

World War I

By Mary Buchanan, Nicole Poorman, and Beth Van Ness

This paper is about World War I and its effect on one Marshall family. World War 1, which began on June 28, 1914, was called the "Great War." It was the worst war the world had yet seen. Groups of countries had formed in Europe. One was the Triple Entente that included Britain, France, and Russia. The second one was the Triple Alliance that included Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Over nine million people died in this war. In May 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed the British passenger liner the Lusitania off the coast of Ireland. Among the 1,198 passengers killed were 124 Americans. President Woodrow Wilson, who had denounced both the British and German blockades as violations of international law, sent strong notes of protest to the German government.

The Germans argued that the British ship had been carrying arms and ammunition. Anxious to keep the United States neutral, they agreed not to sink passenger ships without warning. In early 1917, three events occurred that ended American neutrality. First, Germany broke its promise and said it would start unrestricted submarine warfare again. Second, President Woodrow Wilson learned that Germany was trying to get Mexico to attack the United States and other states. Third, a revolution in Russia toppled the undemocratic rule of the tsar, or emperor, and took the country out of the war. The United States joined the war in 1917. American involvement lasted until November 11, 1918, when the Armistice ended World War I.

A February 10th news story reported that Corporal Joseph H. McKee of Indiana Harbor, a member of the Two Hundred and Thirteenth Aero Squadron, was the only Indiana man aboard the torpedoed liner Tucanla who had been accounted for. One Illinois man, Alva Plowman Caml, also was reported rescued.

The loneliness and separation that most soldiers felt is shown by the experiences of one Marshall soldier, Pvt. Herbert Huey. In a letter dated July 15, 1918 he wrote, " Dear wife and Children I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know that I am all right and hope that all of you are the same. I have got only one letter sense I bin down here. I would like to get a letter or two. You write and tell me all the news in town.... I am going to leave right away and don't you write until you here from me. To all good bye. Kiss the baby for me and tell them I will be home some day."

In a letter written July 29, 1918, Private Huey and the other troops have still not been transferred. He writes, "I am going away and don't know where, but I could guess. I have got a new suit and have got it on and it is some hot it is all wool and you know what that means.... I got your letter and I was glad I got your letter, because I was broke and I read it two or three times. I wish I could see you all before I went away for I may never get to see you any more.... I wish you would have sent your picture."

Later that year he wrote from Europe " I just got back from the lines and it was bad, but the Dutch "Germans" are sure going back. We went over the top several times and the

Dutch do run when they see us coming over, but we get some of them. I have got the bad feet so I can hardly walk on them, but I go just the same. Out side of that I'm feeling fine. Were camping in the woods and its wet in here. Well, kid, I wish I were back home so I could get good nights sleep.... Tell Walker that I sure would like to be back in the Mill with him, and I think I will if I ever get back.... Be sure and send some stick candy.... Has the boy started school yet? I hope he is. Are you still liven in our Landen House?"

In a March 10, 1919 letter from Gulliem, Germany, Huey wrote, " I got three letters the same day, you wrote me, you had a hard time so did I kid.... I have slept in a bed but three nights' sense I've been over here. I got you and the kids pictures and they were good and I will bring them back home with me if I don't lose them.... I get so damn lonesome over here that I could die."

Four days after Christmas, he wrote, " We are all back from the front and we are sleeping in barns, and it is a good place to sleep beside the place we had on the front, for it was mud and water,"

Finally on May 17, 1919, Private Huey said in a final letter, " It won't be long then till I will be home."

A typical battle took place on October 2, 1918, in France. Americans found them selves completely surrounded by German forces. For five days, they fought desperately, as food, water, and ammunition ran out. They refused to surrender to the Germans. On October 8, American relief troops were able to reach them.

During the war many things were happening at home. More women were working outside the home to help the war effort. This helped them get more recognition and more rights. Women received the right to vote with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment on June 4, 1919.

The war also had an influence on the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, which restricted the sale of alcoholic beverages. Prohibition officially started January 16, 1920. The war influenced prohibition because people argued that the grain used in alcohol should be saved and used for food to help the war effort. Another argument was based on the idea that workers who drank did not produce as well, and that this hurt the production of war materials.

Marshall, Illinois, during World War I, was very lonely for some families. The Huey family of Marshall told us that during this time they sometimes had to get food from friends and neighbors. Many people had to do this at one time or another. People really didn't like it when the food supplies went down. Many got scared.

While Herbert was in the war his family suffered and also dealt with the problems that they came upon. The kids missed their father and never stopped thinking about him. Bessie sometimes had to have her son Paul stay home from school to help her around the house. While Bessie's husband was in the war she had to deal with all the problems that came

along their way. When the kids would ask where their father was, she would have to tell them that she didn't know where their father was.

Every night that a letter would come in from Herbert, Bessie would read it to the kids so that they would know what their father was doing and if he was all right. The last letter that Bessie got from Herbert was a letter saying he would be home as soon as he could.

In my research of this family I've concluded that they had it rough during the war. They dealt with what came into their path. The family from Marshall has moved on with their life. The day Herbert came home the kids were so happy and they didn't let go of the dad for a long time.