camp. However, Crowder was becoming aware that these men were not going to form a large combat formation in an army commanded by Pershing, and his calculations took this into account. See Chapter 4 for more details.

¹³⁵ See Dickinson, *To Build an Army*, 110-111.

with families, the law stated that deferments were subject to review, but Crowder knew this would be a time-consuming last resort. In any event, both the PMG and a large percentage of the local boards thought a change in the draftable age range a better eventual solution.

The shirkers were another matter entirely. These men, who had not registered for the draft in any jurisdiction, simply could not be considered a “readily available” source, and even quantifying their number was simply a guess. While archival evidence, has put the number of men “who simply didn’t register at all” at 2 to 3 million, based on the experience of the draft thus far this would have netted some 1.5 million draftees.¹³⁶ However, a fair percentage of these men were black, therefore not destined for combat units at any rate, and further there is some anecdotal evidence that a slightly larger percentage of the late registrants were being deferred – once they eventually appeared – than the men who came before them.¹³⁷ More importantly, all of this depended upon being able to actually locate and contact these men, and convincing those that had not reported thus far to do so now. The men involved in the draft knew that turning out a large number of draftees from this reluctant class would take a tremendous amount of time and energy, so barring an expansion in age range, they focused once again on those men already deferred. The tools were in place with the local draft apparatus, the PMG

¹³⁶ Quotation from Keith, taken from 2nd Report, 4. Number of draftees estimated since as mentioned earlier, most boards examined about double the number they were able to draft.

¹³⁷ As noted previously, black draftees constituted a slightly higher percentage of their population group than did white draftees.

and the governor's offices were adapting to their respective tasks, and the information was now there for them to make a "proper" judgement, through the new questionnaire.¹³⁸

The questionnaire changed the landscape for those men labeled "resistant." Yes, conscription officials, state and local, had always had the option to cull the deferred lists for men to move to class I, but the task was now streamlined as local boards now could review the questionnaires before calling men for examination. Whereas previously during the induction periods the boards had focused on the physicals and personal interviews of potential draftees, they now had more time to reach out to delinquents, especially those they believed ignorant or scared.¹³⁹ To this end, the questionnaire expanded the sphere of those involved in the apparatus of conscription, as teachers, students and others began to assist some of the draftees in completing the questionnaires, at a stroke getting more of the populace somehow involved in the war effort, and making contact with individuals previously "uninformed" more likely.¹⁴⁰ This larger footprint of the draft did not make a significant difference with current slackers, but would prove to be a great advantage as the war continued and more men were mobilized and shipped to camp.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ The 16-page questionnaire was instituted to keep help local boards determine potential draftees before calling them for physical examination. It was, wrote one historian, a "series of questions designed to show a simple inventory of (a registrant's) qualifications and circumstances." Dickinson, *To Build an Army*, 147.

¹³⁹ Reviewing the questionnaires was quicker than personal examinations for the local boards.

¹⁴⁰ The questionnaires were difficult for many of the residents of the state. Besides widespread illiteracy, the questionnaires often had to have accompanying affidavits and documentation, something often beyond the ability of a poor (and busy) rural family. To this end local boards, local Red Cross chapters and Councils of Defense organized help for many families in their jurisdictions.

¹⁴¹ See chapter 3 for examples of the reach of the war into even the smallest rural communities.

But the growth of an encamped army did produce one thing, more men who deserted from their units. Training camp was the first “real” time away from home for many of these men, and a number of the soldiers would become deserters. While some actually escaped from the training camps themselves, the larger number of deserters were those who were given leave – a scheduled furlough granted to all soldiers – and subsequently did not return to camp.¹⁴² But deserter numbers were still in the ones and twos, though overall numbers were obviously growing simply through the math of more men in uniform and a higher number of soldiers who decided army life was not for them. But, while deserters were an army problem, many of the men who deserted were known to local boards and mentioned in reports and correspondence to both the PMG in Washington and the state Adjutant General in Washington.¹⁴³

As the war moved into spring and summer of 1918, there were several armed standoffs with larger groups of deserters in several southern states, including those mentioned earlier that took place in Mitchell and Ashe counties in North Carolina. Judith Sealander asserts that these men “evaded the draft in such a spectacular manner that newspapers often eagerly followed their stories, if only to condemn them as perversions of American manhood.”¹⁴⁴ While instances of desertion that took place outside the state were reported in North Carolina, most papers showed much more interest in the two

¹⁴² The simple reason is that not returning from leave was much easier for a homesick soldier than was deserting from a camp surrounded by (usually) wilderness and Military Police.

¹⁴³ Many of the reports on deserters list exactly where the men are, in some cases even noting their place of employment. See District Board Deserter Reports, Military Collection WWI #3, Box 6, Folder 17, NCSA.

¹⁴⁴ Sealander, *Violent Resistance*, 2.

major happenings within the state itself.¹⁴⁵ However, the real story lies in the different approach to the problem by officials in North Carolina as opposed to the other states. In the case of the armed standoffs in the rest of the South, authorities were quick to use larger armed groups to confront and arrest the evaders. However, as Sealander describes, in North Carolina “Governor Thomas W. Bickett initiated a propaganda program of peaceful coercion.”¹⁴⁶ Bickett’s unique approach allowed the deserters to respond to appeals to return with little to fear from the authorities, if they rejoined their units. Involving the community, with support from the locals and the assistance of the newspapers, allowed the governor to focus on public perception, avoid further violence, and end the stalemates with carefully worded appeals and the official amnesty offered by the army.

The first instance occurred in Mitchell County, located in the western section of the state along the Tennessee border. Official reports from this region up to this point are rather typical, with only a few delinquents noted overall, but the Spring of 1918 saw a large group of men in the county desert from the army. Most of these men were not draftees but were described by the local board as enlistees who had come “home on furlough and had failed to return at the proper time.”¹⁴⁷ Later, several draftees, men who had either failed to report for examination or report for entrainment, joined this first

¹⁴⁵ Just a cursory examination of newspapers from the spring and summer of 1918 shows that the situations in Mitchell and Ashe County got much more coverage within the state. While the penalty for desertion could still be death, the reality was that deserters captured in the states were being given prison sentences.

¹⁴⁶ Sealander, *Violent Resistance*, 7.

¹⁴⁷ Chairman McBee’s report to PMG. PMG, *Final Report* 287-288.

group. The *Franklin Times* described them as “evaders of the selective draft law ... that have fled to mountain haunts in eluding war duty.”¹⁴⁸ These men hid in the mountains, avoiding authorities who knew both who the men were and where they were located. Attempts to bring the men in by force were unsuccessful, although the Local Board Chairman commented that local officers “probably made no serious effort to effect a capture,” a sentiment reflected by the state Adjutant General, who stated that some county sheriffs were guilty of “gross negligence of official duties.”¹⁴⁹

Governor Bickett first mentions the situation in May of 1918, in the midst of armed encounters in both Arkansas and Alabama.¹⁵⁰ While his thoughts on the issue of desertion are part of the public record, the governor decided that North Carolina would not ask for outside help to deal with the Mitchell County group.¹⁵¹ Instead, Bickett prompted an approach by North Carolina Senator Lee Overman to Crowder asking for lenient treatment for these men “notwithstanding their bad conduct in this particular case due to their ignorance and the attitude of their kinsmen.”¹⁵² Crowder replied that he couldn’t promise immunity, but that he was more interested in those who had incited the

¹⁴⁸ *Franklin Times*, 31 May 1918.

¹⁴⁹ PMG, *Final Report*, 287. Interestingly many of the Local Board Questionnaires suggest someone other than a local be used to apprehend delinquents, possibly for this very reason, that the attempts to capture deserters and delinquents in their own communities might be less than a full effort. Quotation is from *Franklin Times*, 31 May 1918.

¹⁵⁰ Sealander, *Violent Resistance*, 3-5.

¹⁵¹ The *Franklin Times* article mentioned above notes that according to the Adjutant General federal help would be useless if local authorities failed to assist them.

¹⁵² Sealander, *Violent Resistance*, 7. Letter to Senator Overman from ex-Lieutenant Governor W. C. Newland, and lawyers Sam J. Ervin, and Charles Green.

activity, and not as much in the men themselves, prompting local officials to act on their own.

One of the deserters eventually approached the Local Board Chairman and asked to be allowed to return to camp. The Chairman, John McBee, had the man return to the group and convey that he would seek lenient treatment for any of the others who returned as well. Working through the men's relatives, and with the knowledge of the Justice Department and the governor's office, McBee was able to affect the return of all but one of the men, who were soon returned to camp. The *Polk County News* reported that some thirteen had given themselves up and were taken to camp by a representative from the Department of Justice.¹⁵³ Over the next few weeks the men were allowed to rejoin their regular units and made to pay their own way for the return. McBee commented that this left only one delinquent "known to be in the county."¹⁵⁴

The second instance was the Ashe County incident of June 1918, an episode which shared several characteristics with the occurrence in Mitchell County. In both cases the men resisting were a mixed group of volunteers and draftees, not necessarily resisting only the draft, but service in the army itself. The *Wilmington Dispatch* printed a quote from the state Adjutant General, who described the men as "naïve young fellows who have not comprehended the seriousness of their conduct, and ... that few and perhaps none of the boys are willfully attempting to interfere with the government's plan

¹⁵³ *Polk County News*, 21 June 1918.

¹⁵⁴ PMG, *Final Report*, 288. Newspaper accounts largely confirm McBee's report.

of raising an army.¹⁵⁵ Also, this event, like the Mitchell County episode, occurred in the mountains of North Carolina, in counties bordering Tennessee. These areas were isolated, sparsely populated, largely without improved roads or means of communication, and could easily have maintained these men away from authorities had the communities around them chosen to continue to do so. However, while both instances began with armed standoffs, including a civilian death in Ashe County, both ended with a semblance of peaceful calm. The deserters in Ashe, however, had the news reports from the situation in Mitchell to inform their thinking, and knew their chances of being treated leniently were as Governor Bickett had described in his speech. Given the choices of public shame and jail versus a return to the ranks, the two groups of dissenters disbanded and largely returned to the fold, but in the absence of accounts from the deserters themselves, we are left to the others involved to answer the speculation as to why these men did this.¹⁵⁶

According to the officials involved, both local and national, these men were persuaded to give up after the promise of lenient treatment and an “honorable” return to the ranks. While this may seem a bit simplistic, their choices, first being the promise of no further violence, was probably enough to draw some away, but the amnesty from punishment and return to the ranks was the real incentive. That is not to argue that these men suddenly wanted to be soldiers, rather they had decided to no longer be fugitives.

¹⁵⁵ *Wilmington Dispatch*, 29 June 1918.

¹⁵⁶ The telegram from the Local Board Chairman to Governor Bickett read in part “Situation serious... Have wired Washington for soldiers under military direction.” Bickett, *Public Letters*, 172-173. Letters from resisters or deserters, when coupled with popular wars, seldom make it to the archives.

Labeled as “naïve” and “ignorant” by the newspaper’s accounts, each of these men were given time to weigh the difference between returning or continuing as they were. Governor Bickett’s “sad and certain consequences of ignorance and sin” were a reference to the shame these men had caused their families, and an allusion to the possibility of them being on the run for an undetermined amount of time.¹⁵⁷ While Crowder and Governor Bickett both cite the involved individual’s ignorance of the war, the approaches made by Chairman McBee and the friends and families certainly must have emphasized the shame of these men and their families – in addition to likely punishments.¹⁵⁸ News accounts before the governor’s speech described the possibility of an armed response, and one cites the request from the county for federal support to “round up the deserters,” but it also notes Bickett’s confidence that he will be able to “induce practically all of these registrants to come into the service as their patriotic duty.”¹⁵⁹ In light of this, the men giving up and returning to camp rather than continuing as outlaws facing either violence or jail, and possibly both, is not a surprise. Working within the communities to convince these men to come forward was in the interest of both the officials and the men themselves, especially when the amnesty from Crowder is considered. Eventually all the men from both groups returned and served in the army.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Bickett, *Public Letters*, 174.

¹⁵⁸ Governor Bickett discounted the assertion that deserters might be given amnesty by a post-war Republican administration, stating “every slacker will be run down, if it takes 40 years.” Bickett, *Public Letters*, 348.

¹⁵⁹ *Polk County News*, 5 June 1918.

¹⁶⁰ Lonnie Jones, “The Ashe County Case,” *Ashe County Historical Society*, accessed, 14 May 2017. PMG, *Final Report*, 288.

In the course of these disturbances in western North Carolina, Washington began to look to the future manpower needs for the army. With the huge allied losses and the ongoing German offensives in mind, the PMG calculated the needs moving forward into 1920.¹⁶¹ Included in this estimate was the fact that, with increased call-ups and considering the loss of Class I men to the Navy and the Marine Corps, the army was quickly running out of men in the draft pool. The estimates made by the PMG showed the possibility that only some 100,000 men would be left in Class I by September 1918 at the given rate.¹⁶² With this in view, legislation was passed to expand the pool of men from which draftees were drawn, and the nation would have to register once again.

This third registration was eventually set for September 12th, and if there was truly a nationwide referendum on the war, this was it. By this time U.S. forces had engaged in combat and had incurred losses on the battlefield, so for many the war was no longer the distant spectacle that framed the earlier registrations.¹⁶³ Moreover, for this registration the ages would extend to what some congressmen termed “boys,” with the inclusion of 18- 20 year olds in the draft pool.¹⁶⁴ Finally, few could really claim ignorance of the draft or the war at this point. After 14 months of war, and the inclusion

¹⁶¹ PMG calculations planned for a war into 1920, as did the allied governments. Allied casualties since U.S. joined the war were over one million, and U.S. forces in France by the Spring of 1918 were not even enough to replace the deaths from this period.

¹⁶² Dickinson, *Building an Army*, 110.

¹⁶³ Through September 12 the U.S. forces had only been engaged in relatively small engagements and had suffered just over 10,000 casualties. The percentage of casualties compared to the men engaged hovered around 10%.

¹⁶⁴ PMG, *2nd Report*, 25-26. The army promised not to ship any draftees younger than 19 to France. Volunteers of 18 were not subject to the same restrictions. Also see *Franklin Times*, 31 May 1918.

of so many pieces of the populace, the excuse of ignorance seemed no longer valid, and so preparations began for the September registration.

If the nation believed the army was asking too much in drafting younger and older men, this last registration was a poor indicator. This final registration netted over 13 million men nationwide and over 250,000 in North Carolina. Classification of these men was still in progress when the war ended, so statistics on delinquents from this call do not exist. However, the anecdotal evidence shows that men were even more likely to come forward and register this time.¹⁶⁵ Delinquency statistics as reported by the local boards describe these numbers as negligible, and several of the boards reported having to turn men away. By this time the army had also quit taking volunteers, so the only avenue to join was through the local boards. One Chairman described the people during this last period as “patriotic to the core,” writing that “not a soul this district would not join the boys in France,” while other boards noted that men had to be turned away, that the quotas were full.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, the chronicler for Orange County wrote that during this time there was a “spirit which becomes peculiarly explicit and articulate in times of war.”¹⁶⁷ Comments like these, made by county boards, are an indicator of the attitude against pacifism at the official level, and possibly at the grass-roots level as well.

¹⁶⁵ Several newspapers in the state carry stories about men asking to speed their induction. See *Tryon Bee* 12 October 1918 and *Wilmington Dispatch*, 14 September 1918.

¹⁶⁶ Quotation from Postwar Questionnaire, Halifax County, Box 3, Folder 9, and comments about full quotas from Robeson County, Box 4, Folder 14 and from Chowan County, Box 1, Folder 21, Military Collection #3, NCSA. The army stopped taking enlistees August 8, 1918.

¹⁶⁷ Cameron, *Orange County*, 28.

There was resistance to the war, but in the beginning the resistance was primarily against going to war at all. As the war effort grew the resistance remained mostly individual and unorganized. Once confronted with the consequences of resistance, men generally chose to surrender. Even the two larger groups described previously were fractions of the overall numbers serving. Both instances were well known and publicized, but they did not spawn mass demonstrations or desertions. The reasons may have been shame, imprisonment, honor, duty, or a mixture of them all. But as the war grew more popular, and the weight of the effort spread throughout the areas from which the draftees came, service was difficult to refuse. The lenient treatment may have brought the resisters in but faced with the options of either doing what they had been told repeatedly was their duty, or living outside the law, resisters tended to choose service in uniform.

CHAPTER VII

WAR, MEMORY AND CHANGE

Any interrogation into the thoughts of the post-war populace in the state must consider what the people were fighting for, and what in the end they expected to achieve with victory in the war. There must also be some categorization of who exactly that populace was. The “people” who fought the war and therefore were entitled in some way to expect something in the victory were not the entire population, regardless of the community nature of the war effort. But, there are a few givens which must enter into any political calculus regarding the fruits of victory for North Carolinians. First, there was no great upheaval in the state and no overthrow of the existing structure of control. Second, the people who did the fighting were not returning to a state where the landscape had been completely remade, and so, were able to ease back into their old lives rather readily if they chose to do so. Third, the state was still run by white men, just as it had been before the war, and any reckoning with a changing power structure would have to unseat them to effect much change. No such thing happened. Therefore, while the war did change the perspectives of many individuals, especially the soldiers, the state itself remained much the same.

Therefore, the groups that participated in the war would find either the same opportunities for advancement or the same obstacles, depending upon who you were. For

the purposes of this study, those groups are white men, white women, and the state's black population. Separation of the black population into two groups to examine their postwar experience between the wars is not a useful exercise for this analysis, in that during this period all advantages or disadvantages of this segment of the population began and ended with color. Any examination of the war and memorialization of the victory was essentially the same if you were a black citizen of the state, and this was mostly true regardless of your education or social standing within the group.

By 1920 the war was less than two years distant, and while Wilson's League of Nations vote garnered press coverage, there was hardly a sense in the state that the measure would make any difference in North Carolina. The state was still part of the "solid South," the war had been won and the people who contributed to the victory believed they had done what was asked of them. But as doubts about the stability of Europe, and doubts about the end of "war" crept into public consciousness through newspapers and eventually radio, people in the state were commemorating the war. Slowly, but in a measured way through the dedication of monuments and plaques to the soldiers and others throughout the postwar period and leading up to the Second World War, we can gauge how the state's scattered communities felt about service and the war through these public displays of gratitude and commemoration. Beginning even before the war ended and moving into World War Two that began for the U.S. in 1941, the ceremonies and processes of commemoration give a snapshot of the citizens in the state and their evolving thoughts about the war and their fellow citizens as well.

There is a great deal of useful postwar scholarship concerning the First World War. The key work to start with may be Jennifer Keene's *Doughboys*, which advanced the idea of a negotiated relationship between the state and the soldiers who went to war. Keene argues that these same soldiers who fought the First World War became the leaders who translated their service into that of the "privileged" GI of the Second World War. Keene explored the unfolding discourse between the soldiers and their evolving hopes for the future in light of their service to the nation. Other works on servicemen in the postwar period focus on their reminiscences, like Richard Rubin's *The Last of the Doughboys*, a collection of remembrances from the last few surviving veterans of the AEF. A similar work is Edward Gutierrez's *Doughboys on the Great War*, although where Gutierrez uses the recollections of soldiers immediately after their return home, Rubin uses interviews conducted decades after the conflict.

The men who were asked to go to war, as well as the men who made up the boards and the state hierarchy, expected certain things from the war. Indeed, most of the men according to their words and deeds throughout the conflict expected either change for the better or at least a retaining of their present station through service in the war. To be sure, hardly any of the white men saw the benefit of service in the war as anything but a positive. From the war these men fully expected the larger ideals for which they were asked to fight - democracy, peace and the end to militarism, but in personal terms they expected at least for the status quo to remain. In 1919 the student newspaper for the University of North Carolina declared that "There is glory enough for all, and the future

record will hold as equal those who went and those who could not go.”¹ If those who went were the soldiers, then those who did not go were not the slackers, but the responsible citizens who managed the home front while the army was away. While not expressly described in the quotation, we can reasonably surmise that “those who could not go” included the state’s elite white leadership.²

For the soldiers themselves, the war was sharp and fast, but the remembrance of the war would develop over time for most, as distance from the event changed the way the individual soldiers remembered their experience. There were many who wrote home of the armistice, and what the end of the war meant to them. One Anson County soldier wrote that the last day of the war “was one of the happiest moments of my life, and one that will never be forgotten.”³ Another soldier, in a letter to his mother just after the armistice, wrote that “you know the result of our labor and we all feel well repaid for our hardship and discomforts.”⁴ Primarily, the men wanted to return home, their mission fulfilled. For most of the soldiers they would return to a state little changed from the one they had left, and the majority returned to a life as farmer.⁵

¹ *Yackety Yack*, p.6 [No Author, “Yackety Yack 1918,” Text, No Author. The Yackety Yack 1918. \[Excerpts Relating to World War I\]. Chapel Hill: \[Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies and the Fraternities of the University of North Carolina\], 1918., accessed October 4, 2016, http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/yack1918/yack1918.html.](http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/yack1918/yack1918.html)

² War service and leadership not a watershed event for state’s politicians. Those that voted against war measures were elected just as readily as before the war in most cases.

³ Craighead-Dunlap, *Anson County*, 294.

⁴ Letter Charles down to mother, 18 Nov 1918. Military Collection, WWI Box 4, NCSA.

⁵ “Caswell County Historical Association: Rufus Eddie Foster (1897-1969),” *Caswell County Historical Association* (blog), April 7, 2010, <http://ncccha.blogspot.com/2010/04/rufus-eddie-foster-1897-1969.html>. A quick survey of the returning soldiers for whom I have postwar accounts from newspapers or otherwise shows that of the enlisted soldiers, all but two who were farmers before the war returned to the vocation after the war. Sample is of some 35 men.

The immediate postwar experience for most of these soldiers was often a wait for orders shipping them back to the U.S., a trip back to the states, and for many, a pass through the state and participation in a parade.⁶ Raleigh was the scene of such a parade in March 1919 as the 113th Field Artillery regiment passed through to the cheers of the “biggest crowd ever seen in the city, ” estimated to be some 75,000 people.⁷ The men then continued to a training camp for a short stint in a stateside camp somewhere, followed by what Keene describes as a return home with little fanfare.⁸

Local celebrations of the war in the state were typically delayed for a short while, simply because the men took a while to return home from disparate units, but nearly all soldiers had been returned home by the summer of 1919.⁹ But, while the soldiers were the ones honored, these early events were not necessarily celebrations of bravery and sacrifice, but often were tributes to the entire community and their involvement in the war effort. The Orange County celebration of July 16th, 1919 was remembered as “the biggest day Orange County has ever seen.” In the event, the planning committee numbered over one hundred people, and included both individuals and organizations, notably the Red Cross.¹⁰ The celebration and accompanying parade had veterans from

Part of the appeal may have been the wartime rise in prices, although I have no individual soldiers mentioning this. Both cotton and tobacco prices soared during the war.

⁶ Keene, *Doughboys*, 139. Crowder mentions that the quick end of the war surprised the PMG’s office, and that demobilization plans were not yet fully thought out. The return of army units was therefore chaotic, but relatively quick.

⁷ Craighead-Dunlap, *Anson County*, 272. The parade on March 6th was followed by a number of others as the scattered units returned home.

⁸ Keene, *Doughboys*, 242.

⁹ Keene, *Doughboys*, 132,139.

¹⁰ Cameron, *Orange County*, 108-114.

the World War, in addition to a handful of Confederate veterans, something destined to become a regular feature in postwar celebrations.

But these first official celebrations were also noteworthy for another reason; they were inclusive. At this short remove from the war, the celebration in Orange County included “colored troops and colored Red Cross workers.”¹¹ Segregation was, of course, still the norm in the state, but for a short time the celebratory mood included everyone who served the war effort in some way. But it would only last a short time, as the attempts to attach some meaning to service in the war fell victim to the racism that existed before the war. As the process of memorializing the war and service in the war continued, racial separation would become more pronounced. At any rate, the process of how to remember the war was controlled by the white leadership, and little attention was paid to black soldiers shortly after the end of the war.

Black soldiers looking for guidance as to how to conduct themselves and what to get out of the war had their leaders and little else. W.E.B. DuBois in his 1919 essay “Returning Soldiers,” encouraged black veterans to continue the fight here at home, writing “*We return. We return from fighting. We return fighting. Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why.*”¹² His query was seconded by William James Edwards, who asked, “When the world is made safe for democracy, will the entire country be made safe for it? The Negro only seeks equal rights and justice

¹¹ Cameron, *Orange County*, 117.

¹² W.E.B Du Bois, “Returning Soldiers,” *The Crisis*, XVIII (May, 1919), p. 13.

before all the courts of the land. Are we fighting for democracy for all the people, or are we fighting for democracy for the white man only?"¹³ He later added: "There will be a fuller understanding and a deeper sympathy between the races here at home. Misfortune has prevented that heretofore. Black men fought bravely in the Civil War, but against us. Politics estranged us. Now we will fight together"¹⁴ But blacks in the state were to find that they had gained little from the war, certainly not any degree of inclusion in the management of the state or their place within it, or in fact their place in the state's memory of their war service.

The first attempts to attach meaning to war service began almost immediately. Early commemorations in the state were often very nationalistic, seeming to echo the coming together as a nation that was the true spirit of conscription as pronounced by Provost Marshal General Crowder at his public address in Los Angeles in July 1920. Describing the "great armies [as] "true representations of what we as a nation can do," he was seconded in many ways by some of the memorial addresses and commemorations taking place across the country.¹⁵ The nation's large cities held parades for the veterans, and sometimes for the supporters. If the men who were drafted were not yet sure of what service meant to them, the various memorials and tributes would in many ways become very public investigations into what the war and service in the war - for soldiers and civilians both - truly meant.

¹³ Negro and the World War "William James Edwards. 'Twenty-Five Years in the Black Belt,'" accessed January 31, 2018, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/edwards/edwards.html>, 28.

¹⁴ Edwards, *Negro and the World War*, 31.

¹⁵ Crowder, *Spirit*, 146.

For the white elite, the war was useful in keeping themselves in what they felt was the proper place. These state leaders, one leading citizen wrote, that “[t]he men who shall render service in this war will, during the balance of their lives, rule the Nation, both in politics and in business,” men like newly elected governor Cameron Morrison.¹⁶ Labeled the “Good Roads Governor,” Morrison like almost all men of his age and social status, did not have to participate in the war, at least in any official capacity. He was, however, one of the key players in getting Camp Greene built outside Charlotte, contributing to the economic vibrance of the city during the war.¹⁷ His main role in the memory of the war was his presence at several of the dedications of memorials in the coming years. But he, along with his predecessor Walter Bickett, and his successor Angus McLean, who served until 1929, were representative of the ruling elite in North Carolina who, while vocal in their support of the war, saw their station change very little due to the conflict. The men that were most affected by war service were primarily the middle and working classes, and, of course, small farmers.¹⁸

The middle and working classes were the men who actually went to fight from the state. Primarily they were draftees, but they also volunteered as well. As a group, these men seldom wrote memoirs or remembered the war in print. Rather, they often celebrated their war service in public at public functions, and it was not long after the war

¹⁶ James H. (James Hinton) Pou, “How War Came to America and What It Means to Us,” Text, Pou, James H.. How War Came to America and What it Means to Us. Address Delivered at a Patriotic Meeting of Soldiers and Citizens, Held at Raleigh, N. C., on August 14, 1917. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1917., accessed October 5, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/pouwar/pou.html>.

¹⁷ Charlotte Viewpoint, 11 November 2012. Jack Dillard, accessed March 8, 2018.

¹⁸ A number of the individual records available are of farmers who served in the war and returned to farming after. Accessible through www.ncdr.gov NCWW1 4/26.

that communities and veterans' groups began to honor the service of the men and somehow assigning meaning to the war only recently ended. The early celebrations sometimes included black soldiers, but more often they were white affairs only. Moreover, these early celebrations were often more international and national in tenor, unlike the more local and state celebrations to come.

One of the first postwar remembrance celebrations was held in 1920 by the newly formed American Legion.¹⁹ In a memorial service convened in Greensboro, this event honored veterans from the counties of Guilford, Rockingham and Randolph.²⁰ The program was an international one, and the French military attaché attended the memorial service. Governor Bickett was also there, and the entire program was a short tribute to the fallen soldiers. Like nearly all early commemorations, they sang the “Star-Spangled Banner” as well as “America,” – and in this case the “Marseillaise” as well due to the presence of the French officer. There was also an invocation and readings from the bible by a clergyman. Interestingly, there were no Confederate veterans at this service, and “Dixie” was not on the program either. As the war became more distant, these two staples of southern culture would appear more often at commemorations of the First World War.²¹

¹⁹ The General Assembly created a Memorial Commission soon after the war. They held their first meeting on March 20, 1919.

²⁰ VFW posts were segregated as well.

²¹ Memorial service “Remains of Henry K. Burtner to Arrive Home This Morning :: Textiles, Teachers, and Troops - Greensboro 1880-1945,” accessed September 26, 2017, <http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ttt/id/9223>.

Many more memorials were dedicated in 1921 as well. These early tributes often expressed the higher ideals of Wilsonian democracy in memorial panels, citing the word “freedom” in key places. The memorial in Hollis reads, “they offered their lives upon the altar of world freedom,” while the Anson County plaque of the same time offers the war as fought for “the sacred truth of liberty, equality and justice.” The Nash County memorial echoes these sentiments, describing the war as fought for “liberty, justice and peace.”²² Not all of the plaques have this same language, but at this early stage the tribute is still that of a nation before the state, even with the local flavor of the monuments and the necessity of listing the local fallen soldiers.

In addition to the language on these monuments, the presence of politicians from other states seemed to lend a national tenor to these celebrations. The national commander of the American Legion was present at the Anson County memorial service, and Former Governor Bickett was present at the Nash County and Winston-Salem memorial services. In 1922, the monument erected in New Hanover County would feature Senator Pat Harrison of Mississippi, and in 1923 the dedication of the monument in Gastonia would feature Congressman Tom Connally of Texas and the commander of Fort Bragg. The programs were still national devotions to service and sacrifice, and none yet featured the playing of Dixie, but a few of the celebrations did feature ex-Confederate soldiers in attendance, as reported by local newspapers.²³

²² Rutherford County, Cleveland County, Anson County, Nash County “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/183/>.

²³ Anson, Nash, New Hanover and Gastonia “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/700/>.

This more nationalistic flavor was not restricted only to the dedication of monuments. The Armistice Day program for 1921, published by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction listed both the “Marseillaise” and the “Star-Spangled banner” in the program, along with recitations of poetry and readings from North Carolina’s war record. There is no mention in the program of the Civil War, or of the South as a region, and while there is singing of “The Old North State,” the essence of the program is one of the state as a piece of the nation, not the state or the South alone.²⁴

Soon, however, monuments would begin to include tributes to the dead of the Civil War as well as the World War being erected on the same sites. In September of 1923 the community of Smithfield dedicated a memorial fountain to “Honor ... those from Johnston County who participated in the Great War.” Moreover, the fountain was also dedicated to a Civil War veteran from the area. A speech was reportedly given by “Haywood Sanders, an 83-year-old former slave who had served as the body servant to Edwin Smith Sanders during the Civil War.”²⁵ A short time later another private citizen had a monument to “all wars” erected in his front yard.²⁶ These were small ceremonies by comparison, but the mixture of the Civil War and the World War was a sign that the early nationalism was waning, and a harbinger of things to come.

²⁴ “North Carolina. Dept. of Public Instruction North Carolina Day. Friday, November 11, 1921. Armistice Day. North Carolina in the World War.,” accessed January 31, 2018, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/ncday1921/menu.html>.

²⁵ Smithfield 1923 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

²⁶ Confederate Holly Springs 1923 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

But the tributes to the soldiers in the state were still linked with the concept of North Carolina as a part of the larger nation. Among the monuments dedicated in 1923, the Pisgah Memorial Arch honors those that “made the supreme sacrifice for their country,” while the Gaston County memorial similarly lists men “who died in the service of their country.” There are similar expressions from both the High Point and Charlotte dedications on this busy fifth anniversary of the war. But almost completely gone by now are the inclusive arrangements of the earlier dedications. There are no black soldiers at these ceremonies, no black speakers, and in future ceremonies black soldiers are almost always only mentioned when a national figure attended.²⁷

This whitewashing was not necessarily planned, but it was still evident. The memorials, too, made this silencing easy to accomplish. Because memorial plaques often listed only dead soldiers, in many of the memorial sites there were no black soldiers listed on the monuments since few black soldiers from North Carolina had seen combat. There were deaths of black soldiers in combat, and far more from accidents and disease, but most towns had only white deaths, and thus had only to list white soldiers on the memorials to the dead.²⁸

By 1924, the national flavor was still there for some of the memorial dedications. The Anson County Memorial unveiled in 1924 witnessed the reading of a speech describing the tablet which listed the names of the dead as a “monument of the noble

²⁷ *Pisgah Arch*, Gastonia “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/574/>.

²⁸ High Point and Charlotte Doughboys 1923 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

free” in the “Great War for World-Wide Liberty.”²⁹ North Carolinian and former Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels was the featured speaker, and the words on the monuments are reminiscent of the Wilsonian ideals of the government he served. And while the memorial was dedicated to dead soldiers, both black and white, the black soldiers are listed separately on a different tablet in an example of segregation even for those who died in the war. Once again there is no record of either black soldiers or other prominent official participants at the unveiling, even though one-third of the troops from Anson County were black.³⁰

Another memorial unveiling in 1924 displays fully the possibility of a completely southern remembrance in the state. The Armistice Day dedication of the Rutherford County War Memorial was a turn away from the enlightened nationalistic celebrations for the time being. Unveiled to an estimated crowd of 6,000 people, the festivities in this rural county also featured a march by “approximately 150 members of the Ku Klux Klan dressed in full uniform of the order.” In addition, the movie “Birth of a Nation” was shown periodically throughout the day. But otherwise, the celebrations looked much like many other dedication programs. There was a football game, boxing, a baby contest and a barbecue. The newspaper commented also that there were veterans from the Civil War as well as the Spanish American War.³¹ The normalcy of a truly all-white celebration

²⁹ Craighead-Dunlap, *Anson County*, 15.

³⁰ Craighead-Dunlap, *Anson County*, 48.

³¹ Rutherford County 1924 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

signaled that the more broadminded and inclusive celebrations were becoming a thing of the past.

Eventually more of the memorials began to include other wars besides the First World War, primarily of course the Civil War. One of these, a marker for Camp Chronicle in Gastonia, honored the American Revolution along with the recent war veterans. Another in 1926 in Montgomery County paid tribute to Confederate soldiers on the same monument that honored the servicemen from the world war, with a simple “In memory of sons who served in the Confederate States Army.”³² Similarly, the memorial fountain in Wilson County states, “To the valor of Wilson County Soldiers,” but a Confederate battle flag flew over the monument itself, and the attached drinking fountains were separated for white and colored. Before these unveilings, there were spoken tributes to the Confederate veterans, and sometimes former southern soldiers too, but the joint memorials marked a change in tone. At the same time, the memorials dedicated at former federal installations were much more neutral, as evidenced by the monument at Camp Greene, dedicated simply to the units that trained at the facility, and without racial markers or Confederate battle flags.

In 1928, beginning with the memorial for Iredell County, the unveiling of the monuments began to mark a new trend, highlighting the changing political fortunes in Europe. More often now, dedications began to dwell on the idea of a future war, especially with the memorials of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Both speakers featured

³² Montgomery County 1926 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

at the dedication for the Iredell County memorial mentioned the “need for peace as well as the importance of avoiding further wars.”³³ This tendency, toward peace and goodwill, would continue with the monument in Asheville, a memorial dedicated to the German prisoners of war who spent a good portion of the war interred there. In a gesture of friendship, the memorial dedication featured the German Ambassador, representatives from German veterans’ groups, and a program which featured the German national anthem performed along with the “Star-Spangled Banner.” The remarks of the German Ambassador ask that “love should guide the world and prevent further willful destruction of human lives and civilization.”³⁴ Very similar remarks were being spoken at other memorials in the state at this time.

The Great Depression put a stop to most memorials throughout the early 1930s, but there were a few built.³⁵ During this period most were typically dedicated to all veterans, not simply from the First World War. In addition, these monuments were very southern in tone. The memorial in Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh was dedicated “to the soldiers and sailors of North Carolina who served her in time of war on land and sea.” Further on, the inscription reads, “the soldier of the South takes his place / in the World's Legion of Honor.”³⁶ Similarly the monument to the men of Stokes County is a simple stone overshadowed by the Confederate memorial positioned close by. Both are closer to

³³ Iredell Monument, 1928 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

³⁴ Asheville monument, 1932. “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina.” On the same day the Asheville newspaper announced that Hitler may become next German Chancellor.

³⁵ There was a simple monument unveiled in Yanceyville in February of 1929. Funding issues delayed the House of Memory in Raleigh, reports mention it took 2 years to set all plaques at memorial.

³⁶ House of Memory, “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010, Oakwood Raleigh.

the evolving trend to honor all soldiers from the state, while still featuring white veterans and speakers, as the trend moves toward the exclusive South.

As the Second World War loomed closer, memorial dedications do not cease altogether, but the ceremonies did become less numerous. When there are memorials, they all echo the earlier Asheville remarks hoping that there will not be a repeat of the last war. At the Surry County War Memorial, dedicated on Armistice Day of 1939, the newspaper reported that “All of the speakers advocated for the peace effort and their hopes that there would never be another World War such as this.” Interestingly, in the emerging climate of coming together, both white and black deaths are listed together.³⁷ At the time of the Surry County dedication, Europe had been at war for two months, and governor Clyde Hoey sounded a lot like Claude Kitchin some twenty years before when he said “It is safer to sell supplies than to send men and if England and France can win this war that is our best security for peace.”³⁸ Many of the veterans of the First World War had probably long since given up on their war being the last for the U.S.

By the time of the U.S. entry into the Second World War, the tributes were solely to the soldiers and the sacrifice, and, of course, not for a desire to keep the peace. At the memorial in Alamance County to the war dead, the speaker, Major Gregg Cherry, a gubernatorial candidate in 1944, stated that “we have now learned that the policy of isolation offers no more safety than the proverbial ostrich has with his head in the

³⁷ Surry 1939 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

³⁸ Sarah McCulloh Lemmon and Nancy Smith Midgette, *North Carolina and the Two World Wars* (Raleigh: Office of Archives and History, NC 2013) 131. Quotation from speech given 14 September 1939.

sand.”³⁹ Other memorials, also dedicated during the war, were pledged to the dead of both wars.⁴⁰ With the coming of another war, some veterans joined the service once again, some sat on draft boards, and many pledged to support however they could.

A quarter of a century earlier, soon after the end of the First World War in 1920, in an address titled “North Carolina Women and the World War,” delivered before the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association at its annual convention in Raleigh, Dr. Archibald Henderson closed with these remarks: “As we turn today to the heavy tasks of reconstruction and reorganization of civil life, we cannot in justice forget the part played by women as civilians in the Great War. And I look confidently forward to a time in the near future when, not as a reward, but as a recognition of justice, the women of North Carolina, and of America, shall receive equal civil, legal and political rights with their partners, men, in the great business of making the world a better place to live in.”⁴¹ This exhortation, though, had only to do with white well-to-do women. Black women and poor whites saw little apparent advantage from their recent war service.

Following the First World War, women were expected by the men to “return to their traditional roles.”⁴² But in reality, the postwar years were for some women a period of empowerment, experienced through some new organizations and some old ones as

³⁹ Alamance County 1943 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

⁴⁰ Craven County 1944 “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina.” March 19, 2010.

⁴¹ Archibald Henderson, “North Carolina Women in the World War,” Text, Henderson, Archibald. North Carolina Women in the World War. [Raleigh, N.C.?: North Carolina Literary and Historical Association], 1920., accessed October 4, 2016, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/henderson/henderson.html>.

⁴² The Doughboys and Camp Greene “The Doughboys and Camp Greene: After the War | Charlotte Mecklenburg Story,” accessed January 24, 2018, <http://www.cmstory.org/content/doughboys-and-camp-greene-after-war>.

well. The new veteran's organization, the VFW, had an attached Ladies Auxiliary, and many women joined chapters throughout the state. However, most of these women returned to their pre-war associations and clubs, determined to make their mark on war and the memorialization of service just as the men were doing. But the women proved to be more determined and more adept, and through their associations with these clubs, and using some of the skills refined during the war, they were the driving force for the building of the memorials and monuments and had an outsized effect on the design and building of these memorials to service in the war.

But in a conservative southern state like North Carolina, postwar empowerment for the women of the state was destined to look a lot like the period before the war. Using traditional organs, however, these women were able to utilize their existing avenues of influence to put their mark on the war memorialization and efforts to commemorate service in the state.⁴³ So, while they were unable to erect monuments to their own work in the war, they proved quite adept at steering other efforts to commemorate the war in which they played such a large part.⁴⁴

Women's roles in postwar commemoration began almost immediately. The Women's Council of National Defense chapter for Robeson County sponsored the 1919

⁴³ Some organizations combined their efforts. In 1918 the Wake County Ladies Memorial Association merged with the U.D.C. Chapter in Wake County. Charlotte Bryan Grimes Williams and N. C. United Daughters of the Confederacy. Johnston Pettigrew Chapter No. 95 (Raleigh, *History of the Wake County Ladies Memorial Association : Confederate Memorials in Capitol Square, Memorial Pavilion, the House of Memory and the Confederate Cemetery* (Raleigh, N.C. : [Johnston Pettigrew Chapter, U.D.C.?], 1938). <http://archive.org/details/historyofwakecou00will>.

⁴⁴ While women got no monument of their own for the First World War, one does exist for the women of the Civil War in the Raleigh.

monument in that county, and the Rowan County monument was similarly erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter in Salisbury.⁴⁵ The DAR also sponsored the Anson County Memorial Fountain in 1921 and the second monument to the war in Anson County in 1924.⁴⁶ Eventually the DAR would either solely or partially sponsor some seven more monuments in North Carolina.⁴⁷ During this period the organization focused on fundraising for new monuments, in addition to maintaining some thirty other already existing monuments across the state.

But the DAR was overshadowed in building new memorials by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. A powerful group before the war, the organization had no trouble attracting new members and raising funds where needed. The North Carolina division of the UDC, at the organization's annual meeting in 1923, declared that "a country without sentiment is a country without monuments; a land without monuments is a land without patriots."⁴⁸ The UDC outdid all other women's groups in the state by building or heavily contributing to some nine monuments to the war, while still building and maintaining several Confederate monuments during the same period. This group, too, was quickly a party to the sectionalism that accompanied the building of the monuments.

⁴⁵ Robeson, Rowan "Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina," March 19, 2010. Interestingly, the Robeson County monument listed Indian names separately.

⁴⁶ Anson county 1924 "Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina," March 19, 2010.

⁴⁷ Others are Greene, Gaston, Wilson, Rowan and Wake Counties.

⁴⁸ Annual minutes 26th convention, 67-68. United Daughters of the Confederacy. North Carolina Division, *Minutes of the ... Annual Convention of the United Daughters of the Confederacy : [Serial] North Carolina Division* (Raleigh, N.C. : Capital Printing Co., 1899), <http://archive.org/details/minutesofannualc193unit>.

During the dedication of the Unity Monument at Bennett Place, in 1923, a controversy arose between the UDC and the organizers of the dedication ceremony. In a very exclusionary address, Senator Burton Wheeler noted that the commander of Fort Bragg remarked that the state was a good battleground to fight on issues of “civic righteousness” since “less than 1% of North Carolinians were foreign born.” Added to this was the UDC’s refusal to participate in the dedication due to their objections that the location of the southern surrender would essentially be a “monument of defeat.” Furthermore, the ladies objected to the presence of John Weeks, the Secretary of War, because he was a northerner.⁴⁹ While this was not a First World War monument, the nature of the remarks regarding the Civil War and objections to a northerner could hardly be mistaken.

This episode was an illustrative one for middle and upper-class women of the state, showcasing both their insular nature and the ability to influence events which existed within the spheres that they were in control of. The women influenced the memory and memorialization of the war through their control of fundraising and design efforts, all the while maintaining a position of prominence alongside but not above the men who retained their pre-war position in society. This strengthening of the influence they already had, bolstering their place in postwar North Carolina, was the primary result of their war service.

⁴⁹ Bennett Place, 1923. “Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina,” March 19, 2010.

For the three primary groups involved in the war, very little changed. The white elite retained the power it held before the war, a power buttressed by the war and the draft. Asked to preside over the process of going to war, through the leadership not only of local and district boards, but also fundraising committees, Councils of Defense, Medical and Legal Advisory Boards, and many other organizations, these privileged individuals occupied the posts that came naturally to them. For this group, there was no other natural role. They knew of no other position but that of decisionmaker, and thus emerged from the war much like they entered it; with the reins of power fully in their hands.

For the white women in the state, their place too was secured by the war. The upper crust, as mentioned, would resume a responsibility and station they occupied before the war. Their clubs and associations had been utilized and often energized by the war, but little had changed as to their social status. However, most returned to their pre-war roles of wife and mother. For poor white women, their circumstances also remained mostly the same. There were a few who experienced an upward mobility, advancing as nurses or teachers during the war, but in this mostly agricultural state the majority continued as farmer's wives, the income of a wartime allotment and control of household funds an increasingly distant memory.

For the state's black residents, the war meant even less. Despite the exhortations of W.E.B. DuBois, war service had not brought democracy to the state. Once the sheen of postwar parades and the early memorials wore off, black residents found themselves in much the same circumstances as before the war. Most of the men were farmers or

laborers, while the women who could find work mostly operated as domestics in white households. Real change for this group would be decades in coming.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation surveyed the implementation and working of the draft in North Carolina, as well as the growth of the support apparatus surrounding conscription and the war effort generally. The available evidence substantiates the premise that the war itself was largely supported by the people throughout the state. While I do not argue that there was unbound enthusiasm at the outset, I certainly do suggest that support grew in both substance and degree as the war continued. As the scale of the war effort grew, the draft and the ever-widening support effort expanded along with it. Essential to this interpretation are the positive responses to the continuing requests for soldiers, from the first registration in June of 1917 until the September 1918 expansion of the draft to net men from 18 to 45 years of age. All segments of the population redoubled their efforts to fulfill what would become the final call for draftees. From prospective soldier to wife and mother, there was broad support across the state. This backing was not a foregone conclusion, more men were requested time and again, and no one knew this to be the final call. The men did their duty, as did the many others, in support of the war.

The thematic structure allows for the exploration of the many facets of support for the draft and enables some interpretation as to why this is the case. The first chapter, which examined the ability of the state to compel personal individual service, was

especially useful as a basis from which to examine the individuals' perception of duty to the community. While the confines of what made up the state had undergone changes since the settlement of North Carolina, the idea of duty had remained largely the same. Even with the Civil War still in living memory, most of these men chose to either ignore or forget the state's history of resistance and quarrel with a national government in that conflict, and they registered anyway. Lists were made, boards were formed, the men came forth.

Registering men for the draft was a local event. Just as the same was played out across the country in thousands of other places, the community was necessarily involved in sending the men off to war. The huge task of forming an army involved seemingly everyone in the scattered counties and towns in the state. Starting with the potential draftees, they were in fact stirred with both carrot and stick. Instructed by officials from their local sheriffs to President Wilson to do their duty and register, most of them simply did what was asked of them. The registration boards examined the men, deferred some and drafted others. Yes, boards were reluctant to send husbands, even less so husbands with kids, but when needed they sent them, and the draftees reported to camp. Motivated by duty, by honor, and sometimes by fear of public shame, the draftees, even at this early and uncertain stage in the U.S. war effort, and without undue enthusiasm, mostly came when they were called. As the war continued, especially as U.S. troops started to see combat, determination and sometimes enthusiasm increased as well, even among the draftees and potential draftees.

The matching piece of the support for the war came from the women. Barred from but a few official occupations, the women of the state served in a vast array of support roles throughout the war, and nowhere did support for the war reach so deeply into the tiny hamlets and villages as through the organizations these women directed and ran. Many accounts record the roles of women throughout the conflict, but this dissertation points out that many women who were also wives and mothers, as well as other relations, watched their men go off to war. These women occupied some jobs previously taken by men, but primarily worked on the many farms throughout the state that were absent some men, who were either away at training camp and later in France. The letters record their conversations, and the records too point to the efforts of women without draftable male relatives, including students at the women's institutions throughout the state who in many ways supported the war. As is pointed out in the text, moving forward with the draft without the support of the states' women was quite unlikely.

This study also explores racism and classism as it relates to the draft. Of course, these concepts existed in the Jim Crow South, resting in the minds of everyone from the draftees themselves to the governor's office, including those groups who had to endure this prejudice, both official and otherwise. While a discriminatory though benevolent paternalism prevailed (mostly) in the leadership of the state and the draft apparatus, statistically the draftees comprised roughly the same representation as the overall population of the state. Yes, the draftees in the end were primarily poor white men, but the ratios of black and white who served aligned very closely with the actual makeup of

the state's inhabitants. Draft boards seemed much more concerned with unemployed black draftees not yet shipped out rather than the racial or social makeup of the population left behind. Moreover, there is more than ample evidence that the existence of children was far more important when deferments were granted than the race or economic station of a prospective draftee. While not specifically designed to be so, a relatively accurate cross-section of the population did wind up in uniform.

Related to the issue of race and class is the problem of resistance to the draft and the war. There were instances of both individual and group resistance to the draft and the war, but these episodes were most useful to illustrate how little this occurred in the state. Desertion rates, as well as no-shows and late arrivals in North Carolina, were among the lowest in the country, and even more so in the South. As described previously, individuals who failed to report were normally always officially received and recorded as having a valid excuse, usually ignorance, and forwarded to training camp where appropriate. There are no instances in the source material of individual draftees or men who would later become soldiers expressing anything resembling political views against the war.

Group resistance, though, presents a different picture. However, the official response to these episodes is most indicative as to the mindset of the state overall in terms of support of the war. From the governor on down, these groups were labeled either misguided and ignorant, and if the "truth" of the war effort was all they needed to come into line, then this narrative could be argued as being true. When given a chance to return to the army, with the promise of no further punishment – or public shame and

imprisonment if they did not, these men rejoined the ranks. The label of ignorance of the true nature of the war effort was applied here too. From local boards to the governor, any resistance was either branded ignorance or officially silenced, but official and unofficial accounts show little resistance in the state in any event.

The end of the conflict saw the men return home relatively quickly, and the support effort too uncoiled itself rather easily for the most part. Effortlessly undone were the exemption and medical boards, and most of the other scattered volunteer organs across the state. Celebrating the end of the war took place immediately, while honoring the veterans would await their arrival. The return of the soldiers saw parades and celebrations large and small throughout the state. The first demonstrations, especially in the larger cities, were often inclusive, with soldiers and supporters both black and white, albeit not in ranks together, at least sharing the same procession. However, these soon gave way to the segregated celebrations most were used to, which would not change again for decades to come.

Remembering the war through memorials also accelerated after the war. The first memorials were typically often international or national in makeup and message. There were dignitaries and ambassadors, and the celebrations were often for the end of both the recent conflict and sometimes certain larger ideas, either war itself or at least the notion of militarism. These too shortly took on the hue of each locale where they were held. The sacrifices of local men were honored, but less and less were loftier ideals given prominence. Eventually these pageants became white-only, typically sponsored by white organizations and sometimes attended by Confederate veterans, and even on occasion the

KKK. Black soldiers, if honored at all, had usually to be content with names on a separate plaque.

Post-war North Carolina before long returned once again to what it was before the war. The soldiers returned to their civilian pursuits, for most of them the farm. The volunteers too resumed their pre-war vocations as well. There was no re-ordering of society, regardless of the wishes of a few. White males made the big decisions, both in government and business, and the working of the state looked much like it had in the decades before the war. Opportunities for others, poorer white men, as well as blacks and most women, would not happen soon.

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