Abstract

The Congressional approval of President Wilson’s resolution to enter the United States into the Great War on April 6, 1917 ended a period of American isolationism and galvanized patriotic support for the United States which was manifested both at home and abroad. This war, although it was fought on a different continent, profoundly affected the lives of citizens in the small Midwestern town of Muncie, Indiana. This paper analyzes primary-source documents such as the Muncie Morning Star and The Muncie Sunday Star as well as various presidential declarations, documents from the Library of Congress, and local advertisements to show how men, women, children, clubs, and businesses in Muncie ‘did their part’ to support the United States’ initial entry into World War I. Unfortunately, patriotism can also be manifested in xenophobia and jingoism, and this paper will also record the existence of anti-German sentiment and actions in Muncie as they appear in the newspapers from this time period.

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Middletown in Crisis: Muncie Reacts to the Opening Months of the Great War

On April 6, 1917, the lives of all in the United States changed. This was the day the country entered the Great War, the war on the European continent, the war that would end a blissful period of American isolationism. In Muncie, Indiana, a small Midwestern town, life as the citizens knew it was to change as well. During the First World War, Muncie citizens mobilized and helped the country as they were able. Men, women, and children, as well as churches, factories, and clubs made fundamental changes to their routine proceedings in the first months of American involvement in the war to support the soldiers and the war they fought. One aspect that all of these groups shared was change: they all underwent significant changes in their duties, their business practices, their sermons, to ‘do their part’ for the war. These changes, coupled with intermittent anti-German sentiment as reported in the Muncie Morning Star, paint a picture of the effect of the Great War on a small town in the heart of the Midwest.

“Indiana Lads to Help Uncle Sam”—Muncie Men in the War Effort

Of all the demographic groups that mobilized for the war effort, the men of Muncie were the quickest to react and helped the war effort in the most traditional of ways. Within a week of President Wilson and Congress declaring war on Germany, 57 men from this town enlisted in Company G of the Second Indiana Infantry, and by the end of the month 72 more chose to volunteer for the reserve corps situated at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis and four Muncie boys signed up for the Navy. Forty-six recruits left Muncie for Indianapolis on May 2, 1917; the next day, two more men left to join Company G “somewhere in Indiana” (05/03/17:12). [all references unless otherwise specified are to articles in the Muncie Morning Star or Muncie Sunday Star with the date given mm/dd/yy, followed by page number; Roman
numerals will indicate in what section of the *Muncie Sunday Star* the article can be found].

Through the end of May, Muncie continued to see a small stream of volunteers who enlisted in these divisions. Harry M. Hoot, a recruit from Muncie, wrote a letter to his mother that was reprinted in the paper about his training at Fort DuPont in Delaware. In his letter, he mentioned that he was one of many recruits from Muncie at this fort and that “all are well pleased with training and life in the army” (05/11/17:6). By May 12, Indiana had filled the quota for the officers’ reserve and additional applications were actually turned away; plans were made to secure a second training camp at Fort Benjamin Harrison later that summer. As recruiting fell off toward the middle of May, however, it was replaced with an entirely new means of obtaining soldiers: the Selective Service Act of 1917 was passed by Congress on May 18, 1917 (“Records of the Selective Service System”). President Wilson signed the so-called War Draft Bill the next day and selected June 5 as the day of registration for the Selective Service. A total of 4,885 men from Delaware County registered on that day, but since the state boards in other areas were slow to organize President Wilson pushed the official deadline to register to July. By June 30, however, Company G was already filled “to full war strength” (06/30/17:6) with 150 men.

Muncie men, both those who had enlisted and those who waited to be called, eagerly anticipated serving in the war and made attempts to ready themselves for the fighting in Europe while still in Muncie. Wilber Ryman, in preparation for the second officers’ reserve corps, formed the Muncie Branch of the Military Training Camps Association of the United States. At this camp, prospective soldiers met every Tuesday and Friday evening, and some Sunday afternoons, to drill in preparation for the reserve corps. The Muncie Knights of Columbus formed a parallel drill squad under the direction of Clarence A. Millspaugh; the fifty men in this squad drilled three times a week in preparation for the war. Yet another training group was
founded by the Muncie Young Men’s Christian Association. Starting July 1, 1917, and continuing three times a week, Director McLean of the institution gave instructions to men who had registered for the Selective Service on June 5. A year later, Frank E. Arnold organized another session of drill classes for drafted men in the armory at the Anthony business building.

Of course, not every Muncie man was eligible for service, and not every man in Muncie was sent to the front. Those who stayed in the United States found other ways to support the war effort from the home front. Most notably, they took on the work of those who did have to go to war. Farmer Broyles of nearby Mt. Pleasant wrote a letter to the editor of the *Muncie Morning Star* in which he urged farmers to cooperate and share land and farming tasks: “You owe it to your country as well as to your brother farmer. We must cooperate. Somebody must go to the front and somebody must stay here” (05/07/17:5). Men remaining in Muncie were also asked to fill in at the many factories for soldiers who left their jobs to go to war. The Warner Gear Company of Muncie posted a classified advertisement on June 24, 1918, in which they asked for men aged sixteen to sixty to work “by our President and others who are interested in seeing Old Glory come out as usual so triumphantly.” (06/24/18:6) The company was asked to fill a government order and needed to fill it quickly, so they called upon men in Muncie to “Be a soldier of the shop!” (06/24/18:6) as the advertisement commanded. One Muncie citizen, J.F. Warner, invented a device for detecting the presence and movements of a submerged body such as a U-Boat and sent his idea to the government.

Perhaps one of the most interesting ways older men in Muncie helped the war effort was through the “Sammy Backers” program started by the *Muncie Morning Star*. In this program, older men who had served in previous wars were asked to write to the drafted younger men and
give them advice on military life. The name comes from a slang term for American soldiers abroad, in reference to the patriotic figure of Uncle Sam.

Like the women discussed later, men in Muncie repurposed traditional social gatherings, turning them into occasions to benefit the Red Cross or other charitable organizations helping the war effort. For men, those gatherings were baseball games. On July 22, 1917, the workers of Glascock’s and T.W. Warner companies played a game of ball to benefit the Red Cross Muncie Chapter and tickets were sold for 25 cents. On August 14, there was a doubleheader game in Muncie: first the Preachers played against the Lawyers, and then the Muncie Greys (the city baseball team) squared off against Jewell’s ABCs from Indianapolis. All proceeds from these games went to the emergency fund for Company G. It is unknown how much money was raised at this doubleheader, but a second doubleheader held the next day somehow managed to lose $307.90, as pointed out by Sergeant J.F. Finney of Company G. A year later, on June 26, 1918, the Warner Gear (the same company who urged men to fill in for the soldiers) and T.W. Warner companies faced off in another benefit game, with the proceeds of this game going to the Red Cross of Delaware County. The game was preceded by a concert from both team bands. Of course, charging admission was not the only way to raise funds; for example, Charley Murray, a Muncie comedian and enterprising young fellow, sold kisses at a baseball game for $1 each and promised to send all proceeds to the Red Cross. He raised $100.

“Muncie Women are Laboring Untiringly”—Women in the War Effort

For most Muncie women, the effect of the war was felt most keenly in the home. While the men were urged by propaganda campaigns to enlist and prepare to fight overseas, the same government agencies behind “Enlist!” campaigns urged women to do their part at home by
conserving materials and running the household as self-sufficiently as possible. Muncie women put renewed effort into maintaining small gardens, either at their homes or in McCulloch Park, where garden lots were given away to amateur gardeners wishing to grow their own produce. These women were helped by columns in the *Muncie Morning Star* such as one from May 8, 1917, from the chief of horticulture at Purdue University that educated readers about how best to grow navy beans. Whatever food they managed to grow was to be managed carefully so that there would be enough food for everyone; as a note in the Woman's Club section of the Sunday paper stated, the general feeling was that “anyone who eats today the same amount of food he did before the war is guilty of disloyalty to his country” (06/10/17:8). The Woman's Franchise League of Muncie helped the conservation effort on May 1, 1917, by printing bulletins about food conservation to be sent to private homes. Conservation was not just limited to food—Muncie women were advised to be conservative in all of their spending during the four drives for war funding. A letter to the editor from Minerva Richards of Muncie on June 15, 1917, states that women should give up niceties like new shoes and clothes and use the money saved to buy Liberty Loans to support the war effort; her reasoning was that since the men have to give themselves to the war effort, the least women could do was to go without luxury so that they could financially support the men giving their lives to the war effort. An article in the paper on July 8 supported this point and added that women could also help conserve labor by carrying their own goods home instead of relying on deliveries, as well as not returning items to store unless the items were actually damaged.

These ideas later bloomed into a statewide movement for conservation of food and other household expenditures led by the Indiana League for Women's Service in Indianapolis, and August 15 was called Conscription Day for women. Just as men were required to register for the
selective service, women were asked (but not required) to register their specific skills for the war effort with the national government so that the women could be organized along various lines of work at home that must be accomplished. Locally, Mrs. John Hartley was chair of a committee responsible for handling these ‘service cards’ as well as ‘Hoover cards’ in Muncie. These cards were named after Herbert Hoover, who was at that time administrator of the Food Administration, and signing these cards meant that the bearer would carry out food conservation policies as outlined by Hoover. Hoover devised memorable policies such as “wheatless Mondays, meatless Tuesdays, and porkless Saturdays (“Sow the Seeds of Victory”).” A copy of one of these cards appears in the paper on Wednesday, August 1, 1917, and a committee was formed by Mrs. John Hartley to canvas Muncie to hand out these cards and service cards to the women of Muncie on Conscription Day.

The Muncie citizens appear to have been made aware of the plight in the French hospitals on Saturday, April 28, 1917. On this day, a woman named Mrs. C.C. Marsh came from Washington, D.C. to Muncie and gave a speech about her work at French hospitals in Avignon. Barely three weeks into the war, Muncie citizens responded to her call for help. In one day, Muncie citizens donated $1,210.91, and the goal of $1500 was quickly surpassed. Newspapers advertised the charity; a donation center was established at the corner of Main and Mulberry streets; and druggists donated thermometers, forceps and needles to the relief. Muncie citizens did more than just donate money and ready-to-ship supplies, however; Muncie women especially also donated their time and skills to sew clothing and make other supplies desperately needed by the French hospitals. Sewing for the French Hospital Relief became a social activity, and women’s clubs and associations dutifully ‘did their part’ to help out. An association headquarters was quickly set up at 114 East Main Street, and the clubs developed a rotating system of
management where a different club would have charge of the sewing at that location. The Art
League, Eastern Star Social Club, Research Club, and the Monday Afternoon Club are just a few
of the social groups that gave their time to sew for French hospitals. In addition to social clubs,
religious organizations of women sprang into action to contribute their skills to the war effort;
among the church groups listed as participating in this charity are the women of the First Baptist
Church, the St. Lawrence Catholic Church, the Grace Episcopal Church, the St. John’s
Universalist Church, the High Street Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Friends Memorial
Church. These women were incredibly efficient: a report in the Sunday Star on June 17, 1917,
states that in one week, 222 local women and 172 out-of-town visitors created four crates’ worth
of medical supplies to be shipped out. These crates were packed with 347 day shirts, 322 sheets,
448 bandages, 1603 compresses, 550 gauze rolls, 234 slings, and 214 sets of pajamas--much to
show for a week’s work. In fact, the women’s groups who sewed for the French Hospital Relief
were so successful in their endeavors that in mid-July they received letters from clubs in other
cities expressing their interest in this project. Representatives from groups in other cities
frequently came to the headquarters in Muncie to receive instructions from the club women here.

If Muncie women wanted to sew garments for the war effort or donate money, the French
Hospital Relief was by no means the only organization where they could do their part. Muncie
women were also extremely active in the Red Cross from its beginnings in Muncie on April 20,
1917. At first, the organization had no established headquarters, so members met in their
traditional club headquarters to conduct Red Cross work; for example, Mrs. Thomas Bracken
and Mrs. Charles Williams entertained at a sewing party at the Williams home that was
advertised as a “Red Cross affair” and on May 11, 1917, members of the Paul Revere Chapter of
the Daughters of the American Revolution met at their headquarters in Wysor Block to work on
hospital garments and in fact later split from the Red Cross, forming a third headquarters for hospital supplies in the block. A few days later, on May 17, the Delaware Country Club announced on its opening night that the women’s parties in the afternoons were to be converted into sewing parties for the American Red Cross as well as for the French Hospital Relief, and a sort of headquarters was established in a room at the country club. On June 5, the Muncie chapter of the Red Cross moved into its permanent headquarters at 222 East Main Street. Like the French Hospital Relief, activities for the Red Cross were organized by Muncie women’s clubs; in fact, Red Cross secretary Frank J. Claypool asked each club to form a committee to report to the Red Cross. Notable clubs that volunteered for the Red Cross include the Mizpah Club, the Criterion Club, and the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. The Red Cross activities in Muncie were similar to those for the French Hospital Relief: members met and sewed garments for soldiers to be shipped overseas. The Red Cross, however, had much more exacting standards for clothing and all pieces created had to pass Red Cross inspection before they could be packed into crates. In the week ending June 30, 1917, Muncie women created a plethora of items that passed inspection: 9 dozen slings, 5 dozen abdominal bandages, 8 dozen flannel bandages, 3 dozen washcloths, 2 dozen operating leggings, 12 operating helmets, 6 operating caps, 120 head bandages, 36 shoulder wraps, 18 pairs of bed socks, 16 dozen towels, 13 dozen napkins, 6 dozen pillowcases, 7 dozen operating sheets and 3.5 dozen splint pillows. The Red Cross occasionally auctioned off surplus items in addition to sending them to Europe: two such quilts were sold at the Red Cross rooms on June 28, 1918, for a total of $150. The quilts were donated by Mrs. Greenlee of Middletown and Mrs. Ltitia Odel of Muncie and bought by F. Baron and Malcolm Hewitt, both of Muncie.
A third relief organization in Muncie needed an entirely different skill set altogether—
knotting. Miss Mary Helen Boyd of Indianapolis, executive secretary of the Woman’s Section of
the Indiana State Council of Defense appointed by Governor James P. Goodrich (Carlisle 8)
came to Muncie on Tuesday, June 12, 1917, to speak to women in both relief corps headquarters
as well as the Beth El Temple on Jackson Street about knitting socks for all Indiana soldiers.
This movement, named “Socks for Soldiers,” was to take place in at least 12 cities besides
Indianapolis; it was hoped that at least 2,000 women would participate and produce at least 4,000
pairs of socks before the first Hoosiers were scheduled to leave for France on September 1 of
that year. The organization in Indianapolis provided the materials for knitting socks in addition
to instructors that came to Muncie to teach the women how to knit. This organization eventually
set up headquarters on the second floor of McNaughton’s Department Store, where Mrs. George
Crusey supervised knitting on Mondays and Fridays and gave free lessons to those willing to
learn.

In addition to sewing hospital garments, Muncie women planned events to raise money
for the Red Cross. The first such event mentioned in the Muncie Morning Star is a dance on May
10, 1917, given by the Beau-Not Club. This dance promised to be a “patriotic affair” (04/22/17: I,9) and all proceeds were to be donated to the Red Cross. The St. Vincent de Paul Aid Society
of St. Lawrence Church under committee chair Mrs. Frank Sower held a card party at the
Knights of Columbus Hall “for the benefit of Belgian babies” (05/09/17: 12) that same week. A
few weeks later, the Grace Church Choir of the Grace Episcopal Church of Muncie traveled to
nearby Hartford City to give a benefit concert for the Red Cross that was heard by over a
hundred people; three hundred more had to be turned away. Another such benefit concert was
given at the St. John’s Universalist Church to benefit the French Hospital Relief with an exotic
program: Miss Lucy Ball gave a lecture on Hawaii, followed by a ukulele chorus, and Dr. L.L. and Helen Ball appeared in Korean costumes. Even ordinary social gatherings were repurposed to support the war effort: in May 1917, a group of women decided to start a ‘bridge party chain’ to benefit the Red Cross. The first bridge party happened May 13 at the home of Mrs. Ray Johnson in East Washington Street, where eight couples were entertained at bridge. These eight couples were then asked to host another bridge party in the future, to which eight new couples were to be invited. These couples would host their own bridge parties in turn, in a chain of sorts, until hundreds in Muncie are engaged in these parties. The parties did not necessarily have to revolve around bridge; Mrs. Frank Babbin, Mrs. Fred Kaiser, and Mrs. Oliver chose to simply entertain at cards, Misses Freda and Bessie Schwartz entertained at a ‘cube hearts’ party, and Mrs. Charles S. Davis and Mrs. A.L. Kitselman chose to serve a tea in lieu of playing cards. The common denominator of these parties was that all the winnings of these parties were to be donated to the Red Cross’s newly organized Muncie chapter. These social and philanthropic gatherings were the “absorbing topics of interest with Muncie women” (05/12/17:6) and mention was made of them existing in the *Muncie Morning Star* past June. As one reader pointed out in a letter to the editor on Sunday, June 10, 1917, “parties with no purpose but for the guests to be entertained are few and far between these days with everything full of war relief activities” (06/10/17: I, 9).

Surprisingly, there was little evidence that Muncie women took over the jobs of men who went to war. It seemed that those jobs went to men who had not passed the medical examinations or who were too old or young for service, or perhaps those jobs were seen as unnecessary once war broke out. Briefly, though, a Muncie movie theater set up a school that trained women to work as motion picture operators during the war, and six women signed up for the program.
Children also made changes in their daily routines to help those fighting in the war. On Sunday, May 16, 1917, Indiana governor James P. Goodrich was mentioned in the *Muncie Sunday Star* as urging schoolteachers to preach a doctrine of economy in food, dress, and all useful things to children. In Normal City, a suburb of Muncie, children lived out this message in that they started a garden club to increase the food supply. Children also were prepared to help out by completing the tasks that normally fell to men: the Muncie Boy Scout Troop 1 of Muncie submitted an offer to help by guarding telegraph lines and railroads and removing trash from the streets in case there were not enough policemen or sanitation workers to do this task during the war. In July, Delaware County enrolled 1,000 boys in a program established by the Department of Labor that organized a contingent of boys to perform jobs at farms and shops around the country in the absence of the men. Later in May, the troop in Muncie joined a nationwide campaign to sell Liberty Bonds to finance the war during the week of June 11-14; the campaign was called “Every Scout to Save a Soldier.” By the time the campaign rolled around, two other Boy Scout troops in Muncie joined the campaign. These boys under the supervision of Glenn Matthews of Troop 1, Benjamin McGuire of Troop 2, and E.C. Hartley of Troop 3 executed an ambitious plan of visiting the eight thousand homes in Muncie to deliver posters about war bonds and collect donations. Children also directly donated to various financial campaigns in addition to collecting donations. On Friday, June 8, 1917, the eight-year-old daughter of a Muncie businessman was reported as buying $200 worth of Liberty Bonds even though it cleaned out most of her savings. Three other Muncie children devised a clever fundraiser for the Red Cross: Rachel Tobin, Marcus Feinberg, and John Foster put on a ‘picture show’ in Rachel’s playroom at 501 West
Howard Street, complete with popcorn. The first show they produced netted a little over $1, and the three children donated all their proceeds and decided to continue showings indefinitely.

Girls in Muncie largely emulated the actions of their mothers. In July of 1917, twenty girls from three Sunday schools met at the Red Cross headquarters and formed the Clara Barton chapter of the Red Cross. These girls met every Tuesday from 9:30 to 10:30 to sew for the organization. Mrs. Fred Rose spoke to twenty-five girls in the YMCA about the Red Cross and taught them how to knit and make bandages so that they could help out as well. On July 26, the women of the Red Cross were asked to bring their children older than six years of age to make snippings that would be used to fill up pillows. Girls between six and nine were asked to make snippings in August, with Misses Grace McKeever and Eileen Touhey in charge of their peers, and this group eventually formed the ‘Snipping Club’ and contributed regularly to the Red Cross efforts.

“Profit and Patriotism”—Muncie Businesses in the Great War

Businesses in Muncie contributed to the war effort as well. Companies helped by providing advice, supporting soldiers, and providing places for women to congregate to create articles for the Red Cross and the French Hospital Relief. Most notable for their efforts to support Muncie citizens working for war relief were McNaughton’s Department Store and the Bath-Paris Company. When the first group of recruits left Muncie for training in Indianapolis, the train car was furnished with red, white, and blue decorations, flags and bunting. These materials were donated by McNaughton’s Department Store, which also gave each soldier a small silk flag to carry. For Decoration Day, McNaughton’s offered citizens flag pins on sale for donations only; all donations were to go to the Red Cross. McNaughton’s was generous to families of soldiers as
well: during the war, the company enacted a policy that items bought for soldiers were to be packed, wrapped, and shipped for free. During the citywide Red Cross campaign, McNaughton’s sold 500 copies of the July issue of the *Pictorial Review* magazine for 15 cents each, with all proceeds going to the Red Cross. After the decision was made to allow citizens to garden on plots in McCulloch Park, The Bath-Paris Company store stocked books from the Bureau of Agricultural Research that citizens could have for free. As Muncie women started meeting in groups to sew for various relief groups, McNaughton’s stepped in and offered space on its second floor for any club that wished to gather there and “perform humanitarian service to the soldiers” (07/01/17: II, 12). The store provided chairs, tables, and sewing machines, as well as niceties such as flowers, decorations, and electric fans. Eventually, the women met here to knit socks for Indiana soldiers. In August, the women of the French Hospital Relief asked for supplies like cocoa and sugar to send to France; McNaughton’s decided to donate ten percent of whatever customers buy at no cost, so a dollar order of cocoa or sugar would provide ten cents’ worth to ship to France. In addition to supporting the war effort, McNaughton’s also likely profited from the war: on June 29, 1917, the company somehow acquired a 12-foot torpedo from the United States Navy and decided to display the weapon in the store, which surely increased the amount of visitors to the store. McNaughton’s also capitalized on the self-sufficiency movement by urging Muncie women to make their own clothes from patterns offered for sale at the store. After Muncie citizens formed a Red Cross chapter and started sewing for the organization, the Bath-Paris Company provided patterns and instructions from the Red Cross for men’s socks, eye bandages, jackets, and mufflers free to anyone who asked. The company also provided society bags for knitting “used by nearly all Red Cross workers” (08/15/17:2) at a price of one dollar. During the Red Cross campaign in June of 1917, both stores dedicated a portion of
their daily advertisements in the newspaper to remind the public to become members of the Red Cross and donate their dollars to the Red Cross, either at the organization headquarters or at both department stores.

Banks were pivotal in ensuring the success of the various Liberty Bond campaigns in Muncie. Some, like the Merchants National Bank of Muncie, paid for advertisements to get the word out about the Liberty Loans. The banks stood ready to process $300,000 to $500,000 worth of loans for the government’s first campaign; the total amount of loans needed nationwide was estimated at $7,000,000,000. A number of banks also advertised that they would process Liberty Loans at no cost; those banks include Union National Bank, Muncie Trust Company, Merchants National Bank, Farmers Savings Bank, Delaware County National Bank, and the Peoples Trust Company.

Companies also sponsored patriotic flag-raisings during the early months of the war. On April 18, 1917, the Ball Brothers hosted a patriotic flag raising at the company zinc mill. On the following Friday, Hemingray’s Glass Works held another such flag hoisting. These events were followed in quick succession by flag raisings at the Feeney Manufacturing Company plant on May 4 and at the new baseball park in Muncie on May 6.

It is important not to overlook the service of the newspaper. The Muncie Morning Star was influential in spreading news and advertising campaigns for citizens to help the war effort. On April 24, the Star began printing coupons for war loan subscribers on the first page of the paper and established a bureau where citizens could buy war bonds. If Muncie residents were unsure of how they were supposed to support the war effort, the Star helped by publishing excerpts of patriotic speeches such as Theodore Roosevelt’s “America’s Duty.” Occasionally,
the Star would pay for advertisements pertaining to various citywide campaigns: on Wednesday, June 6, 1917, for example, an advertisement listing the banks that would process Liberty Loans for free gives the attribution “this page advertisement contributed by the Star Publishing Co.” (06/06/17:9). Men who needed to register for the Selective Service could read the full text of the new conscription law in the paper on May 28, 1917, see an example of a draft registration card on the seventh page of the May 23, 1917, edition and read an article titled “Official Answers to Questions” in the paper on May 29, 1917, if they needed any clarification of their duties and responsibilities. The *Muncie Morning Star* also published articles on home gardening for those who wished to become more self-sufficient.

In addition to bolstering support and knowledge of the various war relief effort campaigns in Muncie, the newspaper served as a place of connection where people could share information and opinions about the war and its effect on Muncie. After her son enlisted, for example, Mrs. Mary M. Jackson Mock wrote a poem titled “Enlisted” that appeared the paper; as the editor wrote, “like thousands of other brave mothers, she loyally submits to war’s stern decree” (05/06/17:1, 8). Local author E. S. L. Thompson also wrote a poem titled “Ten Grave in a War-Scarred Wood” that appeared in the newspaper soon after the Americans entered the war, “Holding the Line: on the Somme, February 1917” that appeared in the middle of May, and “Up With the Flag” that appeared in June. On May 11, 1917, the Star published excerpts of a letter Harry M. Hoot wrote to his mother. Hoot was one of the first recruits from Muncie and wrote from Fort DuPont that he and many from Muncie are “all well and pleased with training and life in the army.” (05/11/17:6) The newspaper also printed a letter Muncie citizen Robert Commons wrote to his mother from a war hospital in England after he was injured in the Battle of Vimy Ridge in France in May 1917; Commons praised the Red Cross for its hospitality in France and
urged Muncie citizens to donate to the Red Cross campaign in the United States. After the United States had been involved in the war for a few months, the Star published a human interest section in the Sunday paper on August 12, 1917; articles in this section educated readers about the assembly and insignia of early American warplanes, the emergency rationing system, and the mechanics of marching.

“Cross Followed by American Flag”—Patriotism in Muncie Churches

Churches in Muncie became important centers of relief work and patriotic events during the American involvement in World War I. On Sunday, April 22, 1917, the churches in Muncie decided that the services should all include flag-raisings and sermons about patriotism. The St. John’s Unitarian Universalist Church invited Frank C. Ball to give an address at their Sunday service, which was followed by a musical program and a motion picture telling the story of the American flag. These sermons and patriotic displays continued long after the official weekend, however: at the First Presbyterian Church Reverend Dr. B.M. Nyce preached on May 14 on the topic “The Flower of Manhood Responding to Call” and on May 27 that “every man, woman, and child in the United States must do his or her bit in this world war in order that democracy and world peace be established” (05/28/17: 10).

In addition to sermons, the churches fostered patriotism with music. The High Street Methodist Episcopal Church staged a patriotic concert with local performance group the Garrett’s Boys’ Band on May 17, 1917. The musical selections included “The Stars and Stripes Forever” by John Philip Sousa as well as the national anthems of the countries allied with the United States: Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Russia, Italy, Great Britain, and France; the conclusion of the concert was a performance of the national anthem of the United States. The St. John’s Universalist
Church was the location of a musical evening put on by the Daughters of the American Revolution for the Red Cross; the last song in the program was the national anthem, and the entire audience was encouraged to sing along with the musicians.

Members of churches in Muncie also dominated relief efforts. In particular, the women of the St. Lawrence Catholic Church, the women of the Grace Episcopal Church, the women of the St. John’s Universalist Church and the women of the First Baptist Church took charge of the sewing for the French Hospital Relief campaign. Bible and Sunday school classes of children from the Jackson Street Church and the High Street Church contributed their talents to the hospital relief and the Red Cross as well. The Flower Mission members of the High Street Methodist Episcopal Church formed their own sewing group for the French Hospital Relief in addition to the citywide organization. The Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the First Presbyterian Church regularly hosted all-day events to sew for the Red Cross.

The ladies of the St. Lawrence Church planned a novel fundraiser in July of 1917. These women decided to host a lawn social at the schoolhouse for the benefit of the Red Cross. Members dressed up as Red Cross nurses and sold candy, ice cream, cake, flags, buttons, cigars, and balloons. A life-size Red Cross doll donated by the McNaughton Company was auctioned off to Miss Mary Sullivan of London, Ohio and a tidy sum of $113.37 was raised for the Red Cross.

“Everyone Will Show Colors”—Citywide Campaigns in Muncie

Although citizens in Muncie largely supported the war effort in smaller, more specific ways like sewing hospital garments and enlisting in the army, there were a few campaigns that involved so much of the town that it is impossible to break the events into groups as we have
done for the previous happenings in Muncie. The first such large event to have taken place
happened directly after the United States formally entered the fray of World War I. Next to the
declaration of war published on the front page of the paper on April 7, 1917, was a notice that
Muncie would have a Patriot’s Rally Day on April 17. All citizens were strongly urged to
participate: “Persons standing on the sidewalks [instead of marching in the parade] on the night
of April 17 will be considered lacking in Americanism” (04/07/17:2). The rally and parade had
to be postponed due to bad weather, and they eventually occurred on April 20 as opposed to
April 17. On that Friday night, 10,000 men were reported as marching in the parade and 20,000
spectators observed the proceedings—apparently without being considered lacking in
Americanism. Citizens held banners that included sayings such as “Our forefathers fought—so
can we!,” and “Keep smiling, but enlist!” Over the heads of the Spanish-American War Veterans
flew a banner with the declaration, “We fought in 1898 and are ready again. On to Berlin!”
(04/21/17:1)

As buoyant patriotism gave way to pragmatic concerns for the men who would fight overseas,
Muncie citizens threw themselves into three major causes en masse: the National War Work
Fund, the Red Cross, and the Liberty Loan campaigns. Muncie citizens, banks, press, and
corporations first combined their efforts towards a successful and lengthy Liberty Loan
campaign. The Liberty Loan campaign that began on April 24, 1917, was the first of four
nationwide calls for citizen funds to support the purchase of supplies and materiel for the war.
The government hoped to raise $7,000,000,000 nationwide in bonds; as mentioned before,
Muncie’s share of those loans was to be $300,000 to $500,000. The first day of the official
campaign, the Muncie Morning Star set up a bureau where citizens could buy war bonds. On this
day, as well as every day thereafter until the campaign ended on June 15, the paper included a
war loan coupon’ on the first page of every issue that subscribers could fill out and bring to a bank to do their part and lend money to the government for the war effort. It seems that the war loan program had gotten a slow start in Muncie; after the first day, no news is reported as to its progress until May 5, and even then the only statement in the paper is national in scope, not local (although the news stated that the subscriptions were pouring into the Treasury Department at the rate of $20,000,000 per hour, which seems like a successful rate). On May 9, 1917, the Merchants National Bank of Muncie became the first financial institution to donate an advertisement for the Liberty Loan campaign; the bank also agreed to help citizens with the subscriptions at no cost. On May 24, 1917, the campaign gained momentum as the Liberty Loan general organization campaign appointed a chairman to monitor the progress of the campaign in each county; Delaware County’s delegate was Theodore Rose, the president of the Union National Bank in Muncie. Bond buying hit a fever pitch in the first weeks of June. The Muncie Morning Star published advertisements with titles such as “The Least We Can Do,” “Get on the BOND Wagon,” and “Are Your Dollars More Valuable than your Neighbor’s Sons?”, as well as excerpts from a speech by Senator Owens of Oklahoma and a picture of the entire starting lineup of the New York Giants baseball team subscribing for Liberty bonds. The Bath-Paris Company and McNaughton’s donated a portion of their daily advertisements to the call for bond subscriptions. An article instructing citizens how to buy these bonds in the June 11, 1917, paper was paid for by the banks and trust companies of Muncie. The Woman’s Franchise League invited the vice president of the Delaware County National Bank to their meeting on June 11 to give a speech on the Liberty Loan campaign, perhaps because women were urged to buy the bonds in an advertisement in the June 9 paper that claimed “every woman should help to make the world safe for the babies…by putting her savings into the liberty bond and encouraging the
On June 14, 1917, the penultimate day of the Liberty Loan campaign, the national drive was expected to be short $300,000,000, but Delaware County had already surpassed $1,244,500 the day before. On the last day of the campaign, a poem titled “The Liberty Bell” by Charles Brockden Brown appeared in the *Muncie Morning Star*, the Liberty Bell rang in Pennsylvania as part of a nationwide liberty bond demonstration, and in Muncie factory whistles and bells were rung for three minutes straight “to arouse more interest in the local subscriptions.”(06/14/17:8) The final count shows that the bond was oversubscribed both locally and nationally; Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo estimated that the national loan was oversubscribed by about $1 billion; although figures for Muncie alone are not reported in the paper, Delaware County subscribed $1,474,300, about 113 percent above their prescribed allotment of $692,000.

Muncie next mobilized toward the National War Work Fund. This campaign, which began on May 20, 1917, was an effort by Muncie and other cities in Delaware County to raise $15,000 ($10,000 of which from Muncie alone) for the establishment and maintenance of centers of the Young Men’s Christian Association and gymnasiums wherever soldiers and sailors might find themselves during the war. Fundraising began at a dismally slow pace: by Thursday the 24th of May, only $1,467 had been raised, and the campaign was set to end the next Monday. Nevertheless, the total amount raised had risen to $1900 on Friday, $2,631 on Saturday, and $3365.50 on Sunday. On May 28th, the last day of the drive, Muncie citizens donated an astounding $7796.36, $5000 of which came from the Ball Brothers Corporation. This impressive last day of fundraising raised the total in Muncie to $11,161.86, well above the goal of $10,000. Citizens in Muncie were reminded to donate money by articles about the YMCA that appeared
every day in the *Muncie Morning Star* and the Bath-Paris Company, which dedicated a portion of its advertisement to a notice urging customers to donate to the fund.

The third major citywide campaign in Muncie, the Red Cross membership drive, began on June 5, 1917, the same day as registration day for the men. This campaign hoped to enroll 5,000 citizens of Muncie into the Red Cross and have the new members each pay dues of one dollar. Before the start of the campaign, Muncie citizens were made aware of the Red Cross membership drive by articles in the *Muncie Morning Star* with lengthy, descriptive titles such as “Everyone can join the army of the red cross: A mighty force is needed to help bear burdens of great war.” The Bath-Paris Company urged customers to “Do your bit: Last day to contribute your mite [term meaning a small sum of money] for the Muncie Chapter, American Red Cross” in an advertisement published June 2nd. The Bath-Paris Company also stated in a later advertisement that they would gladly handle Red Cross membership subscriptions at the ribbon counter in the store. An advertisement for the McNaughton Company the next day included a full-column article asking Muncie citizens to join the ‘Red Cross Army’ and assured customers that they could leave their dollars for the Red Cross at the store and they would end up in the right place. On that Tuesday, which the mayor declared as ‘Red Cross Day,’ volunteer solicitors canvassed the neighborhoods of Muncie asking for memberships and dues. The campaign was judged an early success: although it would be several days before the exact total that had been raised would be known, the next day’s paper stated that it was probable Muncie and Delaware County had exceeded its goal of 5,000 new members. As of June 8th, 2200 new memberships had been processed, and a report on June 16th states that between $4000 and $4100 had been raised in membership dues, but no final totals ever appear in the newspaper.
Evidently the local Red Cross was encouraged by this first campaign, however, because the organization waged a second campaign during the week of June 18-June 25, 1917. This campaign was titled the Red Cross War Relief Fund and was part of a nationwide campaign that sought to raise $100,000,000 for the organization; Indiana’s share of that goal was $1,500,000. Indiana governor James P. Goodrich proclaimed the week of the campaign as ‘Red Cross Week’ and urged of his constituents “that they may give generously and in the spirit of patriotism in order that the world of the American Red Cross Society may be successfully continued” (06/13/17:5) in a proclamation printed in the Muncie Morning Star. Delaware County hoped to raise $26,000 of the amount expected of Indiana. To that end, the newspaper published every issue that week with a masthead decorated by two Red Cross icons and statements asking readers to “help the Red Cross and aid humanity” and reminders that “the Red Cross needs you; Be Generous” (06/17/17: 1, 1). On the Sunday of Red Cross Week, the paper also published an essay about the origins of the organization titled “Switzerland—Cradle of the Red Cross” by Muncie resident Marie Widmer. Throughout the week, the paper ran full-page advertisements for the Red Cross complete with excerpts from speeches, proclamations, and testimonials from the Indiana Council for Defense, mothers of soldiers, church leaders in Muncie, and local businessman Frank C. Ball. Each advertisement included a coupon at the bottom right that subscribers to the paper could use to enroll as members and donate to the Red Cross. These advertisements were paid for by a total of twenty-seven Muncie businesses. Starting Saturday, June 23rd, and continuing until the end of the campaign, the newspaper also printed a list of local contributors to the Red Cross fund complete with the amount each person or company donated. On the last day of the Red Cross drive, June 25th, the people of Muncie planned a grand parade in the business district. The streets were packed, largely due to the Muncie Ad Council’s decision to close all stores and
places of business in order that there may be “a general participation in the patriotic activities of
the day, including the Red Cross canvass” (05/25/17:16). A flag owned by the McNaughton
Company was carried through the streets and Muncie citizens were expected to throw money at
this flag. Marching behind the flag were the local performing group Garrett’s Boys’ Band and a
troop of Boy Scouts tasked with picking up the money thrown at the flag. The first reports on
June 26 speculated that Delaware County had raised $40,000 for the Red Cross. The actual total
counted stood at $37,426.11 on July 1; although Muncie Red Cross chair Frank Claypool
speculated on July 3 that Muncie might have contributed as much as $42,000 to the fund, the
official figure reported on July 14 stated that Delaware County had raised $40,097 for the Red
Cross. Although this is lower than Claypool expected, the county still far exceeded its quota of
$26,000.

Far more indicative of the fundamental changes in the ways of life in Muncie during the
First World War are not, however, seen most clearly in the big campaigns waged to raise money
for the war. In addition to these large public movements, citizens in Muncie also made changes
to their private lives and domestic celebrations due to the war. Muncie women’s groups, which
normally recessed for the summer so that the members could go on vacation, chose to meet
regularly during the summer at one of the three headquarters for Red Cross and French Hospital
Relief and “do their bit now, and prepare for further sacrifice in the days that are to come”
(06/10/17: I, 8). An article in the paper on April 22 states that home garden work is likely to take
the place of summer sport. The Delaware Country Club, by definition a place of sport, opened
the season May 17 with a patriotic celebration complete with canopies of flags and a patriotic
song collection performed by Miss Mary Wysor; at this event, the club notified its constituents
that the traditional afternoon parties for the women would be converted into sewing for the Red
Cross and the French Hospital Relief, which “the ladies of the club are not only invited but are expected to attend and thus ‘do their bit’” (05/19/17: 6). Shopping became patriotic too: women could buy the ‘patriotic middies [loosely belted shirts]’ in red, white, and blue at McNaughton’s for one dollar, Victrola released an album of patriotic music in the middle of June, and the Colorcraft Company gave away Uncle Sam toy balloons with purchases of boxes of stationery.

Patriotism was also the theme of the commencement address of the Muncie National Institute [an educational institution located in the current Frank A. Bracken Administration Building that predates the Eastern Division of the Indiana State Normal School] in August that summer, as a commencement address titled “At War for our Own Protection” was delivered to 2500 people, including the 102 graduates. Even the Fourth of July was celebrated in a more patriotic fashion, since Governor Goodrich had appealed to the citizens of Indiana on May 17 not to celebrate in the usual fashion with wasteful fireworks; the reasons he gave were that enemies could use that day to launch a covert attack and that the money could be better spent on munitions. Muncie citizens mostly complied with this order: merchants signed an agreement not to sell fireworks on May 18, and the July 6th paper reported that very few fireworks had been seen the previous day.

An interesting trend reported on in the paper is the prevalence of so-called ‘patriotic parties’ during this time. Marie and Nettie Keys held the first reported patriotic party on May 3, 1917. They decorated the house in flags, served red, white, and blue cake, and played patriotic music and games and gave guests silk flags as favors. The Violet Club chose a patriotic theme for their annual banquet on June 17: the baskets at the tables were filled with red and white peonies and tied with blue streamers, the place cards were embossed with the American seal, and the table centerpiece featured the flags of the three allied countries. Eight women gave patriotic speeches during the dinner. On July 7th, Mrs. Charles Davis threw an extravagant patriotic party
in McCulloch Park for her daughter Isabelle’s sixth birthday. The table was arranged in patriotic colors and featured the flags of the allied countries, a soldier boy figurine, a Red Cross doll, and a toy cannon. The ice cream was molded into Liberty Bells and soldiers on horses. The little guests received soldier caps and flags.

“Germans in U.S. Behaving Well?” – Anti-German Sentiment in Muncie

Most of the reactions to the United States entrance into World War I in Muncie were patriotic and productive; however, it would be dishonest to state that anti-German sentiment was not present as well. Encouragingly, though, it seems that most of the negative statements about Germans and German-Americans in Muncie were either confined to the first few days after the declaration of war or were dependent on the individual’s perceived level of loyalty to the United States; that is, German citizens who appeared to support the Americans were praised for their patriotism, and only those who were outspoken in their approval of the Germans or appeared to favor the other side were looked down upon. On April 6, President Wilson signed the resolution of Congress that brought the United States into the war. The next day, the Muncie Morning Star published an excerpt of a speech he gave in which he said that “Germans in this country…would be unmolested as long as they behaved themselves” (04/07/17: 1). The following Monday, a report by Attorney General Thomas Watt Gregory stated that the Germans in the United States were behaving well. In the vicinity of Muncie, however, the Americans were behaving less well: in Wabash, fifteen-year-old Merle Stahler was held under a faucet by his schoolmates because he tore an American flag off of his coat; the boy was a German immigrant and his father was with the German army in France. In Bluffton, the program of a recital by Harold D. Saurer of Chicago had to be amended to remove a group of German songs. In Elwood, twelve-year-old William Dunn was attacked by twenty students because the silk flag he was holding was mistaken for a
German flag. In Muncie, an unknown person or group of persons broke into the room where German was taught at the Muncie High School on April 10 and removed a picture of Kaiser Wilhelm. The next day, the post office department in Washington informed Muncie postmaster Frank D. Haimbaugh that mail to Germany, Austria-Hungary, Luxemburg, Bulgaria, and Turkey, as well as money orders to those countries, would no longer be allowed since the United States was in a formal state of war with these countries. On April 14, all Muncie citizens whose native countries were regarded as enemies of the United States were also required to turn in all firearms, objects that appeared to be ciphers or codes, or books that could have invisible writing. All ‘alien enemies’ were ordered on April 19 not to live within a half-mile of any fort, camp, aircraft station, government or naval vessel, navy yard, factory, or workshop that produced military materiel after June 1; violations would result in arrest. No citizens in Muncie were reported as being arrested, but a man in nearby Anderson was taken into custody on suspicion of being a German spy; the man, A. William Klapdorf, had been working in a factory for three weeks, and when the authorities arrested him they found an iron-bound trunk containing photos of area factories among his possessions. On August 12, 1917, Muncie citizens complained that the McKinney Band played “Der Wacht am Rhein,” a nationalistic song popular among German soldiers during the war, at a local fair, even though band leader Professor Ian McKinney denied these claims and says that the tune played was actually “Maryland, My Maryland;” these two pieces are typically played in different keys and different meters, so in retrospect these are odd pieces to confuse. This hatred of German items evidently extended to tools as well: Ol Lessinger of Muncie refused to buy a set of pliers from R.M. Jones and Son on June 29, 1918, because the tool was made in Germany; in order to be able to sell the tool, Mr. Jones ground the name “Germany” off of the pliers.
However, the *Muncie Morning Star* published a glowing report of “Der Deutsche Verein,” the German society at the Muncie High School, after the group turned over the entire contents of their treasury, a sum of $21.13, to the Muncie Red Cross during the organization’s membership drive. During the same campaign, the newspaper printed an article titled “The Loyal and the Disloyal” that compared two sets of responses to a plea for Red Cross donations—one positive, the other very anti-American. Both statements came from German-American citizens of Muncie. The message given by these two articles is that although not all trappings of German culture were seen as appropriate during the war, German citizens in Muncie were acceptable as long as they supported the United States in this war.

The entrance of the United States into the First World War was an enormous undertaking by the country, both as a whole and for its individual cities. Citizens accustomed to the isolationism that characterized the period before this war were suddenly thrust into serving in wars over on the European continent or helping at home to support those who were sent overseas. In the small town of Muncie, this change is especially evident; here, men, women, and children, as well as businesses, churches, and organizations made fundamental changes to their routines to support the war and ‘do their part.’ Although this paper mostly discusses trends apparent in the first months after the United States declared war, a brief investigation into 1918 articles show that the enthusiasm continued unabated past the first few months of the war. These new actions and trends, coupled with anti-German sentiment in some cases, show the depth of the effect of the First World War on a small Midwestern town.
Works Cited


