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"You Folks at Home Can Say 'War is Hell': The Great War Experience of A.E.F. Soldier Edward Marcellus

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"I am young, I am twenty years old; yet I know nothing of life but despair, death, fear...And all men of my age, here and over there, throughout the whole world see these things; all my generation is experiencing these things with me."¹ Technological advances and heavy casualties marked the Great War as the first modern war, creating what was later perceived by both historians and the world as a fundamental divide between an age of innocence, and an age of cynicism. This image was bolstered not only by wartime propaganda, but also by representations of soldiers and the trench experience in popular culture following the war. Books such as Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, from which the above quote was taken, reinforced the understanding of the Great War as a universal and horrific experience. However, not all the participants suffered – or at least did not suffer much. One example was American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.) soldier Edward Marcellus; an examination of his wartime correspondence highlights the unique nature of the American soldiers' wartime experiences, demonstrating that the war was not a transformative experience for many American soldiers.

Many historians acknowledge a certain uniqueness of the American experience; however, most writings about the American role in the war tend to fit it into one of two broad categories. The first covers combat: battles, bloodshed, and the important technological advances brought about by the first 'modern' war. These works are irrefutably important in understanding the mechanics of war. The second category focuses on political elites, such as President Woodrow Wilson or General John Pershing, and the ways in which their successes or failures contributed to the Allied victory. Thoughtful analysis has been employed in many of these works, but they are hampered by their adherence, whether conscious or not, to Thomas Carlyle's Great Man Theory.² Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory*, often considered the seminal recent work on the Great War, created a third category centered around the idea that the war had disillusioned an entire generation of men involved in it. Fussell argued that a negative shift in male character followed the war, which he attributed to the inability to relate the horror of the front to those who remained at home. Fussell's ideas have been applied widely, implying that all combatants functioned in similar ways.³ This paper will argue that the unique circumstances of America's entrance into the war and its unusual experience in combat ultimately exclude it from being lumped together with its allies. The shortened service time, physical distance from the home front, lack of singular motivation, and especially the large number of noncombatants were only a few of the factors that set the United States apart.

Colonel Leonard P. Ayres, statistician for the U.S. War Department, claimed in his immediate postwar report entitled *The War with Germany* that the average American soldier who reached France (two out of three) saw hard fighting.⁴ These soldiers from combat units had helped win the war, and in the event their return home was delayed then it was possible that inflated feelings of worth produced by fighting and winning the war, prevented complaints about the A.E.F. and its discharge policies at the time. However, as previously noted, the majority of A.E.F. servicemen were noncombatants. This does not contradict Ayres' official military report on A.E.F. activity, despite the seemingly large variance in claims. Ayres' statistics were misleading, often laid out or worded in a

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confusing manner. His entire statistical summary of the war focused on soldiers who fought in France, yet he made overarching claims about the entire A.E.F. experience. While it is true that the majority of American fighting did occur in France, Ayres' statistics completely ignored the large number of men who never fought, acting as if they did not exist.

Focusing on one ordinary A.E.F. soldier corrects the general conception of America in the war. In *The Cheese and the Worms*, Carlo Ginzburg's work that created the field of microhistory, he criticized historian's reliance on literature as an indicator of popular thought. His specific examples highlighted the indirect nature of this analysis which, he asserted, created a gap between what was published and what was actually believed by the masses. He ultimately concluded that in relying on this sort of material, history remained squarely centered on the dominant figures rather than ordinary people.⁵ World War I scholars have focused on both literature and propaganda, yet Ginzburg's theory suggests that while propaganda may have reflected the goals and ideas of those who produced it, this propaganda was not an accurate representation of the public's views. It was produced by the government to enflame popular sentiment. Because literature and propaganda have been the focus of historical analysis following the war they, along with the views of the 'great' men of the war, have become emblematic of the entire war, creating misconceptions that remain difficult to correct nearly one hundred years later. In order to most accurately understand the reality of the American experience in the Great War, the only direct sources for analysis are the accounts of the individual soldiers.

The United States did not officially enter the war until 1917, nearly three years into the conflict. To rally the public, the government used propaganda to perpetuate the idea of a universal horrific experience. This, in conjunction with battle-driven postwar scholarship, led to the misconception that the experiences of Americans who served with the American Expeditionary Forces were comparable to their French and British allies. In reality, 60 percent of the A.E.F. forces never served in any sort of combat capacity.⁶ This statistic directly contradicted the conception furthered by Remarque and others, that the horror of the Great War was a shared experience of all soldiers, regardless of their nationality. In order to understand the unique nature of the American experience, it is necessary to examine a man who represented this often-overlooked majority: the noncombatant.

Edward Marcellus was a clerk stationed first in France and later in Germany as part of the A.E.F. Army of Occupation sent to police Germany following the Armistice. His correspondence marked him as somewhat unique, because he left a written record of his personal experience while most did not. Otherwise, Marcellus was overwhelmingly ordinary, making him the perfect example of what Ginzburg has called "a modest individual who is himself lacking in significance and for this very reason representative."⁷ His written record is distinctly valuable because his thoughts were recorded at the same time the experiences that molded them were occurring. As work on the subjects of oral history and memory has become more common, historians have found that in the decades following the war, the testimonies of veterans sometimes became warped. In his study of ANZAC soldiers, Alistair Thomson discovered a discrepancy between the popular image of the soldier that took hold following the war and the actual experiences of the men he interviewed. Some of these veterans challenged the popular image, but others reinforced it even when their own stories essentially proved the image false.⁸ The bulk of Marcellus' letters were free from this particular pitfall because they were written during a unique postwar period before ideas of disillusionment had taken hold in popular literature and propaganda had become synonymous with fact in popular culture. His letters did not by any means conform to the traditional understanding of an American doughboy.

A great deal of American propaganda portrayed "war as an opportunity to gain or prove masculinity" through victory in battle.⁹ This served a dual purpose. Men were encouraged to exhibit their bravery by enlisting and serving, making propaganda effective in that regard. Additionally, in an era when information spread across the

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globe as it never had before, both American and foreign propaganda had a secondary purpose to “demolish the enemy’s will to fight by intensifying depression, disillusionment and disagreement.”¹⁰ This was acknowledged by the A.E.F. who published a warning for soldiers in *Stars and Stripes* telling them, “Germany now hopes to weaken our resolution by sending among us these tale-bearers [propagandists and spies], these prophets of disaster, on the chance that some of us will be fools enough to bite.”¹¹ In both regards, this contributed to the idealization of the A.E.F. soldier as a warrior, despite the overall lack of American combat experience. This image was pervasive, as evidenced by another article published in *Stars and Stripes*. A poem entitled “Crusaders” drew parallels between A.E.F. soldiers and the famed English warrior-king Richard the Lionheart: “For while old Coeur de Lion may have worn an iron casque,/He never had to tote around an English gas-proof mask;/He never galled himself with packs that weigh about a ton,/Nor –lucky Richard – did he have to clean a beastly gun.”¹² Writing like this was, according to the mission statement of the newspaper was published by and for the A.E.F. soldiers and their families at home. It perpetuated the image of a war-fighting A.E.F. combatant by spreading it both within the army and on the home front.¹³ The soldier who saw heavy fighting on the front became emblematic of the entire army, although this was not the case.

In reality, most men serving with the A.E.F. were relegated to some variation of simple manual or clerical labor. Many men questioned their designation as noncombatants; after all, they had been conscripted or volunteered with the understanding that they would fight in battle. Many noncombatants coped with this designation by emphasizing the danger inherent in their jobs as ambulance drivers, engineers, or menial laborers.¹⁴ Despite never engaging in combat during the war, Edward Marcellus still felt he contributed to the eventual Allied victory. He self-identified as a soldier upon arrival in training camp, often including himself in statements such as “just wait ‘till we get the Kaiser,” as if he would be personally responsible for the German defeat.¹⁵ He perceived no disconnect between the idealized version of the American soldier presented to the public and the reality that he experienced.

In fact, Marcellus wrote an article entitled “Life in Germany - As seen by a Buck Private” while in Germany, hoping it would be published by the *Saturday Evening Post* as a representation of the American soldier, because he saw himself as having the typical experience.¹⁶ However, the events described in his article were completely divergent from traditional battle-dominated accounts of war and even different from the often-sensationalized work of news correspondents. His ten-page manuscript focused on mundane activities and events such as German weather conditions, crafts made by prisoners at the camp he was stationed at, and the value of German currency. He spent more than an entire page explaining the German’s inability to understand the concept of chewing gum, and another describing their love of cigarettes. He wrote, “While I am speaking of gum, I want to tell you that the average person in Germany does not know what this is. I always stop and explain to them that it is to be kept in the mouth and not to be swallowed, that it is not food but a breath perfumer and aids digestion and etc., nit [*sic*] the minute they taste the sugar in it they forget all you have told them and down it goes.”¹⁷ This sort of writing highlights the difference between the experience of Marcellus, and the experience of the combatant. Despite the fact that Marcellus seemingly perceived no difference, it is necessary to make a distinction between the soldiers as described in propaganda and literature, and the men who actually served in the A.E.F. in order to understand the reality most American soldiers lived.

This propaganda was tied into America’s war involvement. In his 1965 examination of the war, René Albrecht-Carrié suggested that because the United States did not experience the large-scale loss of life that Europe did, “it is therefore understandable that the United States should come out of the war with a feeling of optimistic confidence in itself, its power, and its future, and that it should approach in the same fashion the complicated task of reshaping the world into a new and better order.”¹⁸ This thought process was supported by American political action during the war, Woodrow Wilson’s famous Fourteen Points acting as the impetus. Wilson had made

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American involvement in the war ideological from the start, appealing to traditions of democracy and freedom, among other things, to give the United States a greater and more far-reaching goal than a simple Allied victory.¹⁹ Many latched onto these ideals, and even Europeans considered his propositions regarding peace commendable although he began to lose influence at home with the end of the war. Propaganda experts praised him because “from a propaganda point of view it was a matchless performance, for Wilson brewed the subtle poison, which industrious men injected into the veins of a staggering people, until the smashing powers of the Allied armies knocked them into submission.”²⁰ Marcellus initially espoused these as his personal legitimization for American involvement in the war, writing on his first day in camp, “We must just hope for the best & pray for each other & ask the Lord for strength in this battle for freedom.”²¹ Despite this sentiment, Marcellus did not make a single positive statement regarding the army in his entire body of surviving letters, nor did he often refer to his motivation for fighting after the physical war had ended. This suggests a significant disconnect between this American soldier’s experience and the supposed overall “American experience” of the war. While he accepted the abstract Wilsonian ideals of universal freedom and democracy, Marcellus remained disconnected from the non-idealistic political goals that characterized both American government and military war involvement.

Marcellus began complaining about aspects of military life almost immediately upon his arrival in training camp in September 1918. These letters, written while the war still raged, always circled back to some quasi-positive patriotic statement of the purpose for fighting. “These are some places I must say but just wait ‘till we get the Kaiser & oh boy, oh joy,” he wrote in one early letter.²² Marcellus still saw value in his work, even before shipping out to France, because he saw himself as contributing to the war effort. Statements such as this make it evident that he did indeed approve of American (and his own, despite misgivings) involvement in the war. During his examination of World War I surveys conducted in the 1970s, historian Mark Meigs discovered that the rhetoric so carefully developed by Wilson and his Committee on Public Information, the propaganda distribution apparatus of the wartime American government, was completely lost by the time the survey took place. When asked why they had enlisted, the majority of veterans replied with “‘patriotic reasons,’ ‘I wanted to serve my country,’ ‘natural desire for adventure,’ or some variation of these answers. Whether they enlisted or were drafted made little difference fifty years after the event.”²³ These sentiments shed light on Marcellus’ statement. His desire to do something that would benefit his country fell under the first two of Meigs’ reported answers.

Wartime propaganda not only established misconceptions about the American soldier but also about the war as a whole. In his analysis of the reasons for the proliferation of propaganda during the war, Yale Law professor Harold Laswell suggested that this was done in order to successfully rally a country to support the violence inherent in war. He wrote,

Every war must appear to be a war of defense against a menacing, murderous aggressor. There must be no ambiguity about whom the public is to hate. The war must not be due to a world system of conducting international affairs, nor to the stupidity or malevolence of all governing classes, but to the rapacity of the enemy. Guilt and guilelessness must be assessed geographically, and all the guilt must be on the other side of the frontier.²⁴

Unfortunately, as a result of this, much of what is now remembered about the Great War is essentially mythology. Allied propagandists demonized the Germans in an effort to aggravate American sentiment prior to President Woodrow Wilson’s 1917 war address. The Committee on Public Information created much of this anti-German imagery in an attempt to stimulate home front support and encourage enlistment. U.S. Army enlistment posters frequently portrayed Germans as “Huns,” connoting brutality and savagery. One particularly dramatic example was a poster entitled *Destroy this Mad Brute*, which depicted a German as a terrifying man-sized gorilla, wearing a traditional German military helmet labeled “militarism,” carrying a crude club labeled “kultur [culture]” in one

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hand and a beautiful woman in the other.²⁵ This poster, and others like it, presented Germans as subhuman, something unfamiliar to be both feared and destroyed.

While the average American may have initially been indifferent to the war when it broke out in the summer of 1914, and hesitant to choose a side to support because they felt no need to vilify Germans who had done them little or no personal wrong, many of their minds quickly changed. The *RMS Lusitania*, a British passenger ship, was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915 off the coast of Ireland. Nearly two thousand passengers were killed, including 128 Americans.²⁶ The American public was immediately outraged, and the image of the German as a brutish monster began to gain traction. This was quickly bolstered by the publication of the infamous Bryce Report on May 12, 1915, which detailed all the supposed atrocities, ranging from rape and pillaging to the murder of children, committed by the German army since the beginning of the war. Historian David Traxel wrote, “Americans particularly, with their respect for women and children, their ideal of fair play...built on their earlier revulsion over the destruction and death the Germans had committed in Belgium.”²⁷ This negative sentiment continued to fester as the war went on, despite American neutrality. By 1917 diplomatic relations with Germany had ended with the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare. On February 24 the *RMS Laconia*, another British ship, was torpedoed. The decoded Zimmerman telegram, which detailed a proposed alliance between Germany and Mexico to defeat the United States, was delivered to President Wilson the same day.²⁸

The twin occurrence of these events sparked intense outrage in the United States. This was strengthened by the sensational account of Floyd Gibbons, a *Chicago Tribune* correspondent who had been aboard the *Laconia* in hopes of finding an experience that would make for exciting news. His descriptions were colorful, acting as both anti-German and pro-war propaganda. In the book he wrote on his wartime experiences, he described the torpedo hitting the ship: “suddenly there was a roaring swish as a rocket soared upward from the Captain’s bridge, leaving a comet’s tail of fire. I watched it as it described a graceful arc and then with an audible pop it burst in a flare of brilliant colour, Its [*sic*] ascent had torn a lurid rent in the black sky and had cast a red glare over the roaring sea.”²⁹ Gibbons saw this as the galvanizing event that would bring the United States into the war, and wanted to ensure the public did too. He closed the chapter on the *Laconia* with the mention of a fellow (British) passenger, who asked him if this was the “overt act” required for the declaration of war that President Wilson had made reference to in a past speech. Gibbons wrote, “I did not answer him, but thirty minutes afterward I was pounding out on a typewriter the introduction to a four thousand word newspaper article which I cabled that night and which put the question up to the American public for an answer. Five weeks later the United States entered the war.”³⁰ These events and the way they were portrayed in popular media contributed to the conception of the German soldier as a Hun.

This barbaric image was further reinforced by stories spread during the war, circulated both at home and throughout the A.E.F. There were rumors, for instance, that Germans had crucified soldiers in France. Depending on who told the story, the details, usually the soldiers’ nationality or the number of victims, tended to change. In the long run, however, the nationality of the soldiers did not matter because the truth of the rumor was unimportant.³¹ This image was soon represented in propaganda, acting as a device to bring Allied soldiers together on a religious or ideological plane while encouraging them to vilify their German enemies. Despite its widespread fame, there was never any concrete evidence to suggest the event had actually occurred.³² Similar stories of German atrocities were relayed in the A.E.F. newspaper *Stars and Stripes*. For instance, in a February 1918 article an “eyewitness” claimed that Kaiser Wilhelm was forcing prostitution upon French women in an effort to rebuild the German Empire. He specifically described women who had been impregnated by German officers and forced to wear a painted brand to identify their unborn children as future Germans. In reference to a particular young girl who had been unlucky enough to receive a cattle brand as well, he wrote “I myself saw the girl who had been

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branded and the others who had been painted like sheep...Thank God, America, by coming into the war, will help to stamp out this beastly 'kultur' from the world and make it a safe, clean place to live in for your womenfolk and mine."³³

In contrast, many A.E.F. soldiers enjoyed pleasant interactions with Germans following the Armistice during the occupation. In a 2003 interview with A.E.F. veteran William Eugene Lee, he recalled that "those German people, they were nice people...at first we used to carry a weapon with us all the time. It wasn't long after that we didn't have to carry any weapons. The German people were good people, and we got to know them."³⁴ There were several possible reasons for this amity. Americans had not suffered much destruction at German hands and their exposure to the embittering trench warfare was less than half of what the other Allied countries had experienced. Additionally, Americans had a much more abstract motivation (and a wide variety of them at that) for fighting the war. Because the United States was so far removed from Germany's reach, the immediate peril that drove European nations was not much of an inspiring force for American soldiers. President Wilson and his propagandists attempted to remedy this by appealing to abstract ideals and demonizing the Germans, and while this may have worked in the short run, it seems that the animosity felt during the war quickly evaporated with the signing of the Armistice. Even though public sentiment had been riled by the German submarine attacks, the Zimmerman telegram, and other supposed atrocities, the overwhelming majority of Americans had still been largely unaffected by German aggression. Additionally, millions of Americans were of German ancestry, leading President Wilson to acknowledge this during his initial war address to Congress. He warned that although he knew most German-Americans were loyal to the United States, any "disloyalty...will be dealt with with a firm hand of repression."³⁵ So, it is also possible that the end of the war meant an abandonment of anti-German feeling because the large German-American segment of the population could once again acknowledge their family heritage. This quick dissipation of negative attitudes towards Germans allowed A.E.F. troops stationed in Germany with the Army of Occupation to interact with German citizens in the same way they had with French citizens in France during the war.

Marcellus had an experience of this sort. In a series of letters to his wife Goldie, dated April 1919, he praised the natural beauty of Germany on several occasions, telling her that

You would have enjoyed the trip very much had you been with me, and I would have also, but such is not the case at present. We may get a chance to see these places in future years and if we do I will know how to appreciate them and where to go to see the best part of this country. All of the highestclass [*sic*] people of Germany come to this beauty spot to spend their summer vacations.³⁶

In fact, Marcellus spent several multi-day stretches sightseeing in various German cities, taking advantage of his time in Europe to travel and acquire souvenirs. This sort of behavior often occurred in France during the war, where A.E.F. soldiers were issued passes for weekend-long stretches of leave from the front and given the opportunity to sightsee and interact with the local people, while British and French soldiers were sometimes given the opportunity to return home (if home was within a reasonable distance from their unit's position) for these periods.³⁷ The French were allies, however, making this friendliness and fraternization a natural occurrence. American treatment of Germans in much the same way, on the other hand, was curious given Germany's recent belligerent status. The bloodshed and sacrifice that had characterized the British and French Great War experiences, and the harsh treaty terms they had pursued at Versailles after the Armistice, meant it was unlikely that their citizens experienced Germany in the same way as Marcellus or Lee. This type of friendly postwar relationship with Germany was unique to American soldiers.

Marcellus was quite sympathetic to Germans following the Armistice. In his *Saturday Evening Post* article submission, he wrote "the people of Germany are very pleasant to talk with and altho [*sic*] I do not understand

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very much Deutsch, I can tell by their expressions and actions just about what they are talking about. They are glad the war is over and hope to have a prosperous period soon."³⁸ In fact, his article was more biased towards the Germans than the British, who had been American allies. This was evidenced by a story of a German man he had met in a barbershop. Marcellus pointed out that although the man had lived in England for eight years when war broke out in 1914, he "had not become a naturalized citizen, so they interned him," cruelly separating him from his wife and children for the entirety of the war.³⁹ He also mentioned a similar situation concerning an elderly American man who had been held in Germany during the war, but rather than taking issue with the internment, he was concerned with the poor nutrition this man had been subject to. He wrote,

This old gentleman has been obliged to live on the same rations that the balance of the civilian population has for some time, the past three years I believe he said. These rations consist of five pounds of potatoes, about the same amount of bread, a pound of meat and four ounces of butter per week. You can see very easily that a person cannot get very fat on this quantity of food.⁴⁰

He shared his hopes with Goldie on several occasions that relief for the German people would arrive soon, as they were "getting almost to their rope's end, I might say, when it comes to food...If we were in their places we would be hungry too...we must be human and treat them so."⁴¹ Only a few weeks later he made a similar remark. "Now I am anxious to see their mouths filled for once at an early date for they think we Americans are the real stuff, and there is no reason why peace cannot be signed first and then they can argue the spoils question later... I did not think we had them licked half so bad and the people here are mighty glad it is over."⁴² It is possible that Marcellus was concerned with the issue of food merely because he worried that the veneration the A.E.F. had been receiving in Germany would quickly end as the people's suffering worsened. He often told Goldie that the Germans respected American power which he reiterated in his article, writing "the streets are filled with people who look at the American soldier with much respect as they well know that we are the sole source of food supplies and of course they at once begin to wonder when the food is coming."⁴³ However, his generally positive opinion of the people made this unlikely. It is more probable that any animosity he may have felt towards the Germans during the war was completely gone only four months after the fighting had ended.

While his opinion of Germany would suggest that Marcellus was a positive man, in reality he found little joy in the service of the army. He did not hesitate to share his self-perceived hardships with his wife, and often complained about homesickness, food, living conditions, and his fellow soldiers. After less than a week in camp he exclaimed, "I am sick of this kind of stuff – you are not a man here by any means but there is nothing to do but go ahead & fight it thru just as commanded. You folks at home can say 'war is hell' but we really feel it."⁴⁴ This behavior directly contradicted the assertions made by Fussell in his analysis of soldiers' letters. He arrived at the ultimate conclusion that the change in language occurring during the war, as evidenced by a lack of honesty, realism, and compassion in soldiers' communication with the home front, stripped them of their individuality and made them interchangeable pieces of some great machine. He believed soldiers were unable to relay their experience because of overt censorship, because they feared offending their loved ones' sensibilities, or because they feared portraying themselves as weak.⁴⁵ By complaining to Goldie, Marcellus did not conform to any of those reasons, disproving Fussell's claims as they related to him. He was not the only American soldier to honestly describe his military life. In an anonymous poem titled "My First Night in the Army," the unnamed soldier complained much like Marcellus had, complaining for four stanzas about the thin blankets issued by the Army.⁴⁶ So Marcellus was not alone in this regard, again highlighting the divergence between the American and European war experiences.

Marcellus did not shy away from sharing his problems with his wife, often bookending his complaints with declarations of love. When discussing a fellow soldier, he marveled at the fact that the man was "anxious to go across," explaining that "[he] cannot see where he gets it as he was married for such a short time & just found out

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what married life was. He must not love his wife like I do or he would be heart-broken but it takes all kinds of people to make a world & they are all here I believe.”⁴⁷ A little over a week later he confided, “I have not heard from my father or mother since I have been here. There is such a big difference in our parents that it is hard to realize. My mother has acted so cold that I have given her up entirely. So my dear you see you are all I have to cheer me, when everything goes wrong. You’re the one that I want near me to whisper loves sweet song.”⁴⁸ It is possible that Marcellus was unique, only feeling comfortable sharing the depth of his feelings because he enjoyed a particularly honest relationship with Goldie. However, the candid nature of his letters on other topics also suggests a fundamental difference between the European and American war experiences.

French and British soldiers had spent years fighting on the front lines before American forces arrived to provide some relief in 1917. Hardened French troops had persevered for years because they hated the Germans for their brutality, soldiering on to protect French women and children who would be in significant danger in the event of a German victory.⁴⁹ British citizens were further removed from the possibility of enemy occupation, but the threat existed nevertheless. This insinuated that European soldiers’ reticence in correspondence was a way to retain their roles as protectors, shielding their families from impending threats, rather than, as Fussell had suggested, a loss of individuality due to the brutality of war. Because the United States was so far removed from Germany’s reach, the immediate peril that motivated European nations could not be relied upon as a motivating force for American soldiers. This, coupled with Marcellus’ honesty in describing army life, implied that he was able to maintain an open letter-writing relationship with his wife because he did not particularly fear for her safety, or feel the need to protect her, as evidenced by the following:

I am far from happy as you know by this time...You have your mother & father & sisters to talk to & cheer you but I have not a soul and cannot receive any letters either now. Would just as soon be dead if I thot [*sic*] I would have to live this way all my life. Now I do really believe we are in a division where I will not be near the firing line as I would have been in the Infantry. So I can be glad I am here as I will have a better chance to come back & this [*is*] what I am after now.⁵⁰

Marcellus and his battalion disembarked their army transport ship in France sometime in October 1918, with roughly a month of fighting remaining before the Armistice. His experiences during both this month and the weeks immediately following were largely quiet and uninteresting, demonstrating the disparate experiences of the A.E.F. noncombatant and the fighting soldier. His first surviving letter written from France described his work as “detail work...such as carrying lumber & etc.”⁵¹ He was far from the front, clearly in little immediate danger, and had little of interest to occupy his time. A good deal of the letter focused on completely mundane news, such as the acquisition of new woolen underwear and hose, and comments on the dreary French weather.⁵² This mediocrity in terms of news was not unique to his first letter; it characterized the bulk of his writing.

Marcellus never even shot a gun until after the Armistice had been signed. He wrote, “I shot my first yesterday out on the rifle range. I have a Winchester. Do not think much of shooting. It is not a pleasing sensation by any means & now that the war is over I’d just as soon not know it. You know I always had a horror towards guns & I haven’t changed my mind yet.”⁵³ Such a sentiment highlights the difference between the combatant and noncombatant. Combatants, especially European soldiers, used and often embraced firearms and weapons. This occurred for a myriad of reasons, ranging from the stereotypical masculine thirst for blood, to the more complex desire to protect home, family, or country. Marcellus’ negative opinion of guns was likely possible because of his experience as a noncombative American soldier. This aversion was not necessarily because the war had disillusioned him, or turned him into a pacifist. As evidenced by his earlier excitement in helping to defeat the Kaiser, he had no moral issue with the war or the violence it wrought. Even in camp, when he was certain that he would be assigned to fight at the front, he was not averse to that duty. He matter-of-factly told Goldie “we may be sent right [to] the

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firing line & we may be stationed at some city as a guard against raiders. For the most part I think we will operate on hilltops or dugouts on the side of hills as sentinels. This is quite an important part as enemy planes must not be allowed to pass, as you know."⁵⁴ Clearly, this aversion to guns did not grow out of his A.E.F. experience, nor did it interfere with his service. The fact that this mindset remained the same from before his training camp days until after the Armistice, demonstrated how little Marcellus was changed by his service with the A.E.F.

In fact, Marcellus was more concerned with Goldie's health and safety than his own. By Christmas 1918 he had not received a letter since his arrival in France and complained that "I do not know if you are dead or alive. I hear a good deal about the flu & wonder if you were affected."⁵⁵ He had received word of the Spanish Influenza, a global epidemic that affected the United States particularly badly, and was worried that it may be to blame for her reticence.⁵⁶ He continued to await word from her for weeks, writing "I have been neglecting to write to you the past few days as I expected to get some letters from you. Quite a number of the boys have received letters which have [*sic*] were forwarded from the old companies & I thot [*sic*] mine would come too but no such good luck so far."⁵⁷ When she did begin to respond sometime in February 1919, Marcellus continued to express concern for her wellbeing, as well as that of her parents. When Goldie reported that her mother was ill, he replied that he was "anxiously awaiting further news," and continued to request updates on her recovery over the span of several letters.⁵⁸ This had begun early on in Marcellus' letters. While in camp he frequently reminded Goldie to take care of both her parents, writing "I imagine mother is pretty busy & you must help her all you can as she is getting old & the more you help her the longer you will have her. She has been a very good mother & all of you should do your utmost to preserve her health. I suppose your Father also feels a keen responsibility now & you must help him if you can."⁵⁹ Throughout his time with the A.E.F. he was always eager to hear news of home and expressed genuine interest in Goldie's affairs by inquiring after her studies as a typist and her day-to-day activities.

For her part, Goldie did her best to comfort her husband during his term of service. She mostly spoke of happy subjects, updating Marcellus on happenings at the local church or discussing the weather. She sometimes complained, telling him "if I only knew when you were coming home. I tell you, this suspense is awful," which was followed by an expression of her incomprehension that he had been chosen for active duty as a married man with responsibilities and dependents.⁶⁰ However, she largely maintained a relatively cheerful outlook. Nearly all of Goldie's letters included a similar line similar to the following: "I hope they will let you come home this time and not ship you someplace else. I must say. Really, Ed, I think you will be home by June some time. Then all will be well."⁶¹ Nonetheless, she did not shy away from her husband sharing less savory information. Goldie requested as much information from Marcellus as he was willing to give her. Even when she worried that he had been chosen to accompany the A.E.F. to Russia in an attempt to quell the burgeoning civil war there, she pled with her husband, telling him "write me all, for if I knew more I would feel better."⁶² She did not object to reading about the details of Marcellus' life in the army, whether those details were unpleasant or completely mundane. She reminded her husband that because she loved him, she wanted to know everything he was experiencing.

Despite Goldie's plea for unflinching honesty, Marcellus' letters rarely mentioned any potential personal danger. When he did speak of his bodily welfare, it was to share mundane and sometimes intimate information. This began immediately after his arrival in training camp. In his first letter from there, he wrote "I keep catching more cold every night it seems & my nose runs faster than my feet. My bowels have gone back on me & they have given me two doses of [Physic?] but no results. They have moved just once since I came here. I am going to the hospital tomorrow morning if I do not get better."⁶³ Similarly, in a letter dated December 13th 1918, his update was that "most of us have the diareha [*sic*] & it keeps us busy beating the path night & day. The mess [food] here is not very good which accounts for this I believe altho [*sic*] it may be the weather or something else."⁶⁴ He also complained that "the suit I have on has been in use over a month but some of the boys have had them on three mos.," which

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he reasoned was “why Cooties & itch & all kinds of skin diseases are so numerous in the army & it is not to be wondered at either, when one knows the conditions, is it?”⁶⁵ He even complained about the less savory activities of his fellow soldiers, who frequented the establishments of *fräuleins* and consequently developed venereal diseases. He wrote, “I am sorry for them too, for they cannot go home until they get cured and it is not so easy to get well. Well Goldie, I can truthfully say I have been clean thru & thru since I have been in the Army.”⁶⁶ While Fussell argued that soldiers refrained from sharing any information with their loved ones that would offend their sensibilities, Marcellus was thoroughly honest with his wife when it came to both his health and that of his fellow soldiers.

Fussell rejected the use of letters as useful historical testimony because he felt that soldiers had learned to “fill the page by saying nothing and to offer the maximum number of clichés” and were motivated by “a decent solicitude for the feelings of the recipient. What possible good could result from telling the truth?”⁶⁷ However, Marcellus rarely attempted to uphold the image of a brave and strong soldier, informing his wife of every ache, pain, and inconvenience he experienced. In another training camp letter, he informed Goldie that he went a day without drilling because “the vaccination [given to new recruits] is inflamed,” continuing to say, “it is just as well I get a rest as I get bilious in the sun.”⁶⁸ He did not share information on physical danger, but this was likely because the threat simply did not exist. Venereal disease and intestinal problems were not exactly the horrors of war that Fussell referred to in his work, but they were the worst parts of Marcellus’ recorded army experience. His decision to share that potentially discomfiting information with his wife showed a marked difference between him and the typical European soldier.

Marcellus did occasionally share positive thoughts with Goldie, often in the form of jokes. As Christmas neared he mentioned the traditional chicken dinner he and Goldie shared, and told her with a false air of chagrin “you can have my drumstick this time but do not eat too much.”⁶⁹ On another occasion he told her that a common order in the A.E.F. was to “make it snappy.” He wished “they [the A.E.F.] would take the hunch & make it snappy & ship us home.”⁷⁰ He then optimistically mentioned the news he had heard “that the service flags are disgarded [*sic*] & replaced by a ‘send the boys home’ flag” and “that one of the congressmen is framing a bill to order the boys home quick.”⁷¹ When he was able to start typing letters from Gustrow, Germany, in spring 1919, he began to return Goldie’s handwritten letters with jokes or comments written between the lines, in addition to his normal letters. These jokes often took the form of sarcastic comments. In one letter Goldie had written “I think you’ll be home by June some time. Then all will be well.”⁷² He did not receive the letter until May 24, so his reply was “June is almost here now. I’ll have to hurry.”⁷³ Marcellus continued to share these anecdotes throughout his time with the A.E.F., indicating that he retained his humanity and individuality despite Fussell’s claims against this possibility. Furthermore, it demonstrated his lack of mental transformation as a result of the war.

Marcellus’ heavy repetition of routine events, often described in extreme detail, were the ultimate indicator of the mundane nature of his wartime experience. His days were extraordinarily peaceful by army standards, and his letters mostly contained comments on completely unremarkable things, like the weather or the progress he had made washing his uniform. His Christmas letter to Goldie for example, laid out his entire day with whole paragraphs devoted to the exact foods he ate and gifts he received:

Christmas a.m. I arose at 6 30 & went down to breakfast which consisted of oatmeal, syrup & bacon. After breakfast I came back to my bunk, folded up my blankets & went down to the community wash house & cleaned up a little – shaved, washed my hair & washed up. Then I went upstairs to the “Y” & sat around reading the papers & periodicals. About 10 30 I went over to the Y tent for church services. At 11 30 I went up to get in the mess line for dinner. Our dinner consisted of mashed potatoes, gravy, roast beef, bread & biscuits, wine, grapes, cigars & cigarettes & nuts. Oh yes & butter too. I must not forget the

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butter as that is the first time I have had any in the Inf. Well I got plenty to eat & it was the best meal I have had since I left Peoria. At 1 45 we all gathered in the Y tent where their *[sic]* was a Christmas tree pre-arranged for the children of Stigny [the town where he was stationed] under 12. There were about 35 & each got a present & a bag of candy with a flag sticking in it. The children sang us several; French songs under the direction of the school teacher & ended up with the Marseillaise. Then we sang one verse of the Star Spangled Banner. After this the presents were presented by our Chaplain assisted by the town mayor.⁷⁴

Though this Christmas celebration did take place after the fighting had ended, it is still notable that the events described in these letters barely mentioned any sort of army activity. This continued through the majority of Marcellus' letters written during the months he remained in Europe following the war. In a similar example of his boring routine, he spent nearly three pages of one letter describing the minutiae of the German train system. This paragraph acted as his introduction to the workings of the system:

The process of collecting fares is quite different here. You walk in and line up for this just the same as you do for everything else in the Army, and then you pass the gatemaster who punches your ticket. You then pass on and go thru a subway to the platform where you wait for your train. When the train comes you get on in the car marked first, second, third or fourth class, whichever your ticket calls for, however you are trusted to get in the right class as they have no porters or brakies to help or direct you.⁷⁵

Passages like this were commonplace in Marcellus' letters, extremely long and filled with seemingly uninteresting information. Their sheer monotony suggests that he resorted to this sort of writing because he simply had nothing else to write, but wanted to maintain the ongoing conversation with his wife nevertheless.

When Marcellus was first transferred to his final assignment at the Russian Prisoner of War (P.O.W.) camp in Gustrow, he told Goldie that he had several hours each day to spend as he desired, writing "we go to bed anytime we choose after supper. We eat breakfast at 8 am. So you see we get plenty of sleep & today our meals were very good. I am getting quite fat indeed. I weighed about 150# when I started for Berlin. I guess I am slightly lighter now as I ran around so much in Coblenz & Berlin that I used up a little of my reserve."⁷⁶ He had plenty of leisure time, and he and his fellow servicemen even took to recreation with the prisoners. After receiving a shipment of baseball equipment from the United States, they tried to teach the Russians the game in hopes that they would eventually be able to hold tournaments to pass the time.⁷⁷ There were so few army activities that the A.E.F. command allowed the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) to set up a program in France for servicemen to attend educational and vocational classes shortly after the Allied victory. "The Chaplain & the Y are starting classes in general school subjects & a few business subjects. Among them is bookkeeping & he has appointed me as instructor. This is quite welcome as it will keep [me] from getting rusty on that."⁷⁸ Ultimately, Marcellus was not able to teach these courses because he was transferred to Gustrow shortly after.

A good deal of the content of these letters centered on descriptions of Marcellus' food intake and weight fluctuation, also mundane in terms of soldier correspondence. His information was initially negative in camp, commenting "you think you are deprived of sugar, I haven't seen a grain of sugar yet...We get a little thin milk...everything is piled in together in a bowl which relieves me of what little appetite I have. You don't get any too much either. [I] have showed a loss of two pounds & I haven't done any drilling to speak of yet either."⁷⁹ As his training continued, he worried that he would not pass inspection required at port by the A.E.F. in order to ship out to France. He noted, "a lot of the boys are rejected at port & they told me I must gain weight here if I stayed. My last weight was 119. I haven't been well at all since I have been here & I doubt if it has changed much altho *[sic]* I am eating all I can get but my stomach is out of gear. My muscles are sore & this shows I am getting hardened in so I may pass."⁸⁰ He later found more favorable conditions in Europe as the end of the war brought better conditions to the A.E.F. He commented, "you will be quite surprised when you see me I'll bet, for I am as fat as a pig.

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Everyone who sees me says that there must be plenty of food in America if they are all as fat as I. And they are quite right for it would take a large quantity indeed.”⁸¹ In the same letter, he wrote, “I just stopped to eat my supper, not dinner, no such a thing in the Army—and I might tell you what it consisted of, just for news. I had roast beef hash, hot biscuits (BP’s), butter, jam and tea. You can readily see that I am not starved as I get all that I want of these and I usually want enough to make me fat.”⁸² The frequent repetition of this sort of information, like the intense detail he shared on other subjects, suggests that it was often the only thing Marcellus could think of to share with his wife. Life as a noncombatant A.E.F. soldier stationed in Europe was so uneventful that he was reduced to simply describing his daily routine.

On the rare occasions he did mention his work and status as an A.E.F. soldier, he bluntly acknowledged its dreariness. “We are all sick of Europe & want to go home ‘toot sweet.’ This is a dull life way out here many miles from home.”⁸³ When describing the duties of his assignment at Gustrow, which was to monitor food distribution to the Russian prisoners, he wrote:

my work is not very heavy here. I go to the lazerette kitchen each morning at nine & stay there until noon & see that the food is fed to the prisoners. I then return to my room & eat lunch at 12:30 p.m. In the afternoon we unload cars if there are any & if not we are at leisure.... We issue food each day at 9 am & accompany it to the kitchens. We have supplied them with beef, noodles, milk, chocolate, beans, hard bread, lentils & sugar. They are quite pleased to get these, naturally & we have a pretty fair supply now. We unloaded some six cars yesterday afternoon & ten more are on the way now. So you see we are helping some.⁸⁴

While he saw some value in his work, as evidenced in the final sentence of the above quote; he did not find it interesting enough to merit an extended tour of duty. In the very same letter, only a paragraph later, he complained, “what I am doing here most anyone can do & why I should be losing several hundred dollars per month is beyond my comprehension but it will not be very much longer.”⁸⁵ He understood the function of the P.O.W. Camp, and was even aware that a “Bolshevist” uprising was possible in territories near Gustrow. He did not take issue with the United States’ continued involvement in Germany, and in fact encouraged aid because “we are claiming to be on a much higher plane and now is the time to show our colors.”⁸⁶ Rather, what he took issue with was his personal presence in Germany. He felt it was unfair for the A.E.F. to force him to stay when there were certainly others who were willing to take his place.

As the November 11, 1918 Armistice became an increasingly distant memory, Marcellus increasingly questioned the value of lingering in Germany. In January 1919 he informed Goldie that he and his fellow soldiers were “just wasting time over here now as the war is won and we should be home...but from the present outlook we may not get back for several months,” as he described his daily routine.⁸⁷ This behavior echoed the attitude the general American public exhibited toward the Great War. Soldiers and citizens had flocked to show patriotism and support the war effort because Wilson and the Committee on Public Information (C.P.I.) fostered a sense of American patriotism through propaganda.⁸⁸ The C.P.I. had employed the image of a noble savior-like American soldier rescuing helpless Europeans to facilitate feelings of American superiority, as well as images of Lady Liberty, a twin representation of American freedom and the ideals of liberty and fraternity advanced during the French Revolution. This reminder of the link between the United States and France acted to “[justify] America’s ‘mission,’ and, through it, her participation in the war.”⁸⁹

Perhaps due to this, American soldiers closely associated themselves with their French allies during the fighting months of the war, praising their resiliency and drawing motivation from their hardships. A poem published in *Stars and Stripes* during those months of fighting laid the relationship out as follows: “and when it plays our Anthem...then we feel/ That, though tongues and ways may vary, we’ve found brothers over here,/ Tried in war,

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and in allegiance true as steel...So, while standing thus together, let us pledge anew our troth/ To the Cause – the world set free! – for which we fight.”⁹⁰ Later in the same issue of the paper, an A.E.F. correspondent praised the French people living on a destroyed street marked by shell holes that was poignantly named *Rue de Joli Coeur* (Street of the Pretty Heart), writing “one may crush, but not conquer, a race whose children can find happiness amid such surroundings. Can abandon themselves to play under the very shadow of disaster. The ‘Street of the Pretty Heart’ – in that title is the secret of triumph of the spirit over the powers of darkness.”⁹¹ So while Americans were more than happy to help and commend their French brethren; as the war raged, they were not necessarily interested in acting the part of savior now that the threat was physically neutralized with the defeat of Germany. Once the French (and British) were safe from the Germans, and the American mission to preserve their legacy of democracy by fulfilling their “privilege, and [their] glory, as members of America’s vanguard of liberty, so to fight, so to strive, that [they] may rightly be called the fellow countrymen of Father Abraham [Lincoln]” had been accomplished, their interest in remaining involved in European squabbles quickly dissipated. ⁹² Marcellus’ interest in staying in Germany mirrored this trajectory and was intensified by the lack of self-perceived fulfilling work.

The German government was forced to concede complete civil control in the occupied areas of the Rhineland to the United States following the Armistice. The United States likely expected resistance on this front, given the image of superiority Germany projected to its people even as hostilities ended. Commanding General Karl von Einem of the German Third Army wrote in his announcement of the official ceasefire “undefeated and tested again and again in numerous battles you are terminating the war in enemy country. What you have accomplished in the face of an enemy force many times superior to ours in number, belongs to history. You can be certain to possess my undying gratitude and the gratitude of the fatherland.”⁹³ Despite this, the official military report on American action in Germany, published in 1920 after the A.E.F. officially shipped out of its headquarters in Coblenz, Germany, asserted that “history records very few instances of an invading army stabilizing its control under conditions so favorable to the task in hand.”⁹⁴ Given this information, it would naturally follow that the Allied forces moved to quickly demobilize, leaving the bare minimum of troops to maintain control in occupied territories. Yet the A.E.F. consistently reported over one million enlisted men until April 1919, nearly five months after the end of the war. The numbers eventually declined as the months passed but were still higher than the A.E.F. had seen during any actual combat months.⁹⁵ This relative ease of control coupled with a large number of soldiers meant that American troops were left with little real work to do.

Marcellus almost immediately encountered this problem upon his arrival in Europe. A letter dated January 16, 1919, written after a month in France en route to his final position at an A.E.F. Russian P.O.W. camp in Gustrow, Germany, focused almost exclusively on the futility of Americans remaining in Europe after the Armistice agreement had been signed. On two separate occasions in the space of one letter, Marcellus made nearly identical statements. The first paragraph of this letter opened with the sentence “we are just wasting time over here now as the war is won and we should be home.”⁹⁶ In the final paragraph he wrote before sending his love and wishes for his wife’s good health, he repeated this thought, asserting that “you know we didn’t mind staying here while the war was on but now our work is done & we have only our homes to look forward to & think of.”⁹⁷ This repetition suggests that it was the foremost in Marcellus’ mind. It was a seemingly bitter viewpoint for an American who never saw combat or experienced the hardships that plagued Britain and France throughout four long years of war. He himself acknowledged this, writing in his article submission for the *Saturday Evening Post* that upon the release of a group of Romanian prisoners from Gustrow he found himself feeling jealous that they would see their homes and families. He soberly reflected “that may have been a selfish thot [*sic*], for they have suffered the horrors of war for many years where I have endured only months, and I cannot say that I suffered very much either,” before lightening the mood by joking “at least I am afraid that I will have a hard time making the folks at home believe it

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when they see me; I am as fat as a pig and I feel pretty well.”⁹⁸ Marcellus understood that he had not seen the worst of the war, but that knowledge did not placate him as his service time dragged on.

The situation Marcellus found himself in was quite common. Stationed in Germany after the fighting had ceased, he was anxious to return to his home and ordinary life. A reflection and report on demobilization published in the years after the war laid it out as follows: “here were more than four million men, most of whom were still civilians at heart. They hoped they were through with military life for the rest of their existence, and they were appealing to everyone to get them out of uniform.”⁹⁹ Marcellus habitually reminded Goldie that her action at home was the only way to secure an early discharge, pressuring her to contact military officers and politicians on the home front. On several occasions he dramatically threatened that her inaction would result in a transfer to Russia or Siberia, stating “if you expect to keep me from going to R [*sic*] Russia, you better warm up the wires and get a little action on that discharge. If I go to Russia I may not be home for another year, as things are very unsettled up there.”¹⁰⁰ Despite reservations regarding the effectiveness of her own action, she complied, because she missed her husband and wanted him home.

To any American doughboy, the possibility of a transfer to Russia was not an idle threat. The United States had sent thousands of troops to Russia and Siberia to assist the non-Communist White Army in the Civil War that broke out shortly after the October 1917 Communist Revolution that had removed Russia from the Great War. The A.E.F. continued to hold Russian P.O.W.s in camps, such as the one Marcellus found himself stationed at, because they feared sending them home would amount to providing the Communists with “fresh” troops. He told Goldie “the main object in keeping these Russian prisoners here is to keep them from going home and starting a revolution in their own Country. The Government there is not very solid and it is doubtful if it will be soon, judging from present progress.”¹⁰¹ Marcellus legitimately feared that the A.E.F. would keep him in the service for the foreseeable future, which was compounded by the lack of news regarding his application for discharge.

This lack of news meant Marcellus was unhappy with his situation throughout the spring of 1919. He wrote Goldie almost daily, and by April his letters consisted almost entirely of complaints about the A.E.F. and pleas for her to help secure his discharge. He was not optimistic on most days, remarking on the ineffectiveness of the A.E.F.’s organization. “Their system seems to be rather slow in this department...Of course they are not so slow when they want something of you, for instance, when you are on the drill field.”¹⁰² He included a copy of his discharge application with this letter, stipulating the reasons for his request:

1. I am at present a member of the United States Military Mission, Russian Prisoners of War Camp, Gustrow, Germany.
2. I am married and my wife is unable to support herself, as her only income is the regular allotment which she receives from the Army Department.
3. My father is sixty-two years of age; he is ill and has no home. He cannot earn a living and has asked me to assist him. I have always contributed to his support for several years but am unable to do so now.

Under the above circumstances I respectfully request a discharge.¹⁰³

Marcellus meticulously compiled evidence to prove these claims, sending both Goldie and his father affidavits that cited him as their sole source of income. Goldie’s note read “Edward R. Marcellus is my sole support and I am in need of his services at once, as I am unable to work and earn a living and the allotment which I receive from the Government is not sufficient for me to exist upon. I need financial assistance immediately.”¹⁰⁴ He also secured the support of his commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel John Fullington, who wrote to A.E.F. headquarters on his behalf. In a letter addressed to the “Commanding General US Military Mission, Berlin,” Fullington informed the A.E.F. that Marcellus was of good character, nonessential to the operation of the camp, and deserved discharge.¹⁰⁵

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Despite all of this effort, Marcellus' discharge was not approved because "the applicant does not submit sufficient evidence that his discharge from the military service would alleviate suffering to warrant this application being forwarded to higher authority."¹⁰⁶

Letters Marcellus wrote in France and Germany were not much different from his earlier camp letters. He lamented that "we drill half a day now & that is useless as we all could do something lucrative at home which would help our country & ourselves far more than this," before noting that "trouble is in the air here among the boys as they are so discontent with conditions."¹⁰⁷ This statement was intensely critical of the A.E.F. and by extension the American government. However, it demonstrated a sort of patriotism despite Marcellus' noticeable irritation. Speaking for himself and his fellow soldiers, he did not claim purely selfish reasons for wanting to return home. He argued that it would benefit the country and his family before making mention of any individual benefit.

He hoped for discharge at any cost, pleading with his wife to help him secure it, telling her "now get busy and telegraph and get me out of this ----- [*sic*] place just as soon as you can, or you will never see me again. I send you much love and many kisses from a far and distant land. I have been perfectly clean and I have done nothing to be ashamed of since leaving home, but that seems to be of no benefit to me now, all I want is to get out of this Army and I am willing to spend every cent [Marcellus' emphasis] to do it."¹⁰⁸ Despite this plea, he never expressed disdain for the war effort or even for the bloodshed and destruction it had wrought. He complained "it is a real shame to have to stay here when I am needed so badly at home, but that is the way the Army is handled. Well you can bet your sweet life that when I get out of this thing once they will never get me again. I was glad to come over here and do my bit but I am not willing to stay over here all my life and waste my time doing practically nothing. I work a little now and then but not enough to keep a man for."¹⁰⁹ This statement was politically charged and intensely critical of the A.E.F. at a time when the Espionage and Sedition Acts, passed in 1918, discouraged the expression of ideas of this kind regarding the United States, its government, or its army.

The statement was not censored however, and Marcellus went on to receive an honorable discharge. This suggests that while he took action by advocating for his own discharge and encouraging Goldie to join in on his behalf, he did not have any far-reaching political or idealistic goals in mind. Marcellus simply wanted to get home. This too demonstrated the complete lack of change in Marcellus' worldview during his service. Had Marcellus indeed become disillusioned, he would have spoken out against the war itself, decried the loss of humanity, or made similar incendiary remarks that were so common in Europe during the decades following the war. Instead, he made a point to remind Goldie "le guerre [the war] is over & we feel it is time to go home. If they want to keep us over here in civil service they ought to pay us for this but this thing of working for 33 per when I am needed at home to earn a living for you & papa does not set well with me."¹¹⁰ Marcellus harbored no ill will toward American participation in the war, or even the war itself. This echoed his earlier pride in being a soldier, when he expressed excitement at the prospect of assisting in the Kaiser's downfall.¹¹¹ The following statement was much more indicative of his feeling regarding the army and the war: "I am getting so tired of this place and I want to go home so bad that I do not take much interest in anything. One of the boys at Parchim [a nearby camp] is sick a bed and they say it is nothing but the blues and homesickness that is the trouble. I think this is the case in many instances over here."¹¹² Marcellus was simply homesick, desperate to return to his wife and home.

Upon learning that his discharge had been disapproved, Marcellus told Goldie "I may not be home for many months now...Things look dark."¹¹³ He blamed his father for the disapproval, suggesting that he declined to sign the affidavit Marcellus had sent him. Marcellus saw this as a slap in the face because "he knows very well that I am over here wasting my time and he ought to be glad to do anything he can to get me out of this place, as I have always helped him and had planned to help him even more in the future."¹¹⁴ He continued, complaining, "I think

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he has just been indifferent in the matter, but that is no way to be at this time. If he cannot assist me by spending a few dollars after I have furnished them, then it is time to sever relations entirely.”¹¹⁵ This was quite a change from passages in earlier letters regarding his father, whom he had been extremely sympathetic to and worried for. Roughly two months earlier he had told Goldie “I always think of my poor old father and wonder how he is getting along. You had better send him some cash if you hear from him and he is in want, for it may be some time before I will be home. I will leave the amount to you for I do not know the exact circumstances he is in only that I know he is unable to earn a living.”¹¹⁶ This abrupt change indicated the depth of his desperation to return home.

Despite this intensifying pessimism, he maintained some hope. He remained entirely focused on his discharge even after the disheartening news, asking Goldie to try telegraphing the proper government authorities for him again only four days after telling her of the initial disapproval.¹¹⁷ This single-minded obsession with returning home was not unique to Marcellus, nor was it the sole product of his intensely pessimistic personality or his overall dissatisfaction with the A.E.F. Rather, it was largely due to the lack of planning the government and army had put into demobilization. When the Armistice became official, there was no government agency equipped to effectively facilitate demobilizing the A.E.F. because the Allies had focused all their attention on simply winning the war.¹¹⁸ It was easy for the soldiers who had not yet shipped out to Europe to return home, but the men overseas faced more of a challenge. While France and Britain considered themselves the heroic victors of the war, Germany may have seen the United States as the real conqueror.¹¹⁹ From the American perspective, victory came with the responsibility to keep peace in Europe. The United States was the logical enforcer of this peace, driven by Wilson’s Fourteen Points and the proposal of the League of Nations, its status as victor, and its less biased view of Germany and other former enemy nations. As a consequence, many A.E.F. soldiers were forced to remain in Europe for months, policing Germany, monitoring Russia, or conducting other activities to maintain a stable transition from war to peace.

The A.E.F. attempted to keep the morale of their soldiers high, by establishing a variety of programs that would keep American soldiers occupied and out of trouble while stuck in Europe. Tourism, which had been commonplace for short periods during the war, was now actively encouraged and men spent a good deal of their time collecting souvenirs to impress friends and family back home. Marcellus often bragged about his growing collection of trinkets in his letters and even provided a detailed description of several of the more interesting items in his *Saturday Evening Post* article. He had been gifted handmade items by the Russian and Romanian prisoners at Gustrow and was impressed by their ingenuity. In reference to one particularly impressive gift, he remarked, “the other day one of them came into my barrack with a package in his hand. It was small and wrapped in tissue paper and I hardly knew what it could be, he handed it to me and I unwrapped it and what do you think it was, a hand made jewel box, trimmed in glass...It looks very nice and will be a pretty ornament on my wife’s dressing table.”¹²⁰ He was also quite proud of his growing coin collection, bragging “it was not very long until I had all the coins a man could ask for and not only Russian, but also Roumanian [*sic*], Austrian, Italian, Danish, Serbian and many rare pieces of German gold...I have one of almost every kind of coin that has been made up here in the past few years and I have paid but very little for them as the prisoners want to give them to me for souvenirs.”¹²¹ The A.E.F. also expended a great deal of effort in the realm of education, setting up both technical and academic classes at some posts, such as the class Marcellus had been asked to teach in France prior to his reassignment, establishing an official American Expeditionary Forces University in Côte d’Or, France, and enacting official orders to send fifteen percent of qualified men to French and British universities. A.E.F. headquarters ordered that up to fifteen percent of each unit would be essentially relieved of military service in order to attend school and would only be required to work in a military capacity for an hour per day.¹²² These actions were commendable, but the A.E.F. failed to understand just how badly its soldiers wanted to return to their friends, families, and homes, to resume the lives they had put on hold to serve their country.

"You Folks at Home Can Say 'War is Hell'"

Marcellus was not officially ordered home until June 1919, nearly seven months after the fighting had ended and the A.E.F. theoretically should have shipped out of Europe. Even then, he encountered a series of delays due to disorganization or ineptitude on the part of the A.E.F. on his journey home. He was held up in St. Aignon, France, for several days during which he "did not do a thing...just waiting for orders & milling."¹²³ He noted that the officials running the St. Aignon camp seemed uninterested in their duties, and the conditions were remarkably poor, writing that "Gen. Pershing was here a couple of days ago & all were required to turn in for inspection & he was very disgusted with conditions."¹²⁴ With this in mind, the contempt for the A.E.F. and general military life that Marcellus displayed in his letters had a factual basis. Before the war had even ended, other soldiers had begun to balk at the idea that their work was serving no greater purpose. Writers at *Stars and Stripes* attempted to remedy this by publishing reassurances that eventually the work of each soldier would contribute to an ultimate Allied victory. Appealing to a variety of army workers, one article read "no, Mr. Infantryman, Mr. Artilleryman...no-use-at-all as your own work may have seemed to you sometimes... [Uncle Sam] has been laying a firm foundation for your comfort and safety and for that of the men who will follow you over – and believe us, he's done an almighty big, an almighty far-sighted, an all-around almightily creditable and thoroughly American, workmanlike job."¹²⁵ Marcellus' commentary on the ineffectiveness and uselessness of his work at the A.E.F. Russian P.O.W. Camp were not the ravings of a disillusioned soldier, nor were they meant to further any sort of political action. Rather, his words were an honest example of the postwar experience of the A.E.F. soldier.

Marcellus remained more or less the same throughout his time with the A.E.F. Army of Occupation. He wrote almost daily to his wife for the entirety of his service time, amounting to roughly nine months. Slight variations in attitude from day to day aside, the body of surviving letters, as a whole, were remarkably consistent in the ideas and attitudes they conveyed. His letters from the first weeks in camp had the same overall voice and tone and expressed similar ideas as his letters sent from Germany only weeks before his discharge. Marcellus did not change because the war was simply not a transformative experience for him. His surviving body of letters demonstrated a mind that changed very little over this fairly long span of time. The juxtaposition of Marcellus' thoughts at the beginning and end of his term of service with the A.E.F. highlights a complete lack of character transformation. He was not left with the emotional scars or physical reminders of the war that would plague the soldiers from other combatant countries, nor was he disillusioned like the "Lost Generation" of American writers such as Ernest Hemingway and E.E. Cummings, who were emblematic of postwar American culture in popular history.¹²⁶ This suggests that he was able to return home to Goldie and build a healthy, happy life relatively unaffected by his participation in the Great War, in stark contrast to the postwar lives of many European soldiers who were fundamentally changed by their experiences.

Reliance upon novelists, artists, or propagandists to inform the historical narrative has misrepresented the average enlisted American because they had completely different wartime experiences. Soldiers like Hemingway and Cummings for instance, served with the Italian and French militaries respectively during the war, meaning they were exposed for a longer time, in a much different environment, to the horrors of war than men who served with the Americans.¹²⁷ The opinions on the absurdity and futility of war that they and other artists forwarded in their works were entirely different from the opinions that most A.E.F. soldiers had immediately following the war. Marcellus, despite his misgivings about the A.E.F. itself, still felt in the end that the war had been worthwhile, a heroic and noble effort to save the world. Men like Marcellus were not "lost" at all. He lived an ordinary life before, during, and after the war. As a noncombatant who helped make up the majority of the A.E.F., there was little in terms of life-changing or transformative experiences for him, or for the average American soldier who participated in The Great War.

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- ¹ Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1987), 263.
- ² Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero Worship* (Project Gutenberg, 2008), eBook edition.
Carlyle's theory, first published in 1840, essentially held that the actions of specific individuals, who stood out from the rest due to some combination of intelligence, technical prowess, and social skill, were the driving forces that shaped history. This theory has been argued against and largely disproved because it ignores the agency of both the ordinary individual and the masses, but many historians (often subconsciously) revert to using it in the discussion of world-changing wars, focusing on leaders like Napoleon for example, rather than on the *grand arm  e* that did the physical daily fighting.
- ³ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- ⁴ Leonard P. Ayres, *The War with Germany: A Statistical Summary* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), 101.
- ⁵ Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), xvi.
- ⁶ Jennifer Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 6.
- ⁷ Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, xx.
- ⁸ Alistair Thomson, *ANZAC Memories: Living with the Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994), 236.
- ⁹ Nicoletta F. Gulace, "Sexual Violence and Family Honor: British Propaganda and International Law During the First World War," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 3 (1997), 743.
- ¹⁰ Harold D. Laswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1972), 214.
- ¹¹ "Spies and Asses," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.
- ¹² "Crusaders," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.
- ¹³ *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.
- ¹⁴ Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*, 60.
- ¹⁵ Edward Marcellus to Goldie Marcellus, 5 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*, Center for American War Letters at the Frank Mt. Pleasant Library of Special Collections & Archives, Chapman University, Orange, California.
- ¹⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.
- ¹⁷ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.
- ¹⁸ Ren   Albrecht-Carri  , *The Meaning of the First World War* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 136.
- ¹⁹ Robert H. Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (Oxford: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 176-180.
- ²⁰ Laswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 217.
- ²¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 3 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.
- ²² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 5 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.
- ²³ Mark Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon: Voices of American Participants in the First World War* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 13.
- ²⁴ Laswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 47.
- ²⁵ Harry R. Hopps, *Destroy this Mad Brute*, 1917, lithograph print, 106x71 cm, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- ²⁶ David Traxel, *Crusader Nation: The United States in Peace and the Great War 1898-1920* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 166-168.
It is now common knowledge that the *Lusitania* likely had concealed weapons onboard at the time of its sinking, but this was not known publicly during the war. The incident was portrayed as the tragic killing of defenseless people, many of whom were women and children.
- ²⁷ Traxel, *Crusader Nation*, 4-5.
- ²⁸ Traxel, *Crusader Nation*, 168.
- ²⁹ Floyd Gibbons, *And They Thought We Wouldn't Fight* (New York: George H. Duran Company, 1918), 26.
- ³⁰ Gibbons, *And They Thought We Wouldn't Fight*, 41-2.

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³¹ "Crucifixion of Canadians (Reported)," House of Commons, *Hansard* (12 May 1915), vol. 71, <http://www.hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1915/may/12/crucifixion-of-canadians-reported#S5CV0071P0-05881>

"Canadian Golgotha," *Canadian Museum of History*,

<http://www.collections.civilization.ca/public/pages/cmsspublic/emupublic/Display.php?irn=1023526&QueryPage=%2Fpublic%2Fpages%2Fcmccpublic%2Femupublic%2FQuery.php&lang=0>

The British House of Commons made a move to investigate this incident after it was initially reported. Sir Robert Houston verified during the May 12, 1915 session that no official information had been shared with the War Office, and that there was no record of any Canadian soldiers who would have been eyewitnesses submitting affidavits. In a striking example of the pervasiveness and reach of propaganda, a bronze sculpture cast in 1918 entitled "Canada's Golgotha" commemorating the alleged event was put on display at the Canadian Museum of History, and was eventually taken down when German officials called the story it represented into question.

³² F.C. Amorsolo, *Your Liberty Bonds Will Help Stop This*, 1917, lithograph print, 72x56 cm, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³³ "German Brands Young Mother with an Iron," *Stars and Stripes: The Official Newspaper of the A.E.F.* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

³⁴ Richard Rubin, *The Last of the Doughboys: The Forgotten Generation and their Forgotten War* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2013), 184.

³⁵ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14.

³⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 17 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

³⁷ Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon*, 75-6.

³⁸ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

³⁹ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴⁰ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 29 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴³ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 3 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴⁵ Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 187.

⁴⁶ "My First Night in the Army," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

⁴⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 5 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴⁸ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 14 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁴⁹ Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would Be Mine: Paul and Marie in the Great War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 122.

⁵⁰ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 9 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 22 October 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

This was likely the first letter written in Europe because he made reference to the boat trip and enclosed a Y.M.C.A. pamphlet on the "boat service" for Goldie to read.

⁵² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 22 October 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 13 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵⁵ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 29 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵⁶ "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918," Human Virology at Stanford, Stanford University, accessed 2 April 2015, <https://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>.

American deaths were estimated at 675,000, and 28% of the entire U.S. population was infected. Worldwide the epidemic took more lives in one year (1918-1919) than the entire Great War would claim. Half of the American soldiers who died during their service time succumbed to the virus. The virus hit the U.S. in September, as

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Marcellus was leaving for France, and coincided with his last letter from Goldie, making it plausible for him to have this fear.

⁵⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 7 January 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵⁸ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 23 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁵⁹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 14 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁰ G. Marcellus to E. Marcellus, 21 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶¹ G. Marcellus to E. Marcellus, 29 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶² G. Marcellus to E. Marcellus, 21 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 3 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 13 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁵ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 13 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁷ Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 182-3.

⁶⁸ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁶⁹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 8 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁰ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷² G. Marcellus to E. Marcellus, 29 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus 24 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 23 December 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁵ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 29 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 23 February 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 2 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁸ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 7 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁷⁹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 3 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁰ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 13 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 2 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 26 February 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁵ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 26 February 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 29 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁸⁸ Zieger, *America's Great War*, 78.

⁸⁹ Jakub Kazecki and Jason Lieblang, "Regression Versus Progression: Fundamental Differences in German and American Posters of the First World War," in *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture*, ed. Pearl James (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 128.

Jonas Lucien, *1778-1783 America owes France the most unalterable gratitude, 1917-... French comrade, your children shall be as our children*. 1918, lithograph print, 81x59 cm., Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Alexander O. Levy, *Liberty Claims Her Own!*, 1917, lithograph print, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁰ "When the French Band Plays," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

⁹¹ "Street of the Pretty Heart," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

⁹² "Father Abraham," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

This appeal to the memory of "Father Abraham" was used much like the traditional calls to Uncle Sam or George Washington. His contributions to American, and therefore democratic, history were emphasized in order to galvanize Americans and garner support for the war effort on an intellectual and ideological plane.

⁹³ Karl von Einem, "Commendation, November 11, 1918," in *United States Army in the World War 1917-1919: American Occupation of Germany*, ed. Gen. William A. Stofft (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 475.

⁹⁴ "Report of the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs Third Army and American Forces in Germany," in *United States Army in the World War 1917-1919: American Occupation of Germany*, ed. Gen. William A. Stofft (Honolulu:

University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 225.

⁹⁵ Ayres, *The War With Germany* 15.

⁹⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁹⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁹⁸ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

⁹⁹ James R. Mock and Evangeline Thurber, *Report on Demobilization* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1944), 126.

¹⁰⁰ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, no date, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 24 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 24 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰⁴ G. Marcellus, June 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰⁵ J. Fullington to Commanding General US Military Mission, 2 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰⁶ W. Mann to J. Fullington, 8 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 16 January 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹⁰⁸ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

The line in the phrase "this ---- place" was included by Marcellus in the original letter, likely to imply language too inappropriate to write in a letter that would possibly go through Army censoring.

¹⁰⁹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 20 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁰ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 26 February 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹¹ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 5 September 1918, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹² E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 31 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 14 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁵ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁶ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 31 March 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁷ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 18 May 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹¹⁸ Mock and Thurber, *Report on Demobilization*, 126-7.

¹¹⁹ John Mosier, *The Myth of the Great War: A New Military History of World War I* (New York: Perennial, 2002), 335.

According to Mosier, it had been the American Argonne campaign (September 1918) that "precipitated a complete collapse at the German General Staff," and perhaps as a result Germany chose to negotiate exclusively with President Woodrow Wilson, offering to accept his Fourteen Points.

¹²⁰ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹²¹ E. Marcellus, "Life in Germany – As seen by a Buck Private," 7 April 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹²² Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon*, 189-90.

¹²³ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 7 June 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹²⁴ E. Marcellus to G. Marcellus, 7 June 1919, *Edward Marcellus World War One Correspondence*.

¹²⁵ "No Delay About Moving In," *Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France), 8 February 1918.

¹²⁶ Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (New York: Scribner, 2006).

The term "Lost Generation" was coined in the epigraph of the novel, which largely concerned the struggles to mentally reconcile the horror of war with pre-war moral values. In the decades following the war it came to represent the entire generation of men who had served in the military during the war, rather than just the authors who wrote about their wartime experiences.

¹²⁷ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 228.