

WALTER JAVAN FRASER, II. Collegians and Conscription On the Home Front in North Carolina During World War I, 1917-1918. (Under the direction of JOSEPH F. STEELMAN, 1964.)

Following President Woodrow Wilson's war message to Congress on April 2, 1917, North Carolina college students responded patriotically to the call to arms. By commencement, 1917, large numbers had abandoned the campuses for military training camps. Academicians across the state who realized the impact war would have on enrollments, were heartened by President Wilson's midsummer plea for all students below twenty-one years of age to return to college. Throughout the war educators and student publications in North Carolina echoed President Wilson. They maintained that the college educated would be responsible for rebuilding a shattered post-war world.

During the 1917-1918 academic year, military instruction was integrated into the college and university curriculums. Professional army personnel and educators, with chauvinistic exhortations, infused campus atmosphere with a vibrant patriotism. Student authors reiterated the refrain and college students reflected a patriotically fired spirit in all their activities.

In October, 1918, Students Army Training Corps units were activated on campuses throughout North Carolina. Academicians eagerly endorsed the SATC plan. However, the War Department's plans to make student-soldiers of college age youth were denounced as undemocratic by Judge Walter Clark and Governor Thomas Walter Bickett. Contending the plan was biased in favor of academically superior students and contrary to

the reasons for the draft age extension, it would appear that their stand was well taken. Hundreds of college age youth, denied admission to the "bomb proof" sanctuaries of the SATC units, were entrained for the front. With the cessation of hostilities the SATC was condemned "to the autocratic junk pile" by college administrators and students, who Judas-like, turned their backs on the War Department's program. And the vibrant campus patriotism, so blatant during the nineteen months of war, quickly abated.

On April 7, 1917, the War Department announced its plans to raise an army by conscription, North Carolina's "rank and file" both denounced and praised the proposal. But in late April, when the Selective Service Act passed Congress, a vast majority of the state's citizens favored its passage.

After the Act was signed into law, Governor Bickett moved swiftly to establish the state's draft machinery. Following the initial nationwide registration for all men between twenty-one to thirty-one years of age, a Washington lottery on July 20, 1917, determined the liability for selective service registrants. North Carolina draft boards summoned the prospective draftees. Although there were many rejections for physical defects and large numbers of exemption claims, most draft boards in North Carolina had secured their assigned quotas by late August.

During the early weeks of August overt hostility to the draft law was encouraged by a small, highly vocal, hard-core element. However, a militant, chauvinistic crusade led by Governor Bickett quickly silenced the anti-conscription forces.

In November, 1917, a questionnaire was adopted as a means of classifying registrants. Governor Bickett, who had urged a more equitable and humane draft procedure, championed the new regulations. Accompanying the implementation of the questionnaire system, the well-intentioned Governor launched a personal crusade. Using authoritarian methods he pursued relentlessly a policy of sending "to the front" any man who did not "habitually and cheerfully support his family."

The emergency calls for more draftees in the spring of 1918 increased the numbers of draft dodgers in North Carolina. In Ashe County open violence finally erupted on June 23, 1918. Made aware of the critical situation that existed between the anti-conscription minority and the patriotic majority, Governor Bickett traveled to the scene of the trouble. In an address on June 29, 1918, he stated that all draft dodgers who surrendered voluntarily would receive a personal letter from him asking for leniency. His speech resulted in the return of hundreds of deserters and delinquents to training camps.

When the announcement was made in early August, 1918, that the age limits liable for selective service would be extended from eighteen to forty-five, citizens from every "rank and file" in North Carolina opposed the measure. However, as the pressing need for more men on the Western Front was brought home to the people, public opinion gradually swung toward the age extension measure.

The fourth and final registration, September 12, 1918, was meritoriously completed in North Carolina. Until the end of the war the draft machinery operated smoothly except for a brief interruption by the

Spanish Influenza epidemic. With the Armistice the state's conscripted of every "rank and file" enlisted Governor Bickett's aid to insure their speedy return to the non-militarized world that had prevailed before 1917.

COLLEGIANS AND CONSCRIPTION
ON THE HOME FRONT IN NORTH CAROLINA
DURING WORLD WAR I, 1917-1918

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
East Carolina College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in History

by
Walter Javan Fraser, II

August 1964

COLLEGIANS AND CONSCRIPTION
ON THE HOME FRONT IN NORTH CAROLINA
DURING WORLD WAR I, 1917-1918

by

Walter Javan Fraser, II

APPROVED BY:

SUPERVISOR OF THESIS

Joseph F. Steelman

DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Robert A. Shambaugh

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

John O. Reynolds

Kathleen Edmunds
Henry C. Lunnell Jr.

PREFACE

This study was originally intended as a general survey of the home front in North Carolina during World War I, but the voluminous amount of primary source material available necessitated limiting the thesis to two aspects of the period. The investigation consequently centered on the relation of college students and the "rank and file" to the War Department's plans for conscription.

To the author the nineteen months covered herein was an exciting period in American as well as North Carolina history. It was a time when the nation was at arms, its manpower mobilized "to make the world safe for democracy." A stern chauvinism gripped the home front, often militantly intolerant of opinions that deviated from the point of view of the majority. And it was a period when democratic principles were at times sacrificed on the altar of expediency.

Numerous persons have made possible the successful completion of this thesis. The contributions made by Louise Wise Fraser and Stephen D. Carnes, Jr. are inestimable. Professor Joseph F. Steelman patiently directed me to source material vital to the construction of the thesis. Throughout the process of composition his suggestions were helpful signposts guiding the way. The interest shown and advice given by professors Henry C. Ferrell, Jr., and Kathleen E. Dunlop is gratefully acknowledged. The friendly assistance rendered by the following library staff members is greatly appreciated: the Joyner Memorial Library, East Carolina College; the North Carolina Room and The Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE.	1
I. ARMAGEDDON COMES TO THE CAMPUS	1
I. <u>"The First Step Toward International Peace . . . [?]".</u>	1
II. <u>God Speed and Pomp and Circumstance.</u>	6
III. <u>The Reaction of Educators.</u>	9
IV. <u>The Return to Campus, September, 1917.</u>	11
V. <u>A Training Ground for Future Officers.</u>	14
VI. <u>"Making Clear the Aims, Purposes and Ideals of America in the War. ."</u>	16
VII. <u>To "Carry On".</u>	22
VIII. <u>Summer, 1918 and the Coming of A New Order</u>	30
IX. <u>Dissenting Opinions.</u>	34
X. <u>Enter the Rank and File.</u>	39
XI. <u>"The Old Order Changeth"</u>	41
XII. <u>The "New Order" Endeth: A Return to the Old?</u>	49
II. CONSCRIPTION COMES TO THE "RANK AND FILE".	53
I. <u>"To Increase the Military. . . of the United States".</u>	54
II. <u>Appointing "the Strongest and Best Men . . ."</u> <u>Possible.</u>	60
III. <u>June 5, 1917---"Everything Passed off Nicely . ."</u>	65
IV. <u>A Final Rule for Exemption Boards.</u>	67
V. <u>The Lottery.</u>	70
VI. <u>Examinations and Exemptions.</u>	72
VII. <u>Anti-Conscription Sentiment and the Militant Backlash.</u>	76
VIII. <u>The Entrainments</u>	86

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
IX. <u>"For A More Perfect Organization of . . .Manpower"</u> .	90
X. <u>The New Draft Policy and the Governor's Crusade.</u> . .	96
XI. <u>Deserters, Delinquents, and Bickett.</u>	101
XII. <u>To Draft or Not to Draft "Children".</u>	114
XIII. <u>Meritoriously Completed.</u>	119
XIV. <u>The Last Steps in the Process.</u>	120
III. CONCLUSION	123

CHAPTER I

ARMAGEDDON COMES TO THE CAMPUS

I

" . . . The First Step Toward International Peace. . . [?]"

For several weeks the imminent possibility of America's involvement in the European crisis had swept the patriotic fervor of North Carolina's collegians toward a crest. When President Woodrow Wilson delivered his war message to Congress on April 2, 1917, the groundswell of patriotism broke, surging across campuses throughout the state. The swift-running tide carried a holy cause and one that purported to "make the world safe for democracy."

The girls of St. Mary's College, who shouted, cheered, stood on and overturned chairs and desks in their enthusiasm, unanimously adopted a resolution that extended their sympathy and pledged support to the President during the crisis. A draft of the resolution was telegraphed to the President's daughter, Mrs. William Gibbs McAdoo, on April 4, 1917.¹ The Trinity Chronicle reported that nearly three hundred students met en masse on April 3 and petitioned college officials for military training. Before the close of the rally, the faculty and administrative officials decided drills would begin after the Easter recess. Later, the faculty adopted a resolution that

¹The News and Observer (Raleigh), April 15, 1917, hereinafter cited as The News and Observer; see also Katherine Batts Salley (ed.), Life at St. Mary's (Chapel Hill, 1942), pp. 157-159.

pledged loyal support to the government.² At the University of North Carolina the last vestiges of an anti-war sentiment were inundated by the chauvinistic flood.³ Since March, nightly drills, with over five hundred student participants, had been conducted in the lighted area behind South Building,⁴ and were later increased from two hours per week to one and a half hours daily.⁵

America's entrance into World War I stirred over one hundred students at Wake Forest College to volunteer for military drill. By mid-April students with prior military training had organized several companies of sixty students each and were instructing the volunteers in basic commands and tactics.⁶

Louisburg College students awaited "the call to arms," but in the interim the entire student body under the leadership of Elizabeth Allen formed a Helper's Association. Each member pledged to furnish a towel, bandages, and other war necessities.⁷

At the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, members of the Agriculture Club, seeing the need for increased production of food crops during the war years, on April 18th appointed a committee to prepare a garden calendar. Copies of this calendar would be distributed

²The Trinity Chronicle (Durham), April 4, 1917.

³Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), pp. 169-170.

⁴Glen Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War: A Lesson from Campus History, 1915-1919," The Carolina Magazine, LXVII (December, 1937), 4, hereinafter cited as Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War."

⁵The News and Observer, April 27, 1917.

⁶Ibid., April 16, 1917.

⁷Ibid.

throughout the state, and if instructions were followed fresh vegetables would be available during nearly every month of the year.⁸

The sentiment of students at East Carolina Training School during the early weeks that followed American entrance into the war was perhaps best reflected by the editor-in-chief of The Training School Quarterly, Fannie Lee Speir. In the April edition she defined the role of teachers and prospective teachers as the ones who would "keep the fires burning on the school altars, so that none of the good we have will go out,"⁹ and concluded that "The teacher in her work is doing as patriotic service for her country as the soldier boy, and she should not be lured from her post of duty by romantic appeals."¹⁰

During the first months following the declaration of war, some whispers of opposition to America's participation were heard from the college campuses in North Carolina. On April 25, The Trinity Chronicle suggested the seventeen acres of corn, peas and Irish potatoes under cultivation on the Trinity campus,¹¹ might be tended by the "anti-militarists," since it "would be a good way for them to display their patriotism."¹² But these few discordant voices were overwhelmed by a continuing patriotic chorus and, within a week of this slap at the Trinity College "anti-militarists," a University of North Carolina student, voicing the overwhelming opinion of the college students,

⁸Ibid., April 19, 1917.

⁹The Training School Quarterly, IV (April-June, 1917), 43.

¹⁰Ibid., 44.

¹¹The News and Observer, June 5, 1917.

¹²The Trinity Chronicle, April 25, 1917.

won the state oratorical contest with the theme, "America has taken the first step toward international peace by entering the war."¹³

Following the spring holidays, faculties of Trinity College and the University of North Carolina, through resolutions, encouraged student training for the war. The Trinity faculty allowed students participating in the three hour weekly drills to count this as three credit hours toward graduation.¹⁴ By April 26, over four hundred students were drilling daily and all anticipated government orders assigning them to military duty.¹⁵ Chapel Hill officials enlisted the aid of Lieutenant Lennox P. McLendon of the State National Guard and Captain Hugh H. Broadhurst of the regular army to assist Coach T. J. Campbell and Professor Patrick H. Winston in drilling the five-hundred member student battalion;¹⁶ faculty members passed a resolution favoring the draft and extending full credit for any work not completed to those students who wished to attend the training camp at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.¹⁷ Other highly-placed educators encouraged an increasing number of college and high school youths to enlist in the armed services. Dr. James Yarkin

¹³Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 4.

¹⁴The News and Observer, April 17, 1917; see also The Trinity Chronicle, April 18, 1917.

¹⁵The Weekly News and Observer, April 26, 1917.

¹⁶Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), pp. 169-170; see also The University of North Carolina Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91, hereinafter cited as University Alumni Review.

¹⁷Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 4; see also Edward Kidder Graham to B. S. Royster, April 25, 1917, University of North Carolina Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as University Papers. During the month of April, President Graham was besieged with letters, telegrams, and even hastily penciled notes from undergraduates and graduates asking for recommendations to the officer reserve corps. He responded immediately with glowing references.

Joyner, Superintendent of Public Instruction, announced that two seniors at Rowland High School, who had missed six weeks of school since their enlistment, would be promoted and graduated en abstentia.¹⁸ Consequently, one of the state's leading newspapers, the Raleigh News and Observer, following the lead of the educators, applauded "the young men of the schools and colleges who are entering into the service of their country."¹⁹

As the student migrations to Oglethorpe and other camps increased, only the editors of The Trinity Chronicle seemed to urge an objective approach to student enlistment. On April 18, an editorial cautioned students to ponder the question: "Could they best benefit the government now by enlisting as a private or would they render a greater service later as an officer?"²⁰ However, the temper of the times did not encourage students to "reason why" and the exodus to Fort Oglethorpe and enlistment depots continued at an accelerated pace.

¹⁸The News and Observer, May 3, 1917.

¹⁹Ibid.; see also Professor H. B. Arbuckle to Edwin Yates Webb, April 9, 1917, Edwin Yates Webb Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Webb Papers. Dr. Arbuckle, Professor of Chemistry at Davidson College, evinced a more profound grasp of the relationship between colleges and the war than the majority of North Carolina educators. Just three days after the declaration of war, Arbuckle wrote Representative Edwin Y. Webb asking him to use his influence "in modifying the War bill so as to exempt young men in our colleges between 18 and 20 and thus conserve for our army the leadership it must find largely in this class of our citizenship." And in closing Dr. Arbuckle wrote: "My idea is to make each college campus a training camp, for which the government should detail efficient military leaders."

²⁰The Trinity Chronicle, April 18, 1917.

On April 28, 1917, after the passage of the Selective Conscriptive Bill, officials at Wake Forest College reasoned the measure spurred a number of students to enlist.²¹ At Chapel Hill undergraduate volunteers in the regular army became almost a daily occurrence.²² A large percentage of the senior class believed they could best serve as officers, and plans were made for their departure to Fort Oglethorpe during the first week in May.²³ The increased numbers of officer training candidates at Trinity College led some to speculate that eventually seventy-five Trinity men would leave for the Georgia training camp.²⁴

II

God Speed and Pomp and Circumstance

On Friday evening, May 4, as sweethearts, friends, mothers, and fathers entered the Methodist Church at Chapel Hill for a farewell convocation in honor of the Oglethorpe-bound students, their faces probably revealed a curious mixture of sadness and pride. After the customary invocation, Professor Archibald Henderson addressed the assemblage. He told the boys to remember that "the folks back home" were with them and to remember that "the United States goes into war with a purity of purpose and a disinterestedness unparalleled in the history of the world."²⁵ Oliver Rand, president of the Senior Class, spoke in behalf

²¹George Washington Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, 1905-1943 (Raleigh, 1943) III, 86, hereinafter cited as Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III.

²²The News and Observer, April 27, 1917; see also University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91.

²³The News and Observer, April 27, 1917.

²⁴The Trinity Chronicle, May 2, 1917.

²⁵The News and Observer, May 7, 1917.

of the departing seniors:²⁶

It is a question of duty. We see that we must go. . . this is a war of ideals . . . We think that we can best be spared among all the men in the nation. War now calls, for service, not glory. Duty calls us to go to the front . . .

During the following days the students attended to their final preparations and on May 8, one hundred and twenty-five volunteers, mostly seniors, departed for Fort Oglethorpe.²⁷

Three days after their departure, a farewell service was conducted in Wingate Memorial Hall of Wake Forest College. The faculty and students endorsed the action of the men who had applied for admission to the Reserve Officers Training Camp in Georgia. "God Speed," intoned Dr. Nathan Y. Gulley, Dean of the College, and R. K. White, president of the Senior Class, announced that it was the desire of every Wake Forest senior to serve his country.²⁸

At the commencement exercises of Trinity College, June 6, 1917, it was observed that "every man in the senior class who could or ought to go to Oglethorpe responded . . . ,"²⁹ for those on hand to receive diplomas numbered less than forty.³⁰

The day before commencement at the University of North Carolina,

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Louis R. Wilson, The University of North Carolina 1900-1930: The Making of a Modern University (Chapel Hill, 1947), p. 263, hereinafter cited as Wilson, University of North Carolina, 1900-1930; see also The News and Observer, May 8, 1917.

²⁸The News and Observer, May 12, 1917.

²⁹Ibid., June, 1917; President William P. Few thus described Trinity's response to the war.

³⁰Ibid., June 6, 1917.

June 5, the annual alumni reunion was held. Judge Francis D. Winston, addressing the "old grads" assembled in Gerrard Hall, boasted that the University "had more students training to fight Kaiserism" than any other institution in the country. Later, when President Edward Kidder Graham spoke to the alumni, he reviewed the school's activities for the past year, and in assessing the future role of the University he sounded a new approach among educators in North Carolina in the relation of students and colleges to the war. He emphasized "that no young man under twenty-one should leave college, but should continue his work and prepare for the big tasks which must come after the war."³¹ However, it seemed these words had come too late when on the following day at commencement exercises, only 96 of the 161 members of the class of 1917 were present to receive their degrees. Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, and Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, spoke during the commencement exercises. The stirring speeches of these national figures, in addition to enthusiastic participation by alumni and friends of the University, produced "the most patriotic [commencement] in the history of the University."³²

³¹Ibid.

³²University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918, 67); see also The News and Observer, June 6, 1917; University Alumni Review, VI (June, 1918), 227; Edward Kidder Graham to Mrs. _____ Smith, June 7, 1917, University Papers. President Graham wrote: "Our commencement was the most enthusiastic and patriotic celebration we have had in this vicinity for many a day. Secretary Baker and Daniels were here, and that partly explains it, but the main explanation is the spirit that brought them here, and brought the largest crowd that I have seen in our Memorial Hall for the past twenty years."

III

Reaction of The Educators

After the commencements, campuses across the state emptied for the summer holidays, and officials of the colleges and universities began to speculate with increasing concern on autumn enrollments.³³ Small institutions as Davidson College, which lost 158 students between April, 1917, and September, 1918,³⁴ planned to operate with reduced budgets. Wake Forest College officials became so concerned about the sharp decrease in enrollments that faculty members elected Professor Hugh Jones as "field agent" for the college. He planned to tour the state "in the interest of the institution" during the summer of 1917.³⁵ What motivated college officials throughout the state to take up the refrain that President Edward Kidder Graham had first enunciated on Alumni Day, 1917? Was it in the interest of the young men of the state, the war effort, or the college that President William Louis Poteat of Wake Forest College urged a return to the campus? In the waning days of June, he announced it was his belief that although a war raged in Europe, it was not a "time to neglect college," and all below twenty-one years of age should "get ready for the widest and finest service, civil, military, naval. . . . To college, young man, young woman! This is your bit."³⁶

President Robert Herring Wright of East Carolina Training School did not face the economic dilemma caused by a sharply reduced student body since the school's enrollment was predominantly female. But on

³³Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 86.

³⁴Walter L. Lingle, Memories of Davidson College (Richmond, 1947), p. 106, hereinafter cited as Lingle, Memories of Davidson College.

³⁵The News and Observer, June 28, 1917.

³⁶Ibid., June 29, 1917.

Founders Day, 1917, addressing the assembled summer school student body, he followed the ideas outlined by presidents Graham and Few.³⁷

You are doing the greatest service when you are teaching. You are doing your patriotic duty now, this summer when you spend your money and time to equip yourself for better service as a teacher. . . . educating is as important as fighting and farming. This is your duty. Don't be a slacker. Do your bit.

These sentiments of the educational leaders in the state marked a new approach to higher education and the war. During the early weeks of the conflict faculties and college officials had encouraged wholesale defections from college classrooms to training camps. Were they far-seeing educators in advocating this new approach or was the "stay in school" plea prompted by other interests?

It could be argued that college officials and faculty members were caught off guard during the first few days after the declaration of war, but recovering by June, were heralds of the position adopted by President Wilson, July 20, 1917. "I . . . urge colleges and technical schools to endeavor to maintain their courses as far as possible on the usual basis."³⁸ And for those under twenty-one, the President felt they should remain in "colleges and technical schools, to the end that the country may not lack an adequate supply of trained men and women."³⁹

Undoubtedly college administrators and faculties across the state were relieved and delighted.⁴⁰ President Wilson's words assured continued attendance for the coming year and he endorsed their concept of higher education relative to the war. When the News and Observer's

³⁷The Training School Quarterly, IV (July-September, 1917) 120-123.

³⁸The News and Observer, July 21, 1917.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 86-87.

annual educational supplement appeared on August 1, North Carolina educators underscored the President's words and reiterated their own refrain. Dr. William P. Few of Trinity College believed it absolutely necessary to increase the numbers of young men attending colleges and universities, for after the war larger numbers of college graduates would be needed.⁴¹ Elon College's advertisement in the supplement closed by encouraging the young men and women of the state to enlist "at Elon this fall and so be able to be a leader when the world-war is over. Don't be a slacker. Volunteer for college and life. Do it Today."⁴² Dr. Charles Francis Meserve, President of Shaw University, Raleigh, believed, "there will be a great dearth of leaders when peace comes if colleges close their doors or if the attendance is materially lessened."⁴³ He was relieved to observe that college and university presidents were no longer urging college youths to enlist as, in his opinion students and faculty should be the last to go.⁴⁴

IV

The Return to Campus, September, 1917

Despite the blandishments of President Wilson, Governor Thomas W. Bickett, educators throughout the state, and sterner parental urgings, college age youths continued, during the summer months and early fall, to follow their classmates into various branches of the armed services.⁴⁵

⁴¹The News and Observer, August 1, 1917.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵The Wake Forest Student, XL (January, 1918), 230; see also University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68; The University of North Carolina News Letter, December 25, 1918, hereinafter cited as The News Letter.

However, when students returned to the campus in early September, 1917, enrollments indicated that primarily the upper-classmen or recent graduates were enlisting.

Opening day at the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, September 6, found the freshman class equal in numbers to that of 1916, but sharp reductions appeared in the junior and senior classes.⁴⁶ Similarly at Elon College while officials reported opening day brought the largest freshman class in the school's history, registration for upper-class work was below average.⁴⁷ Wake Forest College administrators reported over three hundred students registered for classes during the week September 4-11,⁴⁸ approximately two hundred less than normal; Law School attendance was considerably reduced.⁴⁹ At the University of North Carolina, the first day of classes, September 14, found almost one-third of the student body in the freshman class.⁵⁰ The total number registered was 1,113, whereas the students of the 1916-1917 session had numbered 1,250.⁵¹ However, between September 14 and October 1 approximately seventy-nine students dropped out, decreasing enrollment to 1,034. Many of these students had originally entered the graduate schools.⁵²

⁴⁶The News and Observer, September 7, 1917.

⁴⁷Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 7, 1917.

⁴⁸The News and Observer, September 10, 1917. Paschal, in History of Wake Forest College, III, notes 361 students were registered by September 4, 1917, 87.

⁴⁹Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 87-88.

⁵⁰University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91.

⁵¹Ibid., VII (December, 1918), 68.

⁵²Ibid., VI (October, 1917), 5.

The college and university presidents and faculties in their opening week addresses outlined the duty of the students and the role of the schools for the academic year. Dr. Charles C. Pearson of the Political Science Department, Wake Forest College, told the students at their first convocation they "were conscripts of society mobilized to meet the needs of the country [and] . . . it was the patriotic duty of every student to make the best of the unusual opportunity which is presented to him."⁵³ President W. A. Harper of Elon College entitled his speech, "The College Man and Patriotism,"⁵⁴ and speaking to the assembled students Sunday morning September 9, emphasized that they were not "slackers" for being in college, rather it was "unpatriotic for those not in the trenches not to go to college."⁵⁵ The duty of the college was to prepare "the leadership for the world in the re-construction days of world rebuilding when this conflict is done."⁵⁶ Opening day addresses at Chapel Hill were made by Dean Marvin H. Stacy and President Edward Kidder Graham. "Conservation" and "preparation" were the watchwords for the year Dean Stacy told the students. And President Graham stressed that the members of the University community had a role in the war as "important and as heroically difficult as that of men in the trenches," and urged the students to acquire an awareness of life through knowledge, which would prepare them for the world.⁵⁷

College students had returned to the campuses with a "spirit. . .

⁵³The News and Observer, September 10, 1917.

⁵⁴Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 7, 1917.

⁵⁵The News and Observer, September 10, 1917.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., September 15, 1917; see also Wilson, University of North Carolina 1900-1930, p. 265.

quickened by the stimulus of War."⁵⁸ Elon College was typical when on opening day the students, "alive with patriotism," were wearing minature flags in their lapels, while the Stars and Stripes fluttered from nearly every window in the dormitories.⁵⁹ But the college officials in their opening addresses established the tone for the coming year - one that would be characterized by student responsibility and dedication.

The college publications soon echoed the administrators and teachers. The Tar Heel encouraged students to remain in college for they would be needed after the war when "the world will have to be rebuilt."⁶⁰

V

A Training Ground for Future Officers

The University would "formally introduce military training," an initial issue of the 1917 Tar Heel declared.⁶¹ And The Trinity Chronicle announced military drill would be required of all students except those physically unable or whose parents conscientiously objected.⁶² Officials at the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, Raleigh, planned to require all qualified students to participate in drills under the direction of Major Chalmers G. Hall who had been assigned to the college by the War Department; in November Captain Robert E. L. Spence was

⁵⁸University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68.

⁵⁹Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 7, 1917.

⁶⁰September 21, 1917.

⁶¹Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 4.

⁶²The Trinity Chronicle, September 12, 1917.

appointed Professor of Military Science and Tactics.⁶⁴ All "cadets" at the State College were required to wear the olive drab regulation uniform during school hours.⁶⁵ Elon College also instituted classes in military instruction and by late September three companies were organized for drill.⁶⁶ The decision to include military training in the curriculums of the colleges across the state for the academic year 1917-1918 had undoubtedly been inspired by the formation of student battalions, sanctioned by faculty resolutions, the previous spring.⁶⁷

By the late summer, 1917, Captain J. Stuart Allen was secured to direct military training at the University of North Carolina.⁶⁸ President Graham in his opening address at Chapel Hill, September 14, 1917, announced that Captain Allen, of the Canadian Army and formerly a member of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, would be assisted in his duties by Lieutenant Jonathan Leonard of the Reserve Officers

⁶⁴Ibid., November 4, 1917.

⁶⁵Ibid., September 7, 1917.

⁶⁶Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, October 15, 1917.

⁶⁷University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91; see also Resolution by Visiting Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina, June 5, 1917, University of North Carolina Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, hereinafter cited as Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924. The Visiting Committee of the Board of Trustees, meeting on June 5, 1917, adopted the resolution: "That the plan of instituting military training in the University through a Reserve Officers' Training Corps be carried out, and that the faculty be given full authority to incorporate such courses and credits in the curriculum as the national situation seems to make wise."

⁶⁸Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), 170.

Training Corps, Harvard,⁶⁹ and J. V. Whitfield, class of 1915, who had served as Horner Military School Commandant.⁷⁰ President Graham also announced that the intercollegiate football schedule for the coming year had been canceled.⁷¹ Officials concluded this was necessary in order to provide sufficient time and space for drilling, as well as to encourage students to devote their main interest to military training.⁷²

Reaction to the introduction of military courses at the University was enthusiastic; 565 students, approximately eighty per cent of all those who could qualify, registered in the Department of Military Science.⁷³ Eight faculty members also enrolled for the twelve hours a week course and subjected themselves to the same schedule as that of the undergraduates. Six days each week, the first period beginning at 8:00 a.m., were devoted to military science and every other day the hours 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. were allotted for military instruction. The subject matter included: "close-order drill, open-order drill, manual

⁶⁹The News and Observer, September 15, 1917; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 57.

⁷⁰University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 57.

⁷¹The News and Observer, September 15, 1917.

⁷²University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 57. When President Graham addressed the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees meeting in the Governor's office, Raleigh, August 28, 1917, he noted that intercollegiate football had been abandoned for the fall since it was "inconsistent with. . . [the University's] present chief interest and obligations."

⁷³Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), p. 170. University Alumni Review VI (January, 1918), 91, states 560 enrolled in the course during the Fall.

of arms, manuevers of attack by day and night, and construction of trenches, wire obstacles, and shelters."⁷⁴

On September 15, when the first courses in military science began, the problem of equipment, arms, and training areas for target practice and trench construction remained largely unsolved, though uniforms and some personal equipment were purchased by students.⁷⁵ However, in the late fall two hundred and fifty rifles of ancient vintage, yet sufficient for drill, were given to the Battalion by Mr. Julius Cone, of Greensboro,⁷⁶ and fifty Springfield rifles were secured by R. W. Glenn, State Secretary of the Military Training Camps Association, for practice firing⁷⁷ on land given by Mr. C. L. Lindsay.

After a quantity of picks and shovels arrived at the University during the early days of October,⁷⁸ trench construction was soon under-way on a plot of land made available by the Order of Ginghamhous.⁷⁹ At the end of October an intricate series of trenches near the Raleigh Road had been surveyed by the Engineering Department and constructed by the

⁷⁴University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91-92; see also John Skally Terry (ed.), Thomas Wolfe's Letters To His Mother (New York, 1943), p. 2. A sophomore at the University of North Carolina, 1917-1918, Thomas Wolfe wrote to his mother October 31, 1917: "This military drill takes up about 15 hours of my time every week. It not only keeps me busy but the night finds me tired."

⁷⁵University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 91. The Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), p. 170 states Mr. Julius Cone of Greensboro donated 180 weapons to the University in the Spring, 1917.

⁷⁶University Alumni Review, VI (January, 1918), 92; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 57.

⁷⁷Wilson, University of North Carolina, 1900-1930, p. 267.

⁷⁸Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, October 5, 1917.

⁷⁹University Alumni Review, VI (October, 1917), 14.

Battalion.⁸⁰ The trenches, winding along the edge of Battle Park, "near Judge Brockwell's Cabin,"⁸¹ were 769 feet long, $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and 3 feet wide. A parapet of dirt and sandbags as well as barbed-wire was erected around the works which included sap-head, advance, dummy, firing, traverse, and support trenches. With completion of these formidable entrenchments, under Captain Allen's direction, the Battalion trained in repelling charges, flank attacks, and mining operations.⁸² To make the instruction more realistic Chapel Hill's Red Cross Chapter served coffee and doughnuts "up front" after the "battles."⁸³ By early spring of 1918, Allen was occasionally leading the troops out of the trenches and into the town, where the cadets engaged in mock house to house combat and maneuvers.⁸⁴

In the first week of November, 1917, the Battalion was presented colors. John L. Patterson of Roanoke Rapids and Paul W. Schenck of Greensboro awarded the Stars and Stripes, North Carolina State flag and Regimental banner to Captain G. D. Holding's company for having the outstanding military training record;⁸⁵ in March, 1918, John Sprunt Hill

⁸⁰The News and Observer, October 16, 1917.

⁸¹Wilson, University of North Carolina, 1900-1930, p. 267.

⁸²University Alumni Review, VI (November, 1917), 37-38; see also Elizabeth Nowell (ed.), The Letters of Thomas Wolfe (New York, 1956), p. 6. Writing to his brother Benjamin H. Wolfe on February 18, 1918, Thomas Wolfe noted: "They're giving us blazes in this military stuff. Military engineering, bomb throwing, trench warfare, bayonet fighting are a few of the things we are doing."

⁸³Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 5.

⁸⁴The Tar Heel, April 27, 1918.

⁸⁵University Alumni Review, VI (December, 1917), 70; see also The News and Observer, November 11, 1917.

presented the national flags of Great Britain and France to Captain Holding's company.⁸⁶

The success of the University as a training ground for future officers was recognized by the federal government in June, 1918, when the school was officially recognized as a Reserve Officers Training Corps facility.⁸⁷ In the opinion of an editor of The Tar Heel this distinction won by the Student Battalion was attributable to the vigor of Captain Allen, the spirit of the four student companies, and the desire of each member to excel so that he might become a regular officer.⁸⁸

VI

"Making Clear the Aims, Purposes and Ideals of America in the War. . ."

Unique among the colleges and universities throughout North Carolina were the war-time services of the University of North Carolina's Bureau of Extension.

In August, 1917, the University Record indicated the Bureau's services to the people of the state would expand to include, "Making clear the aims, purposes and ideals of America in the War for the use of newspapers, publicists, teachers and the general public."⁸⁹ The September issue of the Record featured a list of "timely topics" which the editors urged teachers to discuss in class. The suggestions included: "What we fight and why; America, a land of scandalous waste: Is it so?;

⁸⁶Wilson, University of North Carolina, 1900-1930, p. 267.

⁸⁷University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 86.

⁸⁸May 22, 1918.

⁸⁹The University of North Carolina Record, No. CXLIX (August, 1917), 2; hereinafter cited as The UNC Record; see also the News Letter, December 25, 1918.

The German Spy System; and War Profits and Profiteers."⁹⁰ Teachers were encouraged to follow the progress of the war through the University News Letter and free copies and other leaflets published by the Extension Bureau might be obtained by writing to the War Information Department of the University. Ten leaflets already issued by September dealt with such subjects as, "Why we are at War with Germany," "Patriotism and the School" and "What to read concerning the War."⁹¹ The Extension Service also announced that communities distant from extension centers would be able to hear lectures by university professors on "War Conditions at the Front," "The Love of Country" and "Russia, the Unknown Factor," by paying the professor's travel expenses to their communities.⁹²

By mid-October the Bureau of Extension had completed its program for building up patriotism and morale beyond the University grounds.⁹³ War propaganda was to be disseminated across the state through extension courses, a readers service, group lectures, correspondence courses and direct publicity of "Why we are at War and Why this is our War," through articles written by faculty, special editions of the News Letter and War leaflets, a University news service to dailies and Sunday editions, and the Lafayette Association.⁹⁴ The Bureau felt that since Lafayette had

⁹⁰The Record, No. CL (September, 1917), 67-68.

⁹¹Ibid., 69-70.

⁹²Ibid., 69.

⁹³Wilson, University of North Carolina, 1900-1930, p. 266.

⁹⁴University Alumni Review, VI (November, 1917), 33; see also University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68; Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 67.

embodied "democratic instincts," the Association was appropriately named; its aim being----to encourage "development of certain new ideals and the inculcating of new virtues," through community "reading classes and discussion groups."⁹⁵

Regardless of the other duties in which the University assisted the government during the war, officials at Chapel Hill believed its chief mission remained to educate the people of the state to "American aims, purposes and ideals in relation to the World War."⁹⁶ Consequently, as the War progressed the War Information Service of the Bureau of Extension continued to expand in scope and efficiency.⁹⁷ Increasingly there were demands for professors to lecture in all parts of the state. In February, a War Study Center was established in Winston-Salem and attended by a cross-section of citizens who were enlightened by lively lectures and discussions on France's role in the War. A Center established in Raleigh enjoyed similar success with lectures and discussions about Russia's role.⁹⁸

By June, 1918, the Extension Service of the University had reached 100,000 people by lectures on War subjects; 75,000 War Information Leaflets had been published; the News Letter war editions enjoyed a weekly

⁹⁵The News and Observer, November 4, 1917.

⁹⁶University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68.

⁹⁷The Tar Heel, May 22, 1918; referred to as The War Educational Service, University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68.

⁹⁸The Tar Heel, May 22, 1918; see also University Alumni Review, VII (December, 1918), 68.

circulation of 15,000; and the War Study Centers had enrolled six-hundred citizens.⁹⁹

VII

To "Carry On"

A "new sense of responsibility stirs in the air of this quiet place, and . . . in all our affairs there is a freshly invigorated purpose. . . ,"¹⁰⁰ President Graham observed in his University Day address, October 12, 1917.¹⁰¹ Students at Chapel Hill deeply committed to the cause of "democracy versus autocracy" listened in rapt silence as their President read a letter from a former student who wrote:¹⁰²

I am about to leave for France. . . You send me because you taught me ideals that won't let me stay here. . . the resultant of all my desires to live and serve is a purpose to fit myself to come back and serve through Carolina. . . .

As the University students filed out at the conclusion of the ceremonies, with the words of a former comrade ringing in their ears, and Governor Thomas W. Bickett's exhortations to prepare themselves so when called to duty they might say, " 'Here am I, send me,' "¹⁰³ they were undoubtedly intoxicated with a patriotism which would burn long after the cessation of hostilities. This same atmosphere of vibrant

⁹⁹University Alumni Review, VI (June, 1918), 227.

¹⁰⁰The News and Observer, October 13, 1917.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Ibid., see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 67. Graham also read the letter to the Board of Trustees, January 22, 1918.

¹⁰³Ibid., see also Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 4.

patriotism, duty and responsibility President Graham felt at the University also surrounded other campuses in the State during the academic year, 1917-1918.

One of the first causes the students championed was collecting funds for the \$125,000 allotment colleges in North Carolina had been requested to raise for the American Red Cross.¹⁰⁴ Students at Elon College were among the first to campaign for these funds. A Halloween celebration planned at Elon was canceled and after speakers praised the patriotic cause, a collection was taken up for the Red Cross fund.¹⁰⁵

The women's colleges in the state, in addition to monetary contributions, formed Red Cross Auxiliaries which contributed hospital supplies. State Normal College's Auxiliary numbered 263, the largest in the state, and by early April, 1918, had furnished the Red Cross, "25,000 surgical dressings, 91 comfort pillows, 275 trench candles, and 300 pairs of hospital socks."¹⁰⁶ The Greensboro College Auxiliary had 51 members and by April had contributed, "57 knitted garments, 750 compresses, 11 bed shirts," as well as 55 books for the soldiers' library.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, October 15, 1917.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Mabel Tate and Naomi Neal, Women and the War in North Carolina (N. P., 1918), p. 5. "A Partial Report of the Work of Women in North Carolina during the First Year of the War, April 2, 1917-April 2, 1918, based upon Material Collected by the Department of History of the State Normal and Industrial College. . . .", hereinafter cited as Tate and Neal, Women and the War In North Carolina.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 6.

Salem College girls also contributed surgical dressings and knitted garments to the Red Cross.¹⁰⁸ After the formation of the East Carolina Training School Auxiliary of the Pitt County Chapter of the Red Cross, October 23, 1917, girls at the institution enthusiastically launched into similar work.¹⁰⁹

The zeal exhibited in relation to Red Cross work was also shown in student support of Liberty Loan campaigns. Parading seniors, wrapped in red, white and blue cloth, bearing flags and singing, "We're Going Over," "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and "Over There," launched a "Buy Liberty Bonds," campaign at East Carolina Training School on the evening of October 22, 1917. During the bond rally, Professor H. E. Austin urged the students to "deny themselves" to help promote the Liberty Bond issue. He announced that the class of 1919 had already raised \$100.00, while the seniors were continuing their drive to raise a \$100.00 bond with the aid of the student body.¹¹⁰

The University of North Carolina Magazine encouraged student participation in the fourth Liberty Loan Drive through the medium of a poem, "Buy and By."

Let's down the Kaiser in a sea of consternation
 Let's show him how many can fight
 Let's buy a bond and buy and buy
 Let's do all this as our part, and then by and by
 Let's enjoy our freedom---and watch old Kaiser die.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹The News and Observer, October 28, 1917.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 5.

In the same spirit the drive was "kicked-off" by the Battalion marching into Chapel Hill and building a "bond"-fire in front of the postoffice.¹¹²

The men of Wake Forest College, by December, 1917, had subscribed \$650.00 to be invested in Liberty Loan Bonds. The contributions were unanimous; seemingly the students delighted in the idea of being able to contribute materially to the war effort. The bonds would be donated to the college and the interest accruing used to erect a memorial to Wake Forest men who had responded to the nation's "call to arms."¹¹³

By the spring of 1918, significant sums had been invested in Liberty Bonds by the women's colleges. Faculty and students at Greensboro College had bought \$2,405.00 in Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps. At Salem College funds which had originally been raised for a new gymnasium were diverted to the Liberty Loan campaign. Consequently, the student body owned \$1180.40 in Liberty Bonds and War Savings Certificates.¹¹⁴

Through liberal contributions to the Y. W. and Y. M. C. A. War Friendship Funds, Belgium Refugees Fund, and by resolutions of self-abstinence and conservation, students also exhibited their patriotic home front support.¹¹⁵ On October 23, 1917, East Carolina Training School students took a pledge en masse to abide by "the gospel of the clean

¹¹²Ibid., 4-5.

¹¹³Wake Forest Student, XXXVII (December, 1917), 174.

¹¹⁴Tate and Neal, Women and the War In North Carolina, p. 6.

¹¹⁵Ibid.; see also University Alumni Review, VI (November, 1917), and The News and Observer, February 24, 1918.

plate" and to reduce consumption of sugar.¹¹⁶ Early November found girls at State Normal and Industrial College pledged to give up Thanksgiving dinner, consume less meat and wheat, and deny themselves personal luxuries.¹¹⁷ President Foust observed that the girls were following their resolutions, for many had given up soft drinks and candy. Ten young women also pledged not to go home Christmas and donate the cost of the trip to the War Fund.¹¹⁸ During the late winter months, men at State Agriculture and Engineering College, Raleigh, shivered on Mondays as they dressed for classes in their frigid rooms. "Heatless Monday's," had been instituted by President W. C. Riddick as a result of student petitions to conserve coal.¹¹⁹

A heady idealism infected student bodies in all their undertakings during the academic year, 1917-1918. This spirit was reflected and encouraged by student writers such as J. N. Davis, who wrote "Renaissance" dedicated "To the Warriors of Peace," in the Wake Forest Student, October, 1917.¹²⁰

. . .Men, Away! Men, away!
 . . .Throw your books to the Wind
 . . .Ye latter main raiders,
 Twentieth Century Crusaders,
 Come! follow with me!
 And they come---oh they come!
 . . .The student is there
 . . .Glorious, all of them
 As the bright knights of old;
 And then to the battle
 For right and for France!

¹¹⁶The News and Observer, October 28, 1917.

¹¹⁷Ibid., November 4, 1917.

¹¹⁸Ibid., November 14, 1917.

¹¹⁹Ibid., January 28, 1918.

¹²⁰Wake Forest Student, XXXVII (October, 1917), 7-9.

Caught up by this spirit the exodus to training camps continued throughout the year.¹²¹

This idealistic concept of the War was revealed in the student publications during the war years. Years later, Thomas Wolfe, speaking at Purdue University reflected: "I suppose my first attempts creatively may be traced to the direct and patriotic inspiration of the War."¹²² The November, 1917 "War Issue" of the University Magazine carried Wolfe's first published poem; though it was not indicative of the future Thomas Wolfe,¹²³ it did summarize the image many students had of "A Field in Flanders:"¹²⁴

The low, grey clouds are drifting 'cross the sky,
While here and there the little smoke puffs break,
And now and then the shrapnel bursts on high,
And growling guns their mighty thunder make.
A war-ripped field,---with what a tale to tell!
A tale to cause the souls of kings to quake,
For here, within a smoking bloody, Hell,
Ten million risk their lives for Freedom's sake.
And to the right a ruined village burns,
And to the left a wood its secrets hold,
But in the gutted field the plowshare turns
A grinning skull which sneers its message bold.

In the December issue of the Magazine, Wolfe's verse contribution "To France" was startlingly similar in spirit and thesis to the poem,

¹²¹Ibid., XXXVII (January, 1918), 230; see also University Alumni Review, VI (June, 1918), 227.

¹²²Elizabeth Nowell, Thomas Wolfe, A Biography (New York, 1960), p. 39.

¹²³Agatha Boyd Adams, "Thomas Wolfe: Carolina Student, A Brief Biography," The University of North Carolina Extension Publication, XV (Chapel Hill, 1950), 29, hereinafter cited as Adams, "Thomas Wolfe: Carolina Student."

¹²⁴Thomas Wolfe, "A Field in Flanders," The University Magazine, XXXV (November, 1917), 77.

"Renaissance," by J. N. Davis published two months earlier in the Wake Forest Student. Wolfe wrote:¹²⁵

O France, you truly are sublime, . . .
 When Huns came down with bloody hand,
 And left fair Belgium desolate,
 Up bravely from their peaceful land
 Rushed strong defenders of thy state.
 . . . Oh France, to you who never feared
 To you who nobly stood the test,
 With blazing eyes and plumes upreared,
 The Eagle comes from out the West.

"A Cullenden of Virginia," Wolfe's first published short story, appeared in the March, 1918 Magazine.¹²⁶ True to the climate of the times, in Wolfe's own words, it "was about the recreant son of an old family who recovers his courage and vindicates his tarnished honor in the last charge [on the Western Front¹²⁷] over the top that takes his life."¹²⁸

Other student-authors at Chapel Hill viewed the war in visionary terms and their writings revealed an effervescent patriotism. An editorial in the Thanksgiving, 1917 edition of The Tar Heel declared the time was appropriate to rededicate one's life to make the world "a better place in which to live."¹²⁹ And in The University Magazine a writer viewed "The War. . . [as] no useless, half-necessary struggle.

¹²⁵Ibid., XXXV (December, 1917), 165.

¹²⁶Adams, "Thomas Wolfe: Carolina Student," 30.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Nowell, Thomas Wolfe, A Biography, p. 39; see also Clayton Smith Papers, 1916-1918, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Several of the poems in the minute collection, which were written by Smith while a student at the University of North Carolina, 1916-1918, reveal Smith, like Wolfe, was often preoccupied with death. One untitled, undated, penciled poem concludes: "O Death, our keeper of the stillness/Death/Be thou but dimness drawn about our weary land, an unfelt breath/Too soft to outlive dawn. . . ."

¹²⁹The Tar Heel, November 24, 1917.

[but] It is fundamental. Autocracy and freedom have clashed. One or the other must die. Autocracy is doomed. We cannot grant it life."¹³⁰

In conclusion the author patriotically proclaimed: "Our soldiers at the front endeavoring 'to make the world safe for democracy,' will be heartened and fired with the spirit of a nation which seeks to 'win a victory for humanity, rather than a place in the sun for itself.'"¹³¹

The colleges and universities in the State were all swept along by the spirit of to "carry on," as one Tar Heel editor characterized the University work during the academic year, 1917-1918.¹³² By commencement, June, 1918, the high tide of patriotic enthusiasm which had flooded across the campuses a little over a year before had abated, and the "current of patriotic feeling, . . . [still] running swiftly, ran deeper."¹³³

¹³⁰Albert M. Coates, "The University Purpose in War Education," The University Magazine, VI (December, 1917), 179.

¹³¹Ibid., 183.

¹³²The Tar Heel, May 22, 1918; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 64. On January 22, 1918, President Edward K. Graham told the Board of Trustees that the response of the students to the war "was immediate, unreserved. . . .The war had revealed what perhaps needed no demonstration---that American college students are animated by a more...serious purpose than they have,...been credited with."

¹³³University Alumni Review, VI (June, 1918), 227; see also The News and Observer, June 5, 1918. Commencement exercises at East Carolina Teachers Training School were marked by "simplicity, seriousness and dignity as fits the times;" see also Ibid., June 6, 1918. "Beneath the apparent stream of happiness and gaiety [among graduates and guests attending graduating exercises at the University of North Carolina] . . . a strong undertow of seriousness. . . [was also noticeable]." And at Trinity College one of the closing events of the 1918 commencement was the lowering of the flag during the quiet and serious moments attending sunset.

VIII

Summer, 1918 and the Coming of A New Order

The summer months of 1918 were not the traditional quiet, lazy holidays for large numbers of women college students in North Carolina. During the previous spring they had enlisted for a summer of volunteer work under the direction of Miss Minnie Jamison, State Secretary of College Volunteers.¹³⁴ The volunteers, Miss Jamison wrote in a circular sent to women college students July 17, 1918, would "release men from offices and stores to do farm work by filling their places with good work and patriotism."¹³⁵ By late August over two hundred young women representing Flora McDonald College, Greensboro College, State Normal and Industrial College, Lenoir College, Meredith College, Peace Institute, and St. Mary's School, had picked cotton and performed other field-hand work, aided the Red Cross, Food Administration and War Savings Stamp Campaign, cooperated with Negro college students in organizing "back yard garden clubs" among Negro women in settlements of eighteen North Carolina cities, conducted patriotic meetings, canned large quantities of food, served in the Motor Corps, and assisted in various other capacities.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Joseph Hyde Pratt, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense," (Unpublished three volume work, State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina), II, 371, hereinafter cited as Pratt, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense."

¹³⁵ Ibid., 273.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 275-281.

As the summer days swiftly slipped away, college students across the state, though enjoying their patriotic work and military instruction,¹³⁷ began laying plans for the coming academic year. College and university officials as well met to discuss curriculums and a myriad of other details related to the opening of their institutions. On August 27, 1918, in Governor Thomas Walter Bickett's office, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina assembled at the request of President Edward K. Graham. Dr. Graham opened the meeting by stating he had called the Board together in order to present to the members the federal government's plan for utilizing the university facilities to train students for military service. He pointed out that the student Army Training Corps plans were conceived before the draft age was lowered to eighteen. The SATC had been instituted "to avoid the indiscriminate volunteering of college students below the draft age. . . , and to train under direct government supervision the men needed for officers and for other special technical service. . . ."¹³⁸ He

¹³⁷Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918), pp. 170-171; see also The News and Observer, February 17, 1918. Nearly 200 male students, ages sixteen to twenty, attended a six-weeks military training camp at Bingham Heights, Asheville, North Carolina. Directed by Captain J. Stuart Allen, the camp stressed physical training and military drill.

¹³⁸Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 101; see also Parke Rexford Kolbe, The Colleges in Wartime and After (New York, 1919), pp. 70-72, 269, hereinafter cited as Kolbe, Colleges in Wartime. In May, 1918 the War Department's Committee on Education had outlined a plan for the "comprehensive military training. . . /of/ college students." However, the extension of the draft age to include men as young as eighteen in August, 1918, necessitated a revision of the initial War Department plans for a Student Army Training Corps. See also Appendix III of Kolbe's, Colleges in Wartime, "Special Regulations" of the SATC; under "General Principles: "The Students Army Training Corps is raised under the authority of the act of Congress, approved May 18, 1917, commonly known as the Selective Service Act, authorizing the President to increase temporarily the military establishment of the United States, as amended by the Act of August 31, 1918, and under General Order No. 79 of the War Department, dated August 24, 1918, as follows: "there shall be raised and maintained by VOLUNTARY INDUCTION AND DRAFT a Students' Army Training Corps."

emphasized that there were no provisions for exemption under the SATC and that the War Department's plan showed no favoritism, rather "now practically any young man, however poor can go to college. . . ." ¹³⁹

Graham also announced that Colonel G. W. S. Stevens, U. S. A., had been organizing during the previous weeks the training courses for the coming year; assisting him with the SATC plans were Captain J. Stuart Allen and Adjutant J. W. Whitfield. At the conclusion of the meeting the Executive Committee, by resolution, unanimously approved of President Graham's appointment as Director of the SATC for Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. ¹⁴⁰

During the closing days of August, the Students' Army Training Corps plans were released to the press. Subsequently, they were heartily endorsed by educators in North Carolina. On August 31, the War Department issued a prepared statement summarizing the concept of the SATC. All young men planning to return to college were urged to proceed with their plans; if they desired and could qualify as a high school graduate, were eighteen or over, on October 1, 1918, they could be inducted into the SATC. Upon induction, the students would be regarded as active duty troops receiving private's pay of \$30.00 per month; also board, quarters, clothing and tuition would be paid by the government. The student-soldiers would undergo rigorous military training, liable at any moment for call under the age extension of the Selective Service Act. In conclusion, the War Department's Committee on Education and Special Training

¹³⁹Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, pp. 101-103.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.; see also The News and Observer, August 28, 1918.

in their prepared release stated that grammar school graduates would be eligible to enroll in vocational training units of the SATC and would have an equal opportunity to train as officers.¹⁴¹

Editorially, The News and Observer noted that presidents of colleges throughout the state stood solidly behind the government's plan for the wartime use of their educational plants. The writer emphasized that the SATC in no way violated "the fundamental American doctrine of equal rights to all and special privileges to none."¹⁴² As if to underscore this conclusion, several days later The News and Observer quoted Wake Forest President William L. Poteat's reaction to the SATC. To Poteat the government's plan revealed no "suggestion of exemption or favoritism."¹⁴³ Obviously President Poteat was impressed by the move since on August 31, 1918, he mailed out 3,000 letters to young men across the state outlining the SATC program and concluding that it was an opportunity which should attract any ambitious and patriotic student.¹⁴⁴

Other colleges in North Carolina named as Student Army Training Corps centers were quick to publish their new wartime rules. On September 1, 1918 an advertisement placed by Trinity College in The News and Observer announced the fall term would begin on September 25; the

¹⁴¹The New York Times, September 1, 1918; see also The News and Observer, September 2, 1918.

¹⁴²The News and Observer, August 29, 1918.

¹⁴³Ibid., September 2, 1918.

¹⁴⁴President William Poteat, form letter August 31, 1917, North Carolina Council of Defense Papers, State Archives, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as North Carolina Council of Defense Papers; see also The News and Observer, September 2, 1918.

War Department telegram to President Few was reproduced-----"Your institution having satisfied the prescribed conditions, a unit of the students' army training corps will be established therein. . . ." ¹⁴⁵ On September 1, a supplement to the Alumni News of North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering announced that the A & E regiment would be incorporated into the Student Army Training Corps. Registrar E. B. Owen, noted that any young man in North Carolina meeting academic and physical requirements, could receive an expense paid education until he was called to duty. ¹⁴⁶ By September 15, 1918, Davidson, Lenoir College, Elon, and the Agricultural and Technical College of Greensboro announced they had been designated as SATC centers. Eight colleges and universities in North Carolina now planned to receive the student-soldiers. ¹⁴⁷

IX

Dissenting Opinions

Though North Carolina educators, trustee members and newspaper editors enthusiastically supported the Students' Army Training Corps, and praised its fairness, other influential citizens of the state registered dissenting opinions. Chief Justice Walter Clark of the Supreme Court of North Carolina expressed one minority viewpoint in an article

¹⁴⁵The News and Observer, September 1, 1918.

¹⁴⁶Alumni News, III (September 1, 1918).

¹⁴⁷The News and Observer, September 5, 6, 18; see also President R. L. Fritz, Lenoir College, to Edward Kidder Graham, September 13, 1918, University Papers; see also Kolbe, Colleges in Wartime, pp. 296, 302, 309. By November 15, 1918, Atlantic Christian College, Wilson; Biddle University, Charlotte; Catawba College, Newton; and Shaw University, Raleigh, were authorized SATC centers. This brought to twelve the number of colleges and universities in North Carolina participating in the War Department's program. The Agricultural and Technical College, Greensboro, was named only as a Vocational Training Center.

published in several of the State's leading newspapers on August 25, 1918. Entitled "Democracy In the Draft," the article denounced as undemocratic any proposal exempting college students under the Selective Service Act. After reading Judge Clark's statement, President Edward Kidder Graham, obviously distressed, composed a letter to the Chief Justice. Tactfully, Graham observed that evidently Clark did not understand the War Department's proposal since the SATC plans were anything but undemocratic, rather "they are the essence of democracy." Graham emphasized:

Not only will young men in college who do not demonstrate special fitness for special service be sent to camp as privates when their order numbers are reached; but young men in cantonments who show special fitness there will be sent to college for training that cannot be given in camp. Young men with a grammar school education may take advantage of this plan.

Further, Graham noted, that owing to the pressing need for ninety thousand officers by the spring of 1919 "any institution of, or for, the public that would accept exemption from fully sharing the high privileges of this task would lose and not save its life." Graham observed that "Editors, ministers and public spirited men and women of every sort can perform no higher service to the state and to her young men than by making clear to them the extraordinary opportunity thus presented." And in conclusion the President of the University of North Carolina hoped:¹⁴⁸

I trust you will see your way strongly to urge the young men of the state (particularly those without means) to get a clear view of the infinite value of the time that they have at their disposal and the deeper need of their giving all of their time and devoting their capacity to the best and completest preparation.

¹⁴⁸Edward Kidder Graham to Chief Justice Walter Clark, August 25, 1918, Walter Clark Papers, State Archives, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Clark Papers.

However, Clark, remaining unconvinced as to the democratic merits of the SATC, replied to Graham's letter on August 27, 1918. "To send to college for an indefinite period those who have a sufficient education to enter college will be a special privilege to a small class. . . ," Consequently, he believed: "The exemption of the better educated youths. . . , will. . . be a most dangerous experiment, [and] . . . a most serious error, for the industrial and working classes. . . will not stand for it."¹⁴⁹

President Graham's patience with the judicial patriarch was wearing thin. After receiving Judge Clark's brief of the twenty-seventh, he wrote to the Chief Justice that they were both in agreement on the point that college students should not be exempted. However, he emphasized that the SATC plan did not exempt or even "provisionally exempt" college students. Rather, Graham maintained, "They voluntarily induct themselves in the college training camps as the government urges them to do until it calls them." Graham, profoundly moved, concluded:¹⁵⁰

I deeply regret that you still find it necessary to put the colleges before the public in a light that does them a grave injustice, and to put me in the position of advocating an attitude absolutely at variance with my whole temperament and record, and thoroughly repulsive to my deepest instincts.

¹⁴⁹Walter Clark to Edward Kidder Graham, August 27, 1918, University Papers; see also Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 89. Dr. J. J. Taylor, "one of the leading Baptist ministers in the state", also opposed the SATC. Dr. Taylor believed establishment of the SATC at Wake Forest College "would be a violation of the Baptist principle of separation of Church and state."

¹⁵⁰Edward Kidder Graham to Walter Clark, August 28, 1918, University Papers; see also The News and Observer, August 28, 1918. An open letter by President Graham replied to the August 25 article by Judge Clark. Judge Clark's answer to Graham's reply was also printed.

The "fighting judge" remained adamant. On August 29, he wrote to President Graham: "I have no doubt that you are sincere in thinking that your proposition does not involve an exemption and discrimination in favor of college students. I am equally clear that it does." Judge Clark reiterated his argument that the SATC plans favored the better educated youths and too, public money had not been appropriated for college tuitions, but for drilling and training soldiers. The aged Justice wrote: "Having been a witness to the class discrimination which caused such serious disorganization in the Confederate Army, I do not think that the somewhat similar exemption in favor of the educated youths over their comrades will be prudent." He regretted differing with Graham, but Clark emphasized once more that the plan for conscripting the eighteen to twenty-one age group was not for the purpose of educating them at colleges, rather they were to be "taken from their homes and chosen pursuits by the great need of the country for men in the fighting line. . . . We need to make bombs and bomb throwers and not 'bomb proofs.'" ¹⁵¹

Publically, Governor Thomas Walter Bickett remained silent while University president and eminent judge waged their battle over the democratic principles underlying the SATC. However, on August 28 the Governor wired Provost Marshal Crowder and informed him that the War Department's proposal had generated strong feelings in the state. Governor Bickett's telegram indicated that he favored the position

¹⁵¹ Walter Clark to Edward Kidder Graham, August 29, 1918, Clark Papers.

maintained by Judge Clark. He concluded:¹⁵²

I think it is of the utmost importance for you to see to it students in colleges are just as liable to calls from local and district boards as any other class of peoples.

Three days later Governor Bickett wrote a lengthy letter to the Provost Marshal. He explained in detail the arguments advanced by President Graham and Judge Clark and once more expressed his own opinion. The Chief Justice of the state had voiced two attacks on the SATC, the Governor wrote, "contending that it is antipodes of Democracy," while the President of the state University had written articles "maintaining that it is the essence of Democracy." These conflicting views had created "considerable confusion in the public mind about just what is proposed." Then Governor Bickett concluded that an equitable plan would make:¹⁵³

every registrant subject to the call of local boards, and require him to be sent to the training camps whenever his number . . . was reached . . . I do not think that the mere fact that a man is in college ought to take him from under the jurisdiction of the local boards. . . I greatly fear that to do so would produce an immense amount of irritation in the administration of the selective draft law.

Even in October, 1918, conflicting opinions regarding the establishment of the SATC were still being aired. The University of North Carolina's Alumni Review of October, 1918, carried an article that outlined the operational plan of the SATC. Editors of the Review hoped it would counter the impression created among some alumni, "as Judge Walter

¹⁵²Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, August 28, 1918, Governor's Papers, State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Bickett Papers.

¹⁵³Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, August 31, 1918, Bickett Papers.

Clark and Captain Edmund Jones," that the SATC members were a privileged class since they circumvented the Selective Service Act. The article concluded that students who enrolled in the Corps actually accelerated their draft status and at Chapel Hill as elsewhere the Student Army Training Corps was as much a War Department camp as Camp Jackson.¹⁵⁴

Although the SATC plans were implemented, they remained unendorsed by some prominent North Carolina citizens. While educators continued to view the War Department's plan as "the essence of democracy," militantly opposing any dissenting viewpoint, the positions maintained by the venerable Judge Clark and Governor Bickett proved to be well taken. The SATC was to become a sanctuary for the academically able wherein they might avoid liability to the draft. This was to become starkly evident when demobilization of the SATC was initiated.

X

Enter the Rank and File

Publication of the government financed SATC plans and encouragement by educators induced college age youths, many with scanty preparation for college level studies and even less affluent financially, to apply for admission to universities and colleges throughout the state. Heads of the various institutions were deluged with letters of inquiry. An ambitious young man from Robersonville, North Carolina, wrote President Graham:¹⁵⁵

"I hereby make application to enter the Students Army Training Corps at

¹⁵⁴University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 3-4.

¹⁵⁵Durwood R. Everett to Edward Kidder Graham, August 28, 1918, University Papers.

the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C. immediately." He listed his age, 20 years, 10 months; educational background, completion of the 10th grade and a short course at Eastman's Business College; and present position, assistant cashier of the Bank of Robersonville. A letter from Mangum, North Carolina, written in sprawling script by an untutored hand, yet striking in sincerity, was received by President Graham. "I am boy 18 Wish to get in school I desire to be Dr Some day I had part High School educations Pleas send me applications blanks one for my self and one for friend boy"¹⁵⁶ As letters such as these continued to arrive at the University, President Graham predicted: "We are getting ready for the busiest year in our young lives over here. The University will be little short of a training camp itself in every particular."¹⁵⁷

The prediction of President Graham was applicable to other institutions across the state. The largest class in the history of the State College of Agriculture and Engineering entered on opening day September 18, 1918. Many others had to be denied entrance---the 849 students that enrolled were selected on the basis of suitability for college level work and were selected from the hundreds of applicants desiring enlistment under SATC regulations.¹⁵⁸ The day following registration at State College

¹⁵⁶Alvis Manly Hadley to Edward Kidder Graham, September 1, 1918, University Papers.

¹⁵⁷Edward Kidder Graham to Lt. Elliott Cooper, August 29, 1918, University Papers.

¹⁵⁸Alumni News, IV (October 1, 1918), 4. Correspondence relative to enrollment in the SATC flowed into college officials at the rate of 300-400 letters per day---200-300 letters per day in excess of the usual correspondence during the fall registration period; see also The News and Observer, September 19, 1918.

of Agriculture and Engineering Elon reported student enrollment for the academic year 1918-1919 would exceed the record number set during the 1917-1918 session. The problem of dormitory space was so acute that students had to live in houses in the community and nearly a hundred were refused admission because quarters were unavailable. College officials queried reported they had expected large numbers of male students to take advantage of the SATC program; however, they were at a loss to explain the increased number of female applicants.¹⁵⁹ Wake Forest College also established a record on opening day September 24, 1918. Among the 382 students enrolled, the freshman class was the largest in the college's history.¹⁶⁰ Like the predominantly male institutions, the women's colleges in the state, St. Mary's, Meredith and Peace, counted the largest number of students in attendance since their founding. At Meredith and Peace, the faculties moved off campus to free dormitory space for the incoming waves of students.¹⁶¹

XI

"The Old Order Changeth"

President Edward Kidder Graham in opening the 124th session of the

¹⁵⁹The News and Observer, September 22, 1918.

¹⁶⁰Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 92; see also Lingle, Memories of Davidson College, p. 106. Davidson College appeared to be the only school in the state registering a smaller student body than the 1917-1918 year; 321 had enrolled for the 1917-1918 session, however, only 301 registered for the 1918-1919 academic year; see also The Tar Heel October 9, 1918. The University of North Carolina by early October enrolled more students, 1,075, than were registered 1917-1918, yet graduate school enrollment decreased; and the entire student body was reduced below the level of the 1916-1917 year. Women students, numbering 46, were the largest number ever enrolled on campus; see also The News and Observer, September 26, 1918.

¹⁶¹The News and Observer, September 3, 1918.

University of North Carolina observed the University was the "same old institution in the old role, but with a new task to perform."¹⁶² This new task for the faculty at Chapel Hill and other SATC centers throughout the state was to educate the student-soldier. Their job began formally on October 1, 1918.

Lively bugle notes sounded "Colors;" the Stars and Stripes fluttered in the faintest breeze as it was run aloft; nearly 150,000 student voices pledged allegiance across the nation at high noon, the first day of October, 1918; in a matter of minutes the formal induction services for members of the eight SATC units in North Carolina had been completed. At Wake Forest College Lieutenant Raymond M. Demere, Commandant of the College's SATC, read the War Department's general orders of the day.¹⁶³ to the 235 inductees.¹⁶⁴ To the men clustered about the State College of Agriculture and Engineering's flag pole, President W. C. Riddick admonished the new student-soldiers to remember the noble record of the men who had preceded them; Dr. Riddick closed

¹⁶²The Tar Heel, October 2, 1918; see also The News and Observer, September 28, 1918.

¹⁶³The News and Observer, October 2, 1918.

¹⁶⁴Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 92.

by saying he expected the men to live up to the record of their predecessors.¹⁶⁵ At Davidson College 233 students became student-soldiers;¹⁶⁶ and at Chapel Hill 650 newly-created members of the nation's fighting force heard President Graham;¹⁶⁷

the heroes of freedom. . . of Thermoplae, of Runnymede, of Bunker Hill. . . give to us. . . their benediction, as we take from their hands the torch of the eternal task, and 'carry on' to a new and greater victory.

The spirit of this campus, the spirit of our State. . . assure to us the continuing courage and complete devotion that will bring to a glorious fulfillment the noblest adventure that ever called to the aspiring spirit of youth.

¹⁶⁵The News and Observer, October 2, 1918. Special induction services were scheduled for a future date for those currently bed-ridden by the Spanish influenza. During the fall months of 1918 an influenza epidemic besieged the United States. The flu attacked suddenly and without warning. At Wake Forest College, before registration day had ended, September 24, 1918, the college hospital was crowded to capacity with flu patients. More than 250 men were felled by the influenza at Davidson College and classes were suspended for three weeks. By October 23, three deaths had occurred from the flu at the University of North Carolina. As the epidemic subsided at Chapel Hill, President Edward Kidder Graham, ill only a few days, succumbed, October 26, 1918, due to complications of pneumonia following an influenza attack. The entire University was plunged into mourning. On October 31, 1918, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina unanimously elected Professor Marvin H. Stacy as Chairman of the Faculty to carry out the duties of the office of the President. Several weeks later Professor Stacy also became a victim of the flu; see also ibid., September 14, 1918; see also Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 95; see also Lingle, Memories of Davidson College, p. 106; see also The News and Observer, October 27, 28, 29, 1918; see also Edward Kidder Graham Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; see also The Tar Heel, October 30, 1918; see also Trustee Minutes, 1917-1924, p. 107.

¹⁶⁶Lingle, Memories of Davidson College, pp. 106-107.

¹⁶⁷University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 37.

The "new Order" had come to the Students' Army Training Corps centers throughout North Carolina. At Davidson College "tin-Gods", regular army officers detailed by the War Department, assumed command of the student soldiers as well as the college facilities until the Armistice was signed.¹⁶⁸ The nearly 600 members of the SATC at the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, Raleigh, by early October were becoming conditioned to the restrictions imposed by their Commandant, Major Hulvey.¹⁶⁹ At Wake Forest College the Corps members by October 2, 1918 were following a strict routine prescribed by 1st Lieutenant Raymond Demere. Commandant Demere, assisted by Lieutenants Collom, Holman and Buchans, had divided the student-warriors into four companies of over 60 men each; issued them cots, blankets, mattresses and other gear; converted the dormitories into barracks and the gymnasium into a mess hall.¹⁷⁰

The University of North Carolina's student newspaper proclaimed in its initial issue for the collegiate year 1918-1919: "University Virtually Converted into a Government Camp;" an editorial writer admonished the new men to uphold the traditions of Chapel Hill and the spirit of those who before them had responded to their country's call, going "gladly, with the light of faith in their eyes and undying courage in their hearts. . . ."¹⁷¹ A second editorial observed though great

¹⁶⁸Lingle, Memories of Davidson College, p. 106.

¹⁶⁹Alumni News, IV (October 1, 1918), 4.

¹⁷⁰Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 91. One of the most difficult adjustments the faculty had to make was remembering to return the salute of the SATC members; see also The News and Observer, October 2, 1918.

¹⁷¹The Tar Heel, October 2, 1918.

changes had been wrought, "Carolina lives---strong, vital, vibrant, true. . . a glorious spirit can never die."¹⁷²

Student Army Training Corps members quickly acclimated themselves to the "new order;" with the zest and enthusiasm which had accompanied their participation in the Student Battalion nearly seventeen months earlier, the University men now followed the strict military routine imposed by their commandant Lt. Col. G. W. S. Stevens.¹⁷³ Colonel Stevens established his Headquarters in the Sigma Chi House, and one writer has asserted that he not only took charge of the SATC but of the entire University.¹⁷⁴ Ten commissioned officers were added to the military staff to assist Commandant Stevens in directing the student-soldiers.¹⁷⁵ Under their aegis one of the mottoes of the University became "Early to bed and early to rise," since first call came at 6:00 a.m., followed by reveille at 6:15, breakfast at 6:30; physical exercise at 7:15; academic work 8:00-12:15; dinner 12:30; extended academic work 1:30 to 2:30 [excepting Saturdays]; academic work and military instruction 2:35 to 3:35; military instruction 4:00 to 6:00; supper 6:15; study call 7:30; and taps at 10:00 p.m.¹⁷⁶ The dormitories,

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 38; see also The Tar Heel, October 9, 1918. Due to poor health and fearing the flu, Col. Stevens resigned as Commandant during the 1st week in October. He was replaced by Captain H. C. Helmer, U. S. Infantry.

¹⁷⁴Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 6.

¹⁷⁵The News and Observer, September 30, 1918. The addition of Lieutenants, C. P. Round, D. G. Lambert, Raymond Martin, Andrew Bell, H. B. Linbough, John H. Winslow, C. W. Robinson, P. M. Albion, R. A. Roberts and C. A. Joyce, brought the military staff to fourteen.

¹⁷⁶The News and Observer, September 30, 1918; see also University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 6; see also The Tar Heel, October 23, 1918.

quartering four companies of 160 men each, four to a room, were hardly distinguishable from the barrack conditions found on any army post; Swain Hall was designated the "mess hall," where student "kitchen police" assisted in preparation of the food. During "chow time" strict military discipline was enforced. Student military police patrolled the streets of Chapel Hill, insuring that each Corps member leaving the "post" had appropriate credentials.¹⁷⁷ The non-SATC unit, composed of students ineligible for enrollment under SATC regulations, was also subject to the strict discipline imposed on the regulars. This organization was headed by Captain J. Stuart Allen assisted by Adjutant J. V. Whitfield, Professor J. M. Booker, and student captains S. C. Ogburn and A. H. Pell.¹⁷⁸

In addition to the vocational and collegiate sections of the SATC, the University of North Carolina became one of the twelve institutions in the United States to train students for service with the Marine Corps. A Naval section of the SATC, limited to fifty men, was also established at the University.¹⁷⁹ These two branches of SATC were housed in the Battle-Vance-Pettigrew Dormitory; 1st Lieutenant R. E. Boyd and Sergeant J. S. Stump headed the Marine Corps unit, and Ensigns W. J. Skelton and

¹⁷⁷ University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 6; see also The News and Observer, October 6, 1918; see also University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 39-40.

¹⁷⁸ The News and Observer, October 6, 1918; see also University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 39.

¹⁷⁹ University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 7. The Marine section's quota was set at one hundred men.

F. W. Rice of the Naval Mobilization Station in Raleigh made periodic inspections of the Naval unit.¹⁸⁰

Militarily oriented, the curriculum at the University of North Carolina was so greatly revised that the catalogue, the usual guide for entering students, was abandoned.¹⁸¹ A basic course for all student-soldiers, and taught at all SATC centers in the country, was "Issues of the War." As a three hour recitation course, the subject matter dealt with the reasons why nations were currently embroiled in a World War.¹⁸² In addition, SATC members, except engineering and medical students, selected from a number of "restricted electives" their remaining eleven to twelve required hours. The three age groups; twenty year olds taking a twelve week course; nineteen year olds, registered for a twenty-four week course; and the eighteen year old group, enrolled in the thirty-six weeks course, selected from such courses as military French or German, topography, gas and airplane engines, surveying, radio, and several others essential in the training of officers.¹⁸³

By late October, uniforms, blankets, underclothes, shoes and other personal gear had been issued to the student-soldiers. Two hundred Winchester rifles were distributed equally among the four companies by October 30, 1918, and three hundred Russian rifles were expected within

¹⁸⁰University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 39.

¹⁸¹Ibid., VII (October, 1918), 3; see also Hutchinson, "Carolina Goes to War," 6.

¹⁸²War Department Committee on Education and Special Training, memorandum to: Institutions where Units of the SATC Located, September 10, 1918, University Papers; see also University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 5; see also The Tar Heel, October 2, 1918.

¹⁸³University Alumni Review, VII (October, 1918), 5.

several days.¹⁸⁴ Accompanying issue of the weapons, discipline became more rigid and sentinal duty was begun during drill hours.¹⁸⁵ Typical of the duties of the Officer of the Day in the waning days of October as well as the type of details performed by student companies are revealed in a memo to 2nd Lt. C. A. Joyner, of Co. A, OD for October 26, 1918:¹⁸⁶

1. Inspect mess at each meal.
 2. Receive reports from Company Commanders at Retreat.
 3. Inspect barracks and areas.
 4. Make memorandum report to Headquarters at close of day.
 5. Yours [sic] duties [sic] begin from retreat October 26 [sic] 1918 and end with retreat October 27 [sic] 1918.
 6. See that men are not in town without passes.
- [The details assigned to Company A for October 27, 1918 were also enumerated on the memorandum.]
1. Military Police; 1 corporal and 2 privates.
 2. Orderly for Headquarters.
 3. Kitchen Police; 3 corporals; 21 privates; 6 of these pvt. remain on all day.
 4. Any other details authorized by Commanding Officer.

Regardless of the mailed-fist discipline and the stultifying routine instituted by the military regime, the spirit of the student-warriors remained at a high level. In the "class-room, [on the] drill field and barracks," the students were observed as being "decidedly in earnest."¹⁸⁷ An editorial writer in the University newspaper noted that SATC members, infused with an enthusiasm for attaining their goal, a commission in the regular army, were taking meticulous care of their uniforms and when

¹⁸⁴The Tar Heel, October 16, 23, 30, 1918.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., October 30, 1918.

¹⁸⁶A. M. Bell to C. A. Joyner, October 26, 1918, University Papers.

¹⁸⁷University Alumni Review, VII (November, 1918), 38.

wearing the SATC garb, "carry themselves with pride." The author concluded that the SATC had created a new and better order at the University, it was visible in every student.¹⁸⁸

XII

The "New Order" Endeth: A Return to the Old?

A gray, cool dawn spread across the campuses of North Carolina. Students throughout the state, like the girls at St. Mary's, pulled their bed-covers up closer as they turned to capture several more hours of sleep before rising to face their wartime classes. It was November 11, 1918. Then a girl at St. Mary's School sat up awake, then another, there were factory whistles in the morning air, then pealing bells. Other students were roused. From their windows they could see automobiles, horns blaring, speeding down Hillsboro Street; they noted people on the sidewalks gesturing, talking excitedly in clusters. Girls spilled from the dormitories; now they heard the newsboys' joyous cries, barking the morning edition. The girls crowded about the main building, some blanket wrapped, hushed. Others beat on dust-pans, shouting; a snake dance was exuberantly performed. When St. Mary's staff members raised the flag, a brilliant sun broke over the horizon ushering in a new day. Saluting, the girls' straining voices rent the morning air with the "Star Spangled Banner," Armistice Day had arrived.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸The Tar Heel, October 16, 30, 1918. When Governor Thomas W. Bickett reviewed the SATC following the funeral of President Graham, he commented that the discipline and soldier-like qualities displayed by the students were impressive.

¹⁸⁹Salley, Life at St. Mary's, pp. 170-172.

At the University of North Carolina in late November loud cheers greeted the news that the War Department had authorized the demobilization of the Students' Army Training Corps.¹⁹⁰ Editorial writers for student publications, previously lavish in their praise of the SATC, quickly reversed their opinion. A Tar Heel journalist commented that the demobilization was "good news" since the SATC had outlived its usefulness.¹⁹¹ The December issue of the North Carolina A & E Alumni News observed that the SATC had become an institution of the past, although it did concede participants in the Student Corps had learned discipline and received useful training.¹⁹² In February, 1919, a writer in the Wake Forest Student vehemently attacked the SATC. He wrote that the Corps had served its purpose and "as a peace project it smacks of militarism. . . [the SATC] must find its way to the autocratic junk pile with Kultur and other remnants of Germanic imperialism."¹⁹³

Demobilization of the SATC units on campuses across the state began on December 4. Several days before the phase-out process began, a writer in the Tar Heel pleaded for the "new men" to remain in college since they would be needed as "builders of this great new age."¹⁹⁴ But to many SATC members at the University and other colleges in the state, the plea was wasted print. Nearly one-half of the student-soldiers at

¹⁹⁰War Department Telegram, November 26, 1918, to President, University of North Carolina, University Papers; see also The Tar Heel, November 29, 1918.

¹⁹¹The Tar Heel, November 29, 1918.

¹⁹²Alumni News, II (December 1, 1918), 1.

¹⁹³Wake Forest Student, XXXIX (February, 1919), 17-18.

¹⁹⁴The Tar Heel, November 29, 1918.

Wake Forest left the college during the first two weeks in December. The SATC members had only one thought, "discharge." They desired no credit for the seven weeks of study.¹⁹⁵

As Judge Walter Clark and Governor Thomas Walter Bickett had warned, the college campuses under the SATC plans had become "bomb proof" sanctuaries for the academically qualified. Their "less fortunate" contemporaries, drafted under the age extensions of the "New Man-Power Act," were entrained for the front to become the "bomb-throwers." Consequently, when plans for demobilization of the SATC were launched, the draft saving features of the Student Corps were no longer needed. Student editors, like their classmates and college officials, adjudged the War Department's innovation to have reached the end of its usefulness. Now that a haven for the academically superior students was unnecessary, the writers turned their pens on the SATC in condemnation. And when the large number of departing students upon demobilization of the SATC is considered, obviously the draft shy were elated to leave the campus shelter which had protected them from conscription.

In the February, 1919, edition of the Wake Forest Student one E. J. Trueblood published "Democracy Triumphant;"¹⁹⁶

Four years and more the brutal hun held sway;
Midst foul intrigue and hideous crimes galore;
He reigns no more.
The Righteous powers of earth in stern array
Struck down the brute, and down he must remain---
In endless pain

¹⁹⁵ Paschal, History of Wake Forest College, III, 93.

¹⁹⁶ Wake Forest Student, XXXIX (February, 1919), 1.

Brave souls arose to quench the demon's power; . . .
Like heroes true they stood, nor did they cower.
. . .The living must be true to those who died;
Democracy and truth must have their birth
Throughout the earth
The door to service now is opened wide;
We must respond to the compelling strain,
Or be profane.

The words of the student editors revealed that the prejudices of the war years and the utopian dreams might spill over into peace time. Their writings and the overt reactions of college students to demobilization exhibited a longing for normalcy and return to the non-militaristic, uncomplicated and leisurely days that prevailed before Armageddon had come to the campuses.

CHAPTER II

CONSCRIPTION COMES TO THE "RANK AND FILE"

A writer in the February, 1919 edition of The Wake Forest Student observed that college students during the war years had ennobled their class by unhesitatingly answering the call to battle for humanity. The college men had enthusiastically demonstrated they were willing to depart for the fields in Flanders to share the trials of combat with their "less fortunate companions in arms."¹ Conversely then how did the "less fortunate" or the "rank and file" in North Carolina respond to the summon for service in 1917-1918? What was the public's opinion of the War Department plans for raising an army by conscription? Were the opinions reflected in the actions of the drafted? If departure for college or university campuses in September, 1918, were equivalent for many college students to entrainment for regular army camps, what machinery was constructed in North Carolina to induct and entrain thousands of the "rank and file?" And finally, if college administrators exhibited a crusading spirit and effervescent patriotism in exhorting students to "carry on," did state executives as Governor Thomas Walter Bickett display a similar zeal in prosecuting the government's plans under the Selective Service Act?

¹Re. Q., "Sketch of the S. A. T. C. at Wake Forest," Wake Forest Student, XXXIX (February, 1919), 18.

I

"To Increase the Military. . . of the United States."

"SECRETARY BAKER URGES QUICK PASSAGE OF BILL FOR ARMY OF MILLION," a bold, black, streamer headline announced in the Raleigh News and Observer on April 8, 1917. The lead story declared that Secretary of War Newton Baker had appeared before an executive session of the House Military Affairs Committee, April 7, and presented the Wilson administration's plans for raising a 1,000,000 man army by conscription.² Congressional committees in House and Senate immediately launched hearings on the proposed "Act to Authorize the President to Increase Temporarily the Military Establishment of the United States."³

While members of the Congressional Committees argued over selective service, citizens in North Carolina, also divided on the issue, expressed their feelings through letters to their congressmen, newspaper editorials, letters to editors, and public statements. Representative Edwin Yates Webb of Shelby was advised by a group of Charlotte residents to "do all you can to keep our men from going to France or anywhere away from our borders."⁴ On April 12, Dr. H. Q. Alexander, President of the North Carolina Farmers' Union, and E. C. Faires wired Congressman Webb from Raleigh: "Conscription undemocratic unamerican. If American Homes

²The News and Observer, April 8, 1917; see also Major General E. H. Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service (New York, 1920), p. 104, hereinafter cited as Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service.

³Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p/ 104.

⁴E. R. Cannon to Edwin Yates Webb, April 11-13, 1917, Webb Papers.

and Institutions were threatened patriotic Americans would respond to call without conscription. . . ." ⁵ Proponents of the draft were also active correspondents. From Gastonia one of Edwin Yates Webb's constituents wrote: "it seems to me imperative that the selective conscription plan of President Wilson's be passed immediately." ⁶ L. H. Balthis a cotton broker penned: "Trusting that you will support our President's plans in toto. . . ;" and he observed that his views were shared by a large number of people in Cleveland, Gaston, and Mecklenburg counties. ⁷

Editorial writers throughout North Carolina emphasized that the volunteer plan was inadequate, only a draft could satisfy the Army's request for a million men. A writer in The Morning Star of Wilmington observed that in view of the emergency, members of the House should not waste time offering opposition to the Selective Service Bill. The measure should be implemented immediately since it was the only solution for raising a sizeable army. ⁸ "Shall it be Conscription?" asked an editor of The Asheville Times. "If conscription is determined upon, President Wilson will find that the people of the country are behind him. . . ," the newsman concluded. ⁹ Several days later an editor of The

⁵H. Q. Alexander and E. C. Faires to Edwin Yates Webb, April 12, 1917, Webb Papers.

⁶Letter to Edwin Yates Webb, April 16, 1917, Webb Papers.

⁷L. H. Balthis to Edwin Yates Webb, April 11-13, 1917, Webb Papers.

⁸The Morning Star (Wilmington), April 13, 1917, hereinafter cited as The Morning Star.

⁹The Times (Asheville), April 17, 1917, hereinafter cited as The Times.

Times was more emphatic: "The battle is forced on us. . . The voluntary idea will not do. . . and when the selective service bill is passed," the optimistic journalist wrote, "everyone must do his bit. . . There must be no slackers. . . ." ¹⁰ The pro-Wilson and influential capitol city paper, The News and Observer, editorialized that volunteer service, though appealing to the imagination, was not "just," for only the patriotic citizen answered the call while "slackers" were reluctant to enlist. Thus the selective service bill was necessary to select the best for the field while retaining those needed on the home front. ¹¹ "Conscription takes rich and poor alike, hence it is just," wrote a member of The Charlotte Daily Observer staff. The journalist regretted that some congressmen, allegedly for self-aggrandizement, were delaying passage of the administration draft measure. ¹²

As a spirited, often vicious debate lengthened in the Senate and House Military Affairs Committees, and proposals for re-writing the draft

¹⁰ Ibid., April 20, 1917.

¹¹ The News and Observer, April 17, 1917.

¹² Charlotte Daily Observer, April 19, 1917. The writer, however, did not express the opinion of all members of the Charlotte Daily Observer's staff. M. B. Hood, a reporter with the Charlotte paper wrote to Representative Claude Kitchin of North Carolina's Second Congressional District on April 26, 1917. Hood believed an opportunity should be provided for "raising a volunteer contingent before conscription is resorted to." He cautioned Kitchin not "to be influenced by the influences that are driving us toward the very Prussianism we are about to fight;" see M. B. Hood to Claude Kitchin, April 26, 1917, Claude Kitchin Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Kitchin Papers.

plan were offered,¹³ the views of citizens for and against conscription became increasingly outspoken. Governor Thomas Walter Bickett vowed:¹⁴

Equal rights entail equal duties, but men there be who boldly assert their rights and shrewdly forget their duties--- the volunteer system of raising an army works a tragic discrimination against manhood. The flower of our youth present their bodies as a living sacrifice to their country, while baser breeds remain at home. . . . The burning injustice of such a system is surpassed only by its nauseating stupidity. Men should be selected for service upon the basis of natural fitness. . . .

The News and Observer urged Congress to enact a draft law immediately; a staff member wrote that he had "been unable to find any popular opposition to a selective conscription method of raising the needed military."¹⁵ However, an attorney of Gastonia, North Carolina, William H. Lewis, writing to Congressman Claude Kitchin on April 19, believed: "Big newsspppers. . . are misrepresenting the facts. They are representing the 'Big Interests' and misrepresenting the masses of the people, when they report the people favor conscription." Further, Lewis declared, "conscription under America's democratic form of government is not right" and he warned Representative Kitchin if any man "tells you that form of 'conscription' can be justified. . . he misrepresents the facts. He is representing the 'Big Interests' and misrepresenting the interests of the masses of our people." He cautioned Kitchin against the man who favors drafting and sending the conscript "across the ocean, to be butchered in a foreign country, all, by force and against their

¹³Crowder, The Sprit of Selective Service; see also The News and Observer, April 17, 1917.

¹⁴The News and Observer, April 19, 1917.

¹⁵Ibid.

will, such an [sic] one is no friend to justice or to humanity, and does not believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ." Bringing his diatribe to a conclusion he wrote that only a "home-guard" was necessary----"I see hundreds of people every day. . ." and besides "the special interests" groups, none favored conscription. He summarized his argument by asserting: "Patriotism is one thing. Conscribing an army to fight in a foreign country is quite another. Despotism is one thing. A free government is quite another."¹⁶

A "General Evangelist" expressed his observations of the people's reaction to the conscription proposal in a letter to representatives Webb and Kitchin. The reverend, as did attorney Lewis, believed the state newspapers were "grossly" misrepresenting the will of the masses; he had heard the concept of conscription was depressing citizens across the state----some people were even "losing their minds."¹⁷

The volume of correspondence to congressmen Kitchin and Webb increased as final drafts of the Selective Service Bill were prepared in the committees. One of Kitchin's supporters polled voters in the Second Congressional District on ". . .the method of raising an army and practically all are in favor of selective conscription at once."¹⁸ On April 21, Dr. H. Q. Alexander telegraphed another message to Representative Webb. In part he wired: ". . .I know sentiments of farmers better than

¹⁶William H. Lewis to "Our Senators and Representatives in Congress Assembled," April 19, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

¹⁷Reverend William Black to Edwin Yates Webb, April 17, 1917, Webb Papers.

¹⁸Dr. E. W. Lassiter to Claude Kitchin, April 19, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

newspapers this War unrighteous Conscription wrong."²⁰ However, Clarence Poe, respected editor of The Progressive Farmer, and acutely aware of the sentiment among the farm population, wrote Congressman Webb: "I am strongly in favor of the selective draft."²¹

After the Selective Service Bill came before the Committee of the Whole House, the overwhelming majority of letters and telegrams coming to the North Carolina congressmen favored the conscription measure. Of nineteen telegrams Congressman Edwin Y. Webb received on April 26, 1917, from such towns as Newton, Shelby, Marshall, Charlotte, Lincolnton, Gastonia, Morganton, Salisbury and Burnsville, only two opposed the draft bill.²² On the eve of the House and Senate vote on the Selective Service Bill, Henry Groves Connor, Jr., an attorney in Wilson, wrote to Representative Claude Kitchin. Connor interpreted the general trend of state-wide opinion on conscription. Many of the people he contacted initially opposed the draft bill, Connor wrote. But within the "past few weeks," after discussing the proposed act with people in all walks of life, he found "almost without exception. . . [they] are in favor of this measure."²³

The vote on the Selective Service Bill came in the Senate and House on April 28, 1917. By a vote of 81-8 the Senate voted for the Kahn

²⁰H. Q. Alexander to Edwin Yates Webb, April 21, 1917, Webb Papers.

²¹Clarence Poe to Edwin Yates Webb, April 27, 1917, Webb Papers.

²²Telegrams to Edwin Yates Webb, April 26, 1917, Webb Papers.

²³Henry Groves Connor, Jr. to Claude Kitchin, April 27, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

Amendment which eliminated the volunteer provision added in committee. North Carolina senators, Furnifold M. Simmons and Lee S. Overman, voted with the majority.²⁴ In the House three hundred and thirteen "yeas" buried the one hundred and nine "noes" to pass the Kahn Amendment. However, North Carolina's House delegation divided six to three on the vote.²⁵ Opposing the Kahn measure, tantamount to opposing the draft bill itself, were representatives Edward M. Pou of Smithfield, Robert L. Doughton of Laurel Springs, and George E. Hood, of Goldsboro.²⁶ Congressman Pou in expressing his reasons for voting "no" probably echoed his two colleagues. He declared that he was convinced sufficient volunteers could be raised without marshalling an army by conscription.²⁷

On May 17, the Senate by a vote of 65 to 8 approved the conference report which the House had endorsed on May 16. President Woodrow Wilson signed into law, May 18, 1917, the Selective Service Bill for "raising by selective conscription" 500,000 men from twenty-one to thirty years of age.²⁸

II

Appointing "the Strongest and Best Men. . ." Possible

When President Wilson signed the Selective Service Bill on the evening of May 18, he also issued a proclamation designating June 5, 1917,

²⁴Congressional Record, 65 Cong. 1st Sess., pp. 1500-1501.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 1555-1557; see also The News and Observer, April 29, 1917.

²⁶The News and Observer, April 29, 1917.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 113-115; see also The News and Observer, May 18, 1917.

as national registration day.²⁹ North Carolina Governor Thomas Walter Bickett was officially notified of the President's declaration by telegram. Provost Marshall General E. H. Crowder wired: "All persons between the ages of twenty-one and thirty. . .," with certain exceptions, would register between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., the first Tuesday in June in "the precincts where in they have their permanent homes." Provost Marshall Crowder's communication also instructed Governor Bickett to organize registration boards throughout the state. These local boards would act as the foundations of, and generators for, North Carolina's selective service machinery.³⁰

Governor Bickett moved swiftly to comply with Provost Marshall Crowder's instructions. Within twenty-four hours he had named a registration board for every county in the state and commissioned the county sheriff, clerk of the county court, and county physician to compose each board. These three officials were instructed to appoint the precinct registrars and to organize the registration machinery in each county. Since cities over 30,000 were to have separate registration boards, as specified by the Selective Service Bill, Governor Bickett notified the mayors of Wilmington, Charlotte and Winston-Salem to appoint boards for their cities. By May 20, the Governor had carried out his initial instructions in preparing for the first nation-wide registration day.³¹

²⁹The News and Observer, May 19, 1917.

³⁰General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, May 18, 1917, Bickett Papers.

³¹Thomas Walter Bickett to All Sheriffs, Court Clerks and County Physicians, May 19, 1917, Bickett Papers; see also The News and Observer, May 20, 1917; see also Virginia Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, May 21, 1917.

To complete the provisions of the draft bill, officials in every county and in each city over 30,000 had to be appointed to "pass upon and determine the relative rights of citizens affected by the terms of the Act."³² When Governor Bickett was instructed to appoint two citizens, who with registration board officials would form an exemption board, he hesitated. He notified General Crowder that it would be "extremely unfortunate" to have county sheriffs and clerks of county courts serving on exemption boards. Governor Bickett believed unfair practices would result since the county officials would be motivated by political expediency. Thus he urged the Provost Marshall to issue a general order "that sheriffs and county clerks be not named on local exemption boards."³³ Provost Marshall Crowder answered the Governor by telegram on May 29: "Exemption in matters that require functions of discretion will be left mainly to Superior Boards. . . ."³⁴ Although Governor Bickett's mental anxiety was not salved, he wired General Crowder: "the county boards of registration [will be designated] as local exemption boards."³⁵

North Carolina's chief executive remained convinced that the county official's decisions on exemption claims would be dictated by political motives. He reiterated his beliefs to Provost Marshall Crowder on May 31.

³²Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 124.

³³Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, May 28, 1917, Bickett Papers.

³⁴General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, May 29, 1917, Bickett Papers.

³⁵Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, May 29, 1917, Bickett Papers.

The Governor also asserted: "in some of the counties they [county officials] are violently opposed to the whole law and will be disposed to make every exemption possible."³⁶ Undoubtedly this was true in some areas of the state, but the Governor was stalling for time as well. He concluded his message by requesting a week's postponement in appointing local exemption boards. If the request were granted, he felt the extra time could be used to appoint "disinterested patriotic citizens. . . free from political considerations."³⁷ However, the only response Governor Bickett elicited from General Crowder was the Provost Marshal's telegram anxiously inquiring into the reports of "sporadic and widely scattered instances of activities of antiregistration influences. . ." in North Carolina. Crowder concluded his telegram by inquiring if Governor Bickett believed troops would be needed in his state on registration day.³⁸ The Governor hastily assured Secretary of War Newton Baker and Provost Marshal Crowder that no violence was anticipated and troops would not be necessary to insure registration in North Carolina.³⁹

With no other alternative, Governor Bickett complied with the instructions to establish exemption boards across the state. On June 2, Bickett blanketed the state with telegrams to leading citizens requesting they recommend to him from their locality "two intelligent patriotic

³⁶Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, May 31, 1917, Bickett Papers.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, May 31, 1917, Bickett Papers.

³⁹General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 3, 1917, Bickett Papers.

men who are in real sympathy with the Government in the prosecution of this war. . . ." These two men, with members of the local registration board, would compose the exemption boards in each community. Bickett closed his wire with words that reflected the gnawing worry plaguing him for weeks: "There must be no politics in these. . . [appointments]."⁴⁰ During the following days Bickett's office was swamped with telegrams and some letters commending citizens for appointment. Laudatory phrases were not infrequent in the communications---as in one attorney's recommendations for the Gates County Board:⁴¹ "The. . . men mentioned in my message. . . are. . . as good as can be found in this county, unbiased. . . loyal, patriotic and wholly in sympathy with the government." Other communications were more business-like. O. Max Gardner wired from Shelby, N. C.: "Recommend John F. Schenck Towndale and D. Z. Newton Shelby members exemption Board they will accept."⁴²

Throughout the month of June communications came in to Governor Bickett naming men for appointment to the exemption boards. Among letters the Governor perhaps read more than once was one from the United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina, W. C. Hammer. Mr. Hammer listed his board recommendations and then wrote: "conditions in Randolph County are such that the strongest and best men that can possibly be appointed should be on the exemption board. . . ."⁴³

⁴⁰Thomas Walter Bickett to "Leading Citizens," June 2, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁴¹Benjamin L. Banks, Jr. to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 3, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁴²O. Max Gardner to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 4, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁴³W. C. Hammer to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 6, 1917, Bickett Papers.

III

June 5, 1917---. . .Everything Passed off Nicely. . . ."

Young man: "Today is my day. . .America. . .I am yours. . .I ask nothing but the privilege of serving my country. . . ." So ran the monologue of the fictional "young man" whose words were printed in the center two columns of The News and Observer, June 5, 1917.⁴⁴ Few, perhaps, departed their homes to enroll for selective service that morning in early June in the dedicated spirit of the "young man." But North Carolina men between twenty-one and thirty years of age, white and Negro, and of every rank, appeared before their boards in great numbers. Registration exceeded by thousands the state quota of 190,857.⁴⁵

From early morning until evening in Asheville, seemingly endless files of Negro and white registrants were visible throughout the city. Over 5,000 enrolled in Asheville and Buncombe County.⁴⁶ In Winston-Salem the twenty-nine registrars and their assistants rapidly exhausted the supply of selective service identification cards and pasteboard substitutes were used. Before the day was over 5,161 young men had been enrolled.⁴⁷ At Charlotte, even those who were temporarily bedridden

⁴⁴The News and Observer, June 5, 1917.

⁴⁵Ibid., June 6, 1917; see also ibid., June 9, 1917. On June 5, 200,032 men registered for the draft in North Carolina.

⁴⁶The Times, June 6, 1917.

⁴⁷J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," pp. 13-17, Military Collection, World War I Papers, 1903-1933, V. Recruiting and Draft Boards in North Carolina, State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Military Collection, World War I.

sent their names in by friends or agents who acted in their behalf. To the hundreds of prospective draftees who appeared, a Khaki arm-band was awarded, signifying the wearer had enrolled for selective service. One reporter noted it was not unusual in Charlotte to see hats doffed when khaki-band wearers passed along the streets.⁴⁸ Deference was also paid in Wilmington to the men who proudly displayed white lapel badges upon which was printed, "I have registered," and an observer at the Wilmington wards noted a hearty cheerfulness in the air as the men enrolled.⁴⁹ In Elizabeth City no "slackers" were reported. The registrars in the city were overwhelmed by young men, Negro and white, who lined up together to register for service. As in Charlotte and Wilmington, women and young girls were present at the precincts to pin ribbons on the future soldiers. The men who enrolled became "Betsy's Braves," since these words were imprinted on their ribbons.⁵⁰ E. B. Ficklen, in rather flamboyant terms, commented on the reaction to registration in the Greenville area. The boys of Pitt County, he wrote: "With the love of home and patriotism and the love of right over wrong. . . have answered the call and stand ready to face the Great Would Be Ruler of the earth [Germany]. . ."⁵¹ Samuel L. Doshier, a lawyer of Manteo, North Carolina, serving as registrar in his precinct on June 5,

⁴⁸Charlotte Daily Observer, June 6, 1917.

⁴⁹The Morning Star, June 6, 1917.

⁵⁰Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, June 6, 1917.

⁵¹E. B. Ficklen to John Humphrey Small, June 5, 1917, John Humphrey Small Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Small Papers.

summarized the day in Manteo. However, his words could have been spoken by any registrar between his home and Murphy: "everything passed off nicely, there being no trouble at all. I think every person registered who was eligible under the law."⁵²

It was with obvious pride that Governor Bickett telegraphed Provost Marshal Crowder on June 6, 1917. With perhaps equal delight General Crowder read the wire: "[Complete] registration in North Carolina. . . . Not one trace of opposition or disturbance at any precinct in the State."⁵³

IV

A Final Rule for Exemption Boards

With registration completed, construction of the state's machinery for selection was now resumed along the lines specified by the War Department. Undoubtedly Governor Bickett was delighted when he was informed that the initial plans requiring registration board members to sit on exemption boards, would be abandoned. North Carolina's Chief Executive also may have reflected momentarily that his earlier telegrams to Provost Marshal General Crowder had influenced formulation of the new policy. The new ruling specified that personnel composing the exemption boards would be appointed by the Governor of each state

⁵²Samuel L. Doshier to John Humphrey Small, June 9, 1917, Small Papers.

⁵³Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, June 6, 1917, Bickett Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to all Sheriffs in North Carolina, June 11, 1917, Bickett Papers.

with the approval of President Wilson.⁵⁴

Governor Bickett lost no time in fulfilling the new law. On June 25 he wired three prominent citizens in each county and large city in North Carolina. His telegram informed the more than three hundred men that in accordance with the desires of the President of the United States, he had appointed them to serve as members of a three man board for their locality. This board would pass on all claims for draft exemption.⁵⁵ Several days later hundreds of telegrams of acceptance had arrived at Governor Bickett's desk. By the late afternoon of June 27, only four men had declined to serve as members of the local exemption boards.⁵⁶

"The honor and welfare of your state and nation rests in your hands," Governor Bickett wrote the one-hundred and seven local exemption

⁵⁴Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 126.

⁵⁵Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, June 26, 1917. A list of board members followed; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, June 25, 1917, Bickett Papers. Complying with the Provost Marshal's request of June 18, Governor Bickett recommended ten men for presidential appointment to a Western District and Eastern District Federal Exemption Board. The members of the two boards would decide on claims for exemptions on specified grounds as well as appeals from the local boards. Governor Bickett noted: "I recommend these men for this important service because I am satisfied that every one of them is a patriotic and loyal citizen, and will do his duty without fear and without favor;" see also General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, July 21, 1917, Bickett Papers. General Crowder notified Bickett that President Wilson had approved his appointments; see also Thomas Walter Bickett, telegrams to District Board Members, July 23, 1917, Bickett Papers. Governor Bickett informed the District Board members of their appointment and instructed them to convene on July 26, 1917 to take their oath of office and organize their respective boards.

⁵⁶The Weekly News and Observer, June 28, 1917. Citizens of Camden, Robeson, Union, and Wayne Counties declined to serve.

boards on June 28, 1917. Included with Bickett's letter to the North Carolina boards were instructions from Provost Marshal Crowder relative to the organization and operation of the draft machinery at the local level. The boards were advised to hold organizational meetings then immediately proceed to examine and assign serial numbers to the registration cards under their jurisdiction. Copies of each card would be forwarded to the North Carolina Adjutant General's Office. The last task of the individual boards would be to publish in their area of responsibility a list of the registrants and their assigned serial numbers.⁵⁷

Local exemption boards across the state launched into their work with vigor. By early July lists of registrants and their serial numbers were being published by the draft boards. On July 7, headlines on three inside pages of The News and Observer announced: "Selective Service Eligibles in Raleigh and Numbers From Which City's Quota in New Army will be Drawn." Below, on each page, were listed addresses and assigned serial numbers of the Raleigh registrants.⁵⁸

Fifty-two of the local boards, by July 7, had assigned serial numbers to their registrants and forwarded the registration cards to North Carolina's Adjutant General, Lawrence Young. On July 9, the local boards had received additional government pamphlets outlining such rules and regulations as those governing the filing and processing of claims.

⁵⁷The News and Observer, June 29, 1917.

⁵⁸Ibid., July 7, 1917.

for exemption.⁵⁹

When in mid-July the War Department announced that North Carolina would be required to furnish 15,974 men in the first draft call, the state's selective machinery appeared to be running smoothly, geared to meet its first "shake-down." However, Governor Bickett announced to The News and Observer that he was not entirely satisfied with some exemption boards. Several letters had come to his office expressing fear that certain boards would not act impartially. He declared that although the communications had come "from less than five percent of the counties in the State. . ."⁶⁰ he urged all local board members to "hold. . .[their] sacred office so high above personal or partisan consideration. . ." and conduct their work "on a plane of patriotism so high that no breath of suspicion can reach it."⁶¹

V

The Lottery

As the day approached for the drawing in Washington that would determine the order of liability for selective service registrants,⁶² North Carolina newspapers informed the twenty-one to thirty-one year

⁵⁹Ibid., July 8, 1917. Claims for exemption had to be filed with the local board. An investigation would then follow; if the claim were judged valid by the local officials certificates of exemption were issued. Among those persons automatically exempted on filing affidavits were: divinity students, aliens, officers of the United States and the various state officials.

⁶⁰Ibid.; see also Bickett Papers, July, 1917. Letters to this effect are not among the Governor's papers.

⁶¹Thomas Walter Bickett to all members of the Local Exemption Boards, July 10, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁶²Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 130.

old age group that the day was at hand when they would be honored by the government, chosen "to go across the sea. . .to defend the honor and principles of the United States of America."⁶³ On July 20, when 10,500 numbers were to be drawn from the fish-bowl in the Senate Office Building to raise the necessary 687,000 man army,⁶⁴ The News and Observer's editorial page cartoon pictured "Uncle Sam" conducting a lottery. Looking out over a sea of young men, "Uncle Sam" counted: "Eeney-Meeny-Miney-Mo."⁶⁵ Throughout the day large crowds of registered men, white and Negro, milled about The News and Observer's bulletin board to see if their numbers had been selected. A reporter noted that greater interest was shown over the posting of the liability numbers than any other public event that had directly affected the city of Raleigh.⁶⁶ In Asheville a special edition of The Times devoted the entire front page to listing the numbers drawn in Washington and the corresponding serial numbers held by three-hundred Asheville residents.⁶⁷ The day following the drawing newspapers across the state published the orders of liability and the numbers of men affected in their localities.⁶⁸

⁶³The Times, July 14, 1917.

⁶⁴Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 131. As each of the 10,500 numbers were drawn the liability of over 4,500 men scattered across the United States was established, when numbers assigned by the local boards corresponded with the number drawn in Washington.

⁶⁵The News and Observer, July 20, 1917.

⁶⁶Ibid., July 21, 1917.

⁶⁷The Times, July 20, 1917.

⁶⁸The News and Observer, July 21, 1917.

VI

Examinations and Exemptions

The second step in carving out a "selected" army had been taken. Machinery of the local exemption boards was now primed for launching a third phase of the operation. The prospective soldiers had to be summoned for examination.

On July 30, the Raleigh Exemption Board was the first draft board in the state to notify men to report for examinations. By public notices and letters, the registrants were instructed to report August 4, 1917, to the Board's offices in the Commercial National Bank Building.⁶⁹ By mid-August other boards throughout the state had issued calls and examined the first batch of men reporting.⁷⁰ However, many boards, due to physical rejections and the large number of claims for exemptions filed,⁷¹ found it necessary to issue calls for registrants a second and even third time, in order to meet quotas assigned by Adjutant General Young.⁷²

The percentages of men disqualified for physical defects on the initial call ranged from a low of 15% in Craven County to a high of 50% in Davidson County; other counties showed a closer correlation of percentages on rejections for physical defects: Buncombe had 25%;

⁶⁹Ibid., July 31, 1917.

⁷⁰Ibid., August 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 15, 1917.

⁷¹Ibid., August 5, 1917.

⁷²Ibid., August 6-11, 1917; see also Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, August 13, 17, 1917.

Durham 23%; Cabarrus 34%; Rowan 34%; Wake 25%.⁷³ The Granville County Board found it necessary to issue calls for 405 registrants in order to secure their quota of 166 men.⁷⁴ Carteret County summoned 406 men for physical exams in order to satisfy their quota of 103.⁷⁵

As the men came before the boards for their examinations or to file exemption claims, one observer reported: "The men summoned regarded the draft somewhat in the nature of a game between. . . [themselves] and the government in which the duty of the registrant lay in playing the game for all it was worth and taking every chance offered."⁷⁶ Perhaps this explains the reason for the large number of exemption claims filed with boards across the state. The vast majority of the claims were based on dependent relatives. Eighty per cent of the men drafted and claiming exemption in Buncombe County cited family members dependent on their support.⁷⁷ In a number of counties, throughout the war years, dependent relatives remained the primary reason for exemption claims. The majority of prospective draftees in Macon,⁷⁸ Caldwell,⁷⁹ Montgomery,⁸⁰

⁷³The News and Observer, August 9, 1917; see also *ibid.*, August 5, 1917. Many of the physical disqualifications were based on such defects as bad teeth, vision, hearing, flat feet, etc.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, August 10, 1917.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, August 11, 1917.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, August 5, 1917.

⁷⁷Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, August 13, 1917.

⁷⁸T. R. Gray to Robert B. House, October 27, 1920, Military Collection, World War I.

⁷⁹Harold F. Coffey to Robert B. House, September 6, 1920, Military Collection, World War I.

⁸⁰O. C. Burton to Robert B. House, September, 1920, Military Collection, World War I.

and New Hanover⁸¹ counties, listed dependents as their reasons for filling exemption claims. Other reasons for claiming deferment were also used. J. S. Kuykendall of the Winston-Salem Board observed that during the early months of the war "men and members of their families would use every possible means to get them exempted."⁸² The chairman of the Robeson County Board No. 2 reported that during the first phase of the examinations of registrants "quite a lot" of problems were created for the board when some young men as well as their parents claimed they should be exempted from the draft for agricultural or industrial reasons.⁸³ The majority of claims for exemptions from the draft filed in Chowan and Beaufort counties were based on farm related reasons.⁸⁴

Relatives of some prospective draftees, seeing there was little likelihood that the local boards would act favorably on their husband's, son's, or brother's claims for exemption, turned to their last resort--- they wrote their Congressmen. A mother from Macon, North Carolina, penciled a message in urgent phrases to Representative Claude Kitchin on August 15, 1917. She noted her son, 21, had passed his exams for the draft, but, with the recent death of her husband he was needed to aid his brother in "working the crops." She concluded on a pleading

⁸¹J. A. Taylor to Robert B. House, September, 1920, Military Collection, World War I.

⁸²J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston Salem," p. 187, Military Collection, World War I.

⁸³H. R. Meachern to Robert B. House, September 1, 1920, Military Collection, World War I.

⁸⁴C. J. Vann to Robert B. House, September 13, 1920; see also loose, two paged, typed, "History of the Local Board and the Selective Draft in Beaufort, County, North Carolina," Military Collection, World War I.

note: "Could you keep my boy from the War."⁸⁵ From Snow Hill a similar plea came to Kitchin. Editor and owner of The Square Deal, G. A. Jones, wrote asking Representative Kitchin to secure an exemption for his 25 year old brother. Owing to the recent death of his father, Jones explained, his brother was needed to look after his aged mother as well as the family farm. He had already contacted the local board, but exemption would not be granted since the farm could be sold to support the dependent mother. Jones concluded: "I want you to help me get him exempted on the grounds that he is a farmer. . . . Will you come to my rescue [?]. . . write me quick."⁸⁶

Regardless of the large numbers rejected for physical defects and others granted deferments on dependency grounds, in late August the majority of the local draft or exemption boards had secured their quotas. Although there had been complaints throughout the long, hot month of August from those registrants claiming, but not granted exemptions, there were no overt anti-draft acts by registrants.⁸⁷ However, a very vocal, hard-core element, employing arguments identical with those expressed by telegram and letter in April, encouraged overt hostility to the draft.

⁸⁵ Mrs. Lizzie Stewart to Claude Kitchin, August 15, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

⁸⁶ G. A. Jones to Claude Kitchin, August 17, 1917, Kitchin Papers; see also Claude Kitchin to Mrs. Lizzie Stewart, August 18, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

⁸⁷ The News and Observer, August 19, 23, 25, 1917; see also Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, August 13, 25, 1917. Draft and exemption boards in North Carolina were designated as "one and the same."

VII

Anti-Conscription Sentiment and the Militant Backlash

During the weeks following passage of the Selective Service Act, opponents of the measure in North Carolina, by their inactivity seemed to acquiesce in its enactment. On registration day and throughout the month of June no dissenting voices were heard from any section of the state. But with the coming of sultry July, as the impact of registration and the meaning of the law seeped down to the "grass roots," murmurs of protest became audible. Then in early August the summons went out to selected registrants. The full impact of the law suddenly was brought home. Now the smoldering ashes of opposition were rekindled anew by a chorus of dissenting voices.

The first notes of protest were piped in July. For several days two residents of Cherryville had probably talked about writing Congressman Edwin Yates Webb. On July 2, they sat down together and composed their letter. They had read extracts of Tom Watson's speech delivered at Thomas, Georgia, and reprinted in the Atlanta Constitution. From his remarks they had learned that a "bill [is] pending in Congress to prevent conscripts being forced to foreign service without their consent." Therefore the two writers asked Representative Webb to use his "influence with the administration in securing this amendment;" they concluded that the amendment was in the "spirit. . . of democratic policies. . ."⁸⁸ On this same day the principal of Oak View High School,

⁸⁸W. C. Comer and M. G. Comer to Edwin Yates Webb, July 2, 1917, Webb Papers.

Cherryville, obviously an intimate of the two writers, also wrote Congressman Webb. He stated that it was alien to his beliefs to send conscripts overseas against their will. Thus he favored the Mason Amendment being discussed in Congress.⁸⁹ This theme enunciated by the Cherryville writers deviated only slightly from the thesis held by many earlier critics. Dr. H. Q. Alexander had emphasized under no conditions should American boys be sent to Europe.

In late July a minor note of protest to the Selective Service Act was struck in Yanceyville, the county seat of Caswell County. Provincial in tone, attorney R. T. Wilson expounded the view that a county company should be formed and commanded by a local resident. He felt this offered the best alternative to the draft which would send men "off [to war] entirely with strangers."⁹⁰

The long smoldering fires of opposition suddenly burst into the open. Although Governor Bickett was aware that various factions in the state were hostile to the draft law, he was undoubtedly shaken by a letter he received from the Sheriff of Chatham County and a Siler City solicitor, on August 2, 1917:

Certain parties in this county are reported to be soliciting funds from men drafted, using the argument that the draft law is unconstitutional, and proposing to employ counsel to test it, etc., and are using language that is calculated to arouse the

⁸⁹C. L. Eaker to Edwin Yates Webb, July 2, 1917, Webb Papers.

⁹⁰R. T. Wilson to "Dear Willie," July 24, 1917, North Carolina Council of Defense Papers, State Archives, Raleigh.

ignorant against the government. Each day we hear of this going on in different sections, and greatly fear that we are going to have a serious situation in certain sections unless something can be done to stop it.

The two correspondents had heard that one township was going to stop "any man whose name has been drawn among the first to be examined to appear. . ." before the local board. In closing they hoped the Governor would co-operate with them in enlisting the Department of Justice to send a representative to Chatham to "take the matter in hand." They also offered a solution: "If we can secure the arrest of a few men, we believe it will strike terror to the disloyal element and that further trouble may be avoided."⁹¹

The alarm had been sounded. Hastily and in slightly exaggerated terms Governor Bickett wired Provost Marshal Crowder. Informed that registrants in two townships might en masse refuse to appear before their local exemption boards, Bickett's telegram requested advice and he added that perhaps federal troops could best deal with the situation.⁹² General Crowder immediately answered the Governor's plea for assistance. The Provost Marshal stated that automatic induction occurred if a registrant failed to appear when called. If force were necessary, however, he believed civil peace officers should cope with the trouble, but "with a detachment of troops close at hand for moral effect and for use if necessary." The federal troops would be made

⁹¹ Leon L. Lane and Walter D. Siler to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 2, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁹² Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, August 3, 1917, Bickett Papers.

available if Bickett requested them.⁹³

Barely fifty miles south-east of Siler City, the town of Lillington sits near the banks of the Cape Fear River. Dr. H. Q. Alexander was there on August 4, 1917. Citizens of Lillington heard the President of the Farmer's Union denounce President Wilson---charging that he conspired with the wealthy to precipitate the war. J. W. Halford, chairman of the local exemption board, wired that Dr. Alexander also advised resistance to the Selective Service Act. In his telegram to Governor Bickett, Halford stated: "I support his [Alexander's] arrest tonight."⁹⁴

While Dr. Alexander spoke in Lillington, Governor Bickett, having taken under advisement Provost Marshal Crowder's suggestions of the previous day, replied in strong terms to his Siler City informants. In part he wrote:⁹⁵

The man who in this perilous hour lifts voice or hand to weaken the Nation's will or shorten its arm is a traitor to his country and a friend to its foes. He is more than a traitor. He is a murderer. Any word spoken, any deed done to hinder the vigorous prosecution of the war means a prolongation of the War and this means added loss of life.

The men who for love of money are promising to show registrants a way to escape from their duty have sounded depths of infamy heretofore unknown. Send me their names and I promise that they shall be forever pilloried in a people's contempt.

⁹³General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 3, 1917, Bickett Papers.

⁹⁴J. W. Halford to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 4, 1917, Bickett Papers. Governor Bickett forwarded the telegram to the Attorney General of the United States, Thomas W. Gregory.

⁹⁵Thomas Walter Bickett to Walter D. Siler and Leon L. Lane, August 4, 1917, Bickett Papers.

. . . I do not propose to tolerate treason in North Carolina by word or deed. . . Immediate and drastic action will be taken upon every report and men who thus desert their country in its hour of peril will be made to feel the strong arm of the law.

The Governor released to the press the Siler City letter and his own reply. On August 5, the two left hand columns of The News and Observer carried the letters capped by the headline: "Governor Urges Instant Report of All Treason."⁹⁶

Although Governor Bickett, at the time, was unwilling to have the name of Dr. Alexander, "pilloried in a people's contempt. . .," The Times of Asheville, in an editorial on August 6, observed: "If it be true that Dr. H. Q. Alexander. . . has been stirring up strife and opposition to the government of the United States it is time for his dismissal. . . [as Farmer's Union head]. . . Treasonable speech is despicable in every individual. . . but when coming from a state official it is unpardonable," the writer concluded.⁹⁷ Similarly, the Morning Star of Wilmington declared Dr. Alexander's remarks on the unconstitutionality of the draft constituted a grave offense.⁹⁸

The anti-draft sentiment in Chatham County and the militant backlash, were to culminate in the arrest of Frank S. Burns, a prominent farmer living near Goldston. One Western North Carolina paper reported that after Burns' arrest anti-conscription elements in Chatham County began arming themselves, some claimed they would die before capture. The

⁹⁶ The News and Observer, August 5, 1917.

⁹⁷ The Times, August 6, 1917.

⁹⁸ The Morning Star, August 5, 1917.

paper noted most of these opponents were located in the Goldston area where Frank Burns had been collecting money for Tom Watson. Burns had allegedly instructed the youth of the vicinity: "The [draft] law is unconstitutional, we will not submit."⁹⁹ However, several days after the arrest of Burns, Frank Smethurst, ace journalist for The News and Observer, reported that the anti-draft sentiment was "wilting" in Chatham County. Smethurst placed the blame for opposition to conscription on "Tom Watson's rebellious propaganda" and disgruntled Republicans. He pointed out that Frank Burns was a typical ". . . Republican of the County's partisan type," who was charged and released on \$5,000 bail, with "inciting opposition to the war by starting a fund for Thomas E. Watson." Smethurst added that the readers of Watson's Jeffersonian in Chatham County were the leading opponents of sending United States troops to France. Some even opposed United States participation in the war since they viewed it as a war created by and for wealthy interests only. But the Raleigh newspaper correspondent asserted that the large number of Chatham registrants who answered calls August 7, had virtually ended any further resistance to the draft. Additionally, hints about court martials and firing squads had quelled many reluctant registrants, Smethurst believed.¹⁰⁰

Frank Smethurst's reporting was perhaps slightly "yellow." On August 9 Frank Burns, charged with having violated the Espionage Laws,

⁹⁹The Times, August 5, 1917.

¹⁰⁰The News and Observer, August 8, 1917.

was acquitted at a preliminary hearing at Jonesboro. The lack of evidence to support the charges brought against him resulted in his acquittal. But one reporter believed that the arrest of Burns, coupled with the swift action of local authorities, had "knocked any organized resistance to the draft [in Chatham County] into a cocked hat."¹⁰¹

Accompanying the voices raised in opposition to conscription in Chatham County, similar discordant sounds were heard in other sections of the state. United States Marshal Charles A. Webb, stationed in Asheville, was notified of draft opposition in his area. On August 4 he sent deputies to investigate anti-conscription meetings planned in Union County.¹⁰² Draft opponents planning one rally at Monroe enlisted former Governor Cole Blease of South Carolina to speak. When the Governor did not appear, a prominent local citizen took charge, damned the anti-draft sentiment and appealed to the assemblage to "stand firmly with the president."¹⁰³

Turning "upside down, inside out" one anti-draft rally could hardly quash the deep-seated opposition to the war voiced by some south-western North Carolina citizens. From Charlotte, several days following the

¹⁰¹Ibid., August 10, 1917. Burns' alleged connections with Tom Watson's Jeffersonian were not brought to light in the case. These allegations were not incorporated into the charges brought against him; see also ibid., August 5, 1917. July and August copies of the Jeffersonian listed contributions to Watson had come from "numerous small towns in North Carolina."

¹⁰²Ibid., August 5, 1917.

¹⁰³Ibid., see also ibid., August 7, 1917. An editorial writer applauded Republican John J. Parker. He had turned the scheduled meeting "upside down, inside out," making a patriotic rally of the planned disloyal ceremony. Concluding the writer urged "out upon them!, [on] those who attempt to drag down the high name of the state. . ." by their disloyalty.

schedule Monroe rally, a resident wrote Representative Claude Kitchin; he believed that citizens like himself, those who opposed the draft and the sending of American soldiers to Europe, were "on the brink of revolution." He asserted that the people of the Charlotte area were unanimously against the war and draft law. Some people, he thought, could be passified if the press of the country would desist from its threatening attitude:¹⁰⁴

. . . Why the press and War party of the country seems to have gone crazy. Mad; why every man that dont [sic] agree with them is a traitor. . . [They are] . . . advocating the abolition of the very principle that this nation was built upon. Free speech and freedom of opinion. . . I fully believe that whenever you end free speech you end free government.

Perhaps the correspondent from Charlotte had encountered the militant backlash, that of the same type which had brought Frank Burns, the Goldston farmer, before the bar of justice. This rising belligerence toward all opponents of the draft was evidenced in the arrest of A. L. Westbrook of Smithfield on August 6. Charged with making threats against the President and advising men of the Duke Mills not to obey their summonses from exemption boards, Westbrook was jailed when he was unable to post \$5,000 bond.¹⁰⁵ Three days later Floyd E. Simpkins was also arrested in Smithfield and released on \$1,000 bond. Simpkins was charged with seditious remarks. Three witnesses heard him remark "that while he was sure to be drafted. . . he hoped the first shot he fired would be at President Wilson."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Jonathan B. Todd to Claude Kitchin, August 6, 1917, Kitchin Papers.

¹⁰⁵The News and Observer, August 7, 1917.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., August 10, 1917.

As the scattered outcries against the draft law reached their peak, various sentiments were expressed regarding the situation in North Carolina. In Washington on August 6, Representative John Humphrey Small of the First Congressional District publically declared:¹⁰⁷

I have learned with distress of the resistance to the selective draft law for the raising of the national army among some of the people of Western North Carolina.

. . .The selective draft is fair and equitable.

. . .The eyes of the country are upon North Carolina and its citizens and no stigma must rest upon the state. If there are men in North Carolina who esteem themselves as leaders and who are preaching disobedience to law and disloyalty to country, they must be made to feel the heavy hand of an outraged people. . . .

"The Shame of It," declared The Times of Asheville, The Old North State with its proud heritage and the noble record of her men in butternut gray, whose citizens must now walk with hanging heads. The news, anti-draft agitation in North Carolina, is out—The shame of it all."¹⁰⁸

A decidedly opposite opinion was expressed by a journalist for The Morning Star. "Tempest in a Teapot" the Wilmington paper editorialized on August 6, "the cases of a handful of selective service opponents must be considered in the light of the 2,500,000 North Carolinians who are loyally doing their duty."¹⁰⁹ Farmer's Union officials decided their organization had to clarify its position after the stand taken by their President, Dr. H. Q. Alexander. On August 6, they declared that the unpatriotic views allegedly held by Dr. H. Q. Alexander were not

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., August 7, 1917.

¹⁰⁸ The Times, August 6, 1917.

¹⁰⁹ The Morning Star, August 6, 1917.

shared by the rank and file of the farmers in North Carolina.¹¹⁰

Several days later Clarence Poe wrote in The Progressive Farmer,¹¹¹

We greatly regret that a few excellent men among our Southern farmers have allowed themselves to be misled concerning the constitutionality of the selective draft. [Opposition to the law is] . . . absurd, dangerous, treasonable and probably punishable by both fine and imprisonment. . . .to delay or hinder our National Government in its determined course is only to give treasonable aid and comfort to the enemy. . . .

By mid-August the fires of opposition to the Selective Service Act had begun to flicker and die. Many of the conscription opponents swallowed the bitter pill of resignation. This type of acquiescence was revealed in a letter to Congressman Webb from W. Henry Davis, editor of The Hornet, Fork, North Carolina. He had recently been warned by federal agents to discontinue his hostile attitude toward the war. Davis wrote on August 16:¹¹²

The people--the people--the people, are not wanting all this, and practically all the boys are asking for exemption which shows it to be true.

With all the parents of this section on the verge of insanity I myself feel most miserable.

No longer now did Dr. H. Q. Alexander travel the state denouncing the draft. However, perhaps this was due not so much to resignation in his case, but rather to the federal agents who dogged his every move.¹¹³

With the advent of autumn, virtually all that remained of the

¹¹⁰The News and Observer, August 7, 1917.

¹¹¹The Progressive Farmer, XXXII (August 11, 1917), 12.

¹¹²W. Henry Davis to Edwin Yates Webb, August 16, 1917, Webb Papers; see also The News and Observer, August 18, 1917.

¹¹³The News and Observer, August 8, 1917.

overt anti-draft expressions were slogans often mumbled, barely audible: "Hughes and peace; Wilson and War." Severe warnings or threats by federal agents had silenced the most blatant opponents of conscription.¹¹⁴ In some sections a fear was upon the land. It was quite obvious in a letter written to Congressman Webb in the fall of 1917. Surveying the political climate for Webb in Mecklenburg, Gaston, and Cleveland Counties, his partner, attorney O. M. Mull wrote:¹¹⁵

The opponents of the War are fairly well curbed at this time. They are afraid to say any thing. There is a large class of people whose sons are being drafted for the army who are not able to see the necessity for the War measures. . . . Many mothers and fathers are spending sleepless nights now. About a hundred of Cleveland County's conscripted soldiers left on one train last week. The depot scene was like a multiplicity of funerals. Our people are greatly disturbed. . . . The majority of our people are neither enthusiastic war advocates nor slackers.

Attorney Mull had cogently described the contemporary scene in certain western counties of the state. Yet, his conclusions were applicable to other areas of North Carolina in 1917.

VIII

The Entrainments

The first detachment of men selected by exemption boards in twenty-nine counties and destined for Camp Jackson, departed from train depots across the state on September 5, 1917. Second and third detachments of men were selected by other local boards and by September 11, in accordance

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵O. M. Mull to Edwin Yates Webb, September, 1917, Webb Papers.

with the War Department's instructions, 5% of North Carolina's quota for the National Army was housed in barracks of the 81st Division, Camp Jackson, South Carolina.¹¹⁶ By early October, 4,497 white "Tar Heels" had been drafted and entrained for the South Carolina camp.¹¹⁷

Throughout the war the local boards were assigned the responsibility of insuring that the men departed at their scheduled times. The boards also provided for lodging, board, and transportation of the men. Twenty-four hours prior to their scheduled departure for training camps, the men would be notified to report to their local exemption board headquarters. Usually the boards notified 10% in excess of their assigned quotas to compensate for sickness and other factors. Arriving at the local board offices, the selectees took their oath of allegiance and then officials of the board appointed a squad leader who was responsible for the men while enroute to camp. He also took charge of their meal and transportation tickets. In military order the men were then marched to the train depot---often accompanied by martial music and crowds of well-wishers.¹¹⁸

From the first departures, local exemption board officials and the county councils of defense strived to create an air of vibrant patriotism.

¹¹⁶The News and Observer, August 26, September 6, 12, 1917.

¹¹⁷The Times, September 20, 1917; see also The News and Observer, September 20, 29, 1917.

¹¹⁸The News and Observer, August 17, 1917; see also J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," pp. 156-159, Military Collection, World War I; see also The News and Observer, September 20, 1917; see also Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 22, 1917.

Several days prior to the anticipated entrainment date residents of many localities would honor the draftees of their race with "bounteous" dinners.¹¹⁹ Often speeches and toasts were voiced to the prospective soldiers. A typical toast was offered at a departure dinner for Cumberland County selectees:¹²⁰

Here's to the boys of the Old North State,
Whom the nation has called to War's grim fate
We'll give three cheers with a right good will
When you lick the stuffin' out of Kaiser Bill.

Often at the entrainment, while the engine gathered steam, and before the men crowded aboard, local officials would again lecture the camp-bound selectees on patriotism, duty and obedience to orders.¹²¹

Though a solemn quiet oftentimes hung over the crowds of relatives and friends bidding their warriors farewell during the initial departures, by late September, and increasingly throughout the war years, a rising wave of patriotism surged among the entrainment crowds. Typical of the enthusiasm generated for the departing men by the end of September was a demonstration held in Asheville on September 19. Buildings in the city were flag-hung as the Asheville and Buncombe County men stepped to music along the streets, their destination the Asheville train depot. When

¹¹⁹Pratt, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense," II, 223; see also The News and Observer, September 6, 20, 1917.

¹²⁰The News and Observer, September 20, 1917.

¹²¹J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," p. 157, Military Collection, World War I; see also J. A. Taylor to Robert B. House, September, 1920, Military Collection, World War I; see also "History of the Local Board and the Selective Draft in Beaufort County," Military Collection, World War I; see also The Times, September 20, 1917; see also Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 22, 1917.

they arrived former Governor Locke Craig informed the inductees and the crowd of 8,000 that the stay-at-homes would be trusting in the draftees. As the future soldiers climbed aboard their waiting train, Mrs. Silvio Von Ruck sang "The Star Spangled Banner" and "The Marseillaise;" the young ladies of the Red Cross "showered gifts" on the men.¹²² Two days later similar send-off ceremonies were held for forty-six inductees from Elizabeth City. At the station one writer observed: "It looked as if everybody in town was there, and as if every automobile in the three counties between Pasquotank River and the Virginia line was there also." A local magistrate delivered a stirring address reminding the boys that they were sons of the Confederacy. As the train pulled away the local band's strains of "America" dissolved into "Dixie."¹²³

Many of the first inductees were unable to express the same enthusiasm at their entrainments which their patriotic well-wishers exhibited. Some displayed rather weak smiles, mumbled a few patriotic phrases and zestfully clasped hands; deeming it obligatory, rather than feeling any real elation.¹²⁴ Often the selectees were too preoccupied with thoughts

¹²²The Times, September 20, 1917; see also The News and Observer, September 20, 1917; see also "History of the Local Board and the Selective Draft in Beaufort County," Military Collection, World War I. "Comfort bags" were supplied by the Red Cross chapters across the state when the men entrained during the war years; see also J. A. Taylor to Robert B. House, September, 1920, Military Collection, World War I. The churches of New Hanover County provided a Testament for all departing white inductees; see also J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of the Local Exemption Board for the City of Winton-Salem," p. 158. In addition to "comfort kits" and Bibles, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. supplied all inductees from Winston-Salem with a package of cigarettes.

¹²³Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 22, 1917.

¹²⁴The News and Observer, September 8, 1917; see also The Times, September 20, 1917.

of being torpedoed in the North Atlantic to enter wholeheartedly into the flag-waving ceremonies. Others worried about their families and undoubtedly numbers of the inductees conjured up visions of dull, dingy barracks and growling sergeants.¹²⁵ Consequently, it was with slight exaggeration that one wag recorded the spirit revealed by departing draftees at Elizabeth City. He wrote that as the train pulled away from the station the prospective warriors waved goodbyes from windows and "their lusty cheers rang out their undaunted willingness to serve their country on the far-flung battle line overseas."¹²⁶ Yet, in the latter years of the war this type of "lusty" departure became commonplace. The draftees' fears of the "huns" and training camps abated; as well, the surging patriotic tide of public opinion swept them aboard their training camp bound trains. The spirit became contagious and by September, 1918 many men who had previously been granted exemptions requested that their boards send them to the front, so, that like their friends, already encamped, they could get into the fight.¹²⁷

IX

" . . . For A More Perfect Organization of . . . Manpower "

The time has come for a more perfect organization of our manpower. The selective principle must be carried to its logical

¹²⁵T. R. Gray to Robert B. House, October 27, 1920, Military Collection, World War I; see also Harold F. Coffey to Robert B. House, September 6, 1917, Military Collection, World War I.

¹²⁶Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark, September 22, 1917.

¹²⁷"History of the Local Board and the Selective Draft in Beaufort County," Military Collection, World War I; see also T. R. Gray to Robert B. House, October 27, 1920, Military Collection, World War I; see also J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," p. 187; see also The News and Observer, August 4, 1918.

conclusion. We must make a complete inventory of the qualifications of all registrants in order to determine, as to each man not already selected for duty with the colors, the place in the military, industrial, or agricultural ranks of the nation in which his experience and training can best be made to serve the common good.

So wrote President Woodrow Wilson in a foreword to the new regulations governing the expedition of the Selective Service Act, made known to the public, November 10, 1917.¹²⁸ Provost Marshal General Crowder in explaining the fine points of the new selective service machinery observed: "We have hacked the first increment of our armies out with a broadax because there was time for no greater refinement."¹²⁹ He explained that the time had now come when: "We must consider the circumstances of all registrants. We must arrange them in the order in which they can be taken with the least disturbance. . . . This means a segregation of registrants in classes arranged in the order of their availability for military service."¹³⁰

The foundations of the new plan were built on a questionnaire which would be mailed to the nearly ten million registrants in the United States. Upon the return of the questionnaire to the local board, the members would determine from the applicant's personal history, his classification in the five categories. Legal advisory boards were to be appointed to aid applicants at each exemption board in the county in the

¹²⁸The News and Observer, November 23, 1917.

¹²⁹Ibid., November 23, 1917; see also Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 134. By December 15, 1917, the Army had accepted 516,000 men from local exemption boards across the United States.

¹³⁰The News and Observer, November 23, 1917.

filing of the questionnaire. Medical advisory boards were also to be constituted in each district to conduct a thorough examination of the registrants.¹³¹ President Wilson expressly appealed to these professions to aid in carrying out the new law; he asked police officials to aid the local boards to search out all those who did not respond to the new summons; and cooperation was requested of news media in order to give the new selective service regulations wide publicity.¹³²

Governor Bickett was delighted with the new regulations, as enthusiastic over this change as he had been when the War Department in June revised its plans regarding the composition of local exemption boards. The War Department in both revisions had probably entertained the suggestions of Governor Bickett.

Since early June, North Carolina's chief executive had become increasingly concerned with the inequities of the selective service machinery. Obviously he was influenced by correspondence from citizens throughout the state who, pleading their own special cases, revealed to him the non-discriminatory and prejudicial aspects of the law. One of the first letters of this nature came from a farm family near Louisburg. A mother and father requested that Governor Bickett come to their aid in obtaining exemptions for their sons. They believed their sons could aid the war effort more by cultivating their 100 acre farm than by "going to the front."¹³³ When Edwin T. Cansler wrote Governor Bickett in late

¹³¹Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 146-147; see also The News and Observer, November 11, 23, 1917.

¹³²The News and Observer, November 11, 1917.

¹³³Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Beasley to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 6, 1917, Bickett Papers.

September, he found himself "deeply in sympathy with. . . [the] spirit. . ." of the letter.¹³⁴ Cansler, an Eastern District Board member, wrote:

I have found a decided non-judicial disposition on the part of most of the members of the Board to disregard the appeal of the poor man, with a wife and child, or children, and on the other hand to consider most favorably the claims of employees of corporations on industrial grounds. . . the employee of the corporation, and his superiors, are not only intelligent, but amply able to protect their rights, while on the other hand, the poor man is usually unintelligent, and has no one to speak for him before either the Local or the District Board.

Cansler also noted that the local boards were unwilling to offer either information or assistance in making out appeals, consequently many legitimate claims were disqualified on the basis of incorrect procedure and the men inducted, while those with invalid claims, yet affluent enough to secure influential intervention, escaped the draft. "It seems to be the aim and purpose of these Exemption Boards to get an army without reference to the rights of individuals who are being drafted," Cansler asserted. In conclusion he advised the Governor if it were not to be "'a rich man's war, and a poor man's fight' the District and Local boards are going to have to be specifically instructed on these matters. . . the rights of all [must be] equally and fairly protected."¹³⁵ Writing that he was deeply stirred by the tone of the letter, Governor Bickett replied: "It has been very difficult to formulate general rules for the

¹³⁴Thomas Walter Bickett to E. T. Cansler, September 28, 1917, Bickett Papers.

¹³⁵E. T. Cansler to Thomas Walter Bickett, September 26, 1917, Bickett Papers.

government of local and district boards;" and he noted that enclosed was a letter he had written several days before to Provost Marshal General Crowder. Confident his plan would be approved by the War Department, Governor Bickett advised Cansler that it be kept confidential until endorsed by the Provost Marshal.¹³⁶ The enclosed letter stated in part:

I am profoundly convinced that the administration of the selective draft law is being attended with much unnecessary hardship and suffering. It seems to me that not enough attention has been paid to the selective principle in the law. . .there is no discrimination between registrants; [to achieve] . . .a wise and just discrimination in the selection of the men who are to be sent to the front. . .

Governor Bickett outlined his own plan. First, all boards should divide the registrants into three classes; (1) all single and married men "who do not habitually support their families;" (2) "all married men who have no children;" (3) "all married men who have children." The Governor believed that a county's entire quota could usually be drawn from Class I. To Bickett, his plan would "carry out the spirit of the law, and certainly it is the very essence of humanitarianism."¹³⁷

By early October Governor Bickett was in Washington conferring with Provost Marshal General Crowder and Secretary of War Newton Baker on the inequalities of the draft law. When he returned he directed all local boards in the state to follow a new procedure when a married man claimed exemption on the grounds of a dependent wife or children, or

¹³⁶Thomas Walter Bickett to E. T. Cansler, September 26, 1917, Bickett Papers.

¹³⁷Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, September 25, 1917, Bickett Papers.

both. First the boards would determine: (1) has the registrant heretofore supported his wife by his own labor; (2) is there sufficient property in the family to support the children if the husband is drafted? The Governor advised that if the first question were affirmatively answered and the second negatively, automatic discharge resulted; unless: (1) parents of husband or wife had sufficient means to support the children and wife during the service of the husband; and (2) the parents agreed to undertake support of the wife and child. In closing his letter to the local boards, Governor Bickett wrote that the new rule was retroactive. If any previous cases of hardship had been imposed, such cases would be reconsidered in the light of these new instructions.¹³⁸

In the first few days of 1918, Provost Marshal Crowder publically announced that the new draft policy would attempt to raise men needed for service from Class I. This class would be composed of the young unmarried man; unskilled farm and industrial laborers; married men not supporting their wives or usefully employed; and those who failed to return their questionnaire or who did not fall into any other category on the draft schedule. The remaining four classes were composed of married men without children; married men with children, but unskilled; married men with children, but skilled; and the fifth class was made up of those legally exempt.¹³⁹

¹³⁸Thomas Walter Bickett to All Local Boards, October 8, 1917, Bickett Papers.

¹³⁹The News and Observer, January 4, 15, 1918; see also Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 147.

X

The New Draft Policy and the Governor's Crusade

The new draft provisions strikingly resembled Governor Bickett's own proposals submitted to the War Department nearly three months before. It is obvious then that the Governor would praise the new selective service regulations. Before a meeting of local board members in Raleigh, January 14, 1918, Governor Bickett declared:

The Selective Service Law is the fairest and wisest law under which an army has ever been raised. It is the legislative embodiment of 'equal justice' to all and special privileges to none; the very essence of Americanism and the sublimation [?] of a square deal. The man who doesn't endorse it is not a good citizen and is not willing to carry his part of the load.

Near the conclusion of his address, Governor Bickett struck a chord he was to emphasize until the termination of the draft. He exhorted the assembled exemption board members to place "in the forefront of the first class. . .the man who has not been in the habit of supporting his family. He is the 'singular' man and is therefore, in a single class."¹⁴⁰

The new draft provisions were rapidly implemented in North Carolina. By the end of November, 1917 one-hundred legal advisory boards had been created in the state and their members appointed by Governor Bickett. Similarly, assisted by Dr. John Wesley Long, the Governor appointed medical advisory board members to work in close cooperation with the local exemption boards.¹⁴¹ Local boards throughout the state had begun

¹⁴⁰The News and Observer, January 15, 1918.

¹⁴¹Ibid., November 19, 24, 1917; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to Chairman, County Councils of Defense, November 14, 1917, Bickett Papers.

sending out the complicated questionnaire on December 20, 1917. Mailed to 5% of their total registrants each day,¹⁴² forty-five of the local exemption boards had completed their task by January 11, 1918.¹⁴³ On January 21, Major John D. Langston announced that 50% of the registrants in North Carolina had been classified and 25% assigned to class I.¹⁴⁴

The process of classification under the new draft laws greatly increased the work of the local exemption board members. Many complained that with the additional demands of their selective service job, they would have to abandon their regular occupation. Various board members indicated that it would be necessary for them to resign their selective service appointments.¹⁴⁵ Governor Bickett, realizing the new demands imposed on the board members, continued to remind the draft officials of the patriotic contribution they were making. He was behind them one-hundred per cent and publically he declared:¹⁴⁶

. . .if . . .any member of a local board in North Carolina should be swept into a violation of the criminal law of the state, I will take gubernatorial notice of the conditions under which he has been laboring and will at once grant him a full and unconditional pardon.

¹⁴²The News and Observer, December 21, 1917.

¹⁴³Ibid., January 12, 1918. An envelope shortage prohibited many boards from completing the process by January 11, 1918.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., January 22, 1918; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, January 24, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁴⁵"History of the Local Board and the Selective Draft in Beaufort County," Military Collection, World War I; see also The News and Observer, November 27, 1917; see also Joseph Hyde Pratt, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense" (Unpublished three volume work, State Archives, Raleigh), II, 206.

¹⁴⁶The News and Observer, January 15, 1918.

While praising the board members for their patriotic sacrifices, the well-intentioned Governor also cultivated their aid in the pursuit of a policy that had become an obsession with him. During the second week in February he wrote to all local boards: "I cannot emphasize too strongly that it is the fixed determination of the Government to make up the next quota out of single men and married men who do not support their families. No others should be placed in class I."¹⁴⁷ Governor Bickett, fired by a militant spirit, launched a new crusade. Prior to his message of February 7, he had personally intervened in several instances. On January 22, the Governor received a plea from a Henderson, North Carolina woman. "I married David C. Hardee and he is so cruel to me and my children and will not work or provide for me and his children, he is a well, healthy man 28 years of age. . .," and Mrs. Hardee ended her letter asking the Governor's "mediate [sic] advice, as my condition demands it. . .."¹⁴⁸ The Governor took immediate action. Temporarily abandoning all other demands of his high office after reading the letter, and solely on the basis of Mrs. Hardee's testimony, he wrote the Henderson Exemption Board:

I want you to take steps at once to have. . . [David C. Hardee] put in class I. . . and sent to the front at the earliest date possible. . . He ought to be given a chance to die for his country and support his wife and children at the same time. He is one man that I take genuine joy in sending to the

¹⁴⁷ Thomas Walter Bickett to all Boards, February 8, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁴⁸ Mrs. D. C. Hardee to Thomas Walter Bickett, January 20, 1918, Bickett Papers.

front, and I will personally appreciate it if you will take prompt, vigorous and relentless action in this case.¹⁴⁹

As the huge task of classification and its attendant problems continued,¹⁵⁰ Governor Bickett sought cooperation from the Federation of Women's Clubs in the state. To the president of the North Carolina Woman's Club Governor Bickett wrote that the women should assist the government in any way that will help in the vigorous prosecution of the war. The closing lines of his letter reveal the authoritarian brink to which his crusade was rushing: "Do not complain about anything that the government may do, nor permit any one else to complain in your presence."¹⁵¹ In early March the Governor addressed an audience in Kinston, North Carolina. Any women "claiming worthless husbands" should notify him "on the quiet" and he would guarantee that they would immediately face the world with "another chance." The crusader had reached a new plateau. Not only would Governor Bickett "save" the state's "womanhood" and "motherhood," but his informants would aid him in recruiting new conscripts for the nation's new national army.¹⁵²

The response to his Kinston address was immediate. On March 15 the Governor received a letter from Beaufort, North Carolina: "I think it so grand in you to have such care for us poor suffering women. I write

¹⁴⁹Thomas Walter Bickett to Local Exemption Board, Henderson, N. C., January 22, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵⁰The News and Observer, January 15, February 28, 1918; see also ibid., March 5, 1918. On March 4, Major John D. Langston announced that seventy-four of the local boards in the state had completed the classification of registrants.

¹⁵¹Thomas Walter Bickett to Mrs. Clarence Johnson, February 18, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵²The News and Observer, March 7, 1918.

to. . .notify you, as you say 'on the quiet.' . . .My husband's name is Albert Stanley. . .I think he is placed in class five. I will thank you for what ever you do in my behalf. . ."¹⁵³ Moving swiftly, Governor Bickett wrote the Morehead City Board on the day he received the plea. He considerably exaggerated the claims of Mrs. Stanley:

I am in receipt of a strictly confidential letter to the effect that Albert Stanley of Beaufort. . .does not habitually support his wife. . .please transfer [Stanley]. . .from class 5 to class 1 at once.

The Governor had based his letter once again on the claims of a disenchanted wife. Governor Bickett stated the reason as follows: "It is my fixed purpose not to leave in the state of North Carolina a man within draft age who does not habitually and cheerfully support his family."¹⁵⁴

In May, 1918, when Governor Bickett addressed the Conference of Governors and Former Governors attending the National Convention of the League to Enforce Peace, meeting at Philadelphia, he observed: "The women are in line in Dixie. . .and when the women get in line, the men have to." In other words, he explained in the form of an anecdote, the women of North Carolina were vigorously assisting him in sending men to the front.¹⁵⁵

Throughout the remaining days of the war Governor Bickett was to pursue relentlessly, with the assistance of North Carolina's "woman-

¹⁵³Mrs. H. A. Stanley to Thomas Walter Bickett, March 14, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵⁴Thomas Walter Bickett to Local Exemption Board, Morehead City, March 15, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵⁵Thomas Walter Bickett's Address, delivered May 17, 1918, Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Bickett Papers.

hood," the prosecution of his arbitrary policy of sending to the front any man "not habitually and cheerfully support [ing] his family."¹⁵⁶

XI

Deserters, Delinquents, and Bickett

In early February, 1918, the first reports of deserters and delinquents¹⁵⁷ roving the mountains of western North Carolina were brought to the attention of Governor Bickett. Sheriff W. P. Moody of Watauga County had notified Governor Bickett, through District Attorney W. C. Hammer, Asheboro, that "there are some deserters. . .dodg [ing] about in the mountains of Wilkes, Ashe and Watauga Counties."¹⁵⁸ By late March members of the Jackson County Exemption Board had become alarmed at the number of deserters in their vicinity. A letter from the Chairman of the Jackson County Board reached Governor Bickett's desk on April 1. Anxiously, the Governor read:¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶Thomas Walter Bickett to Local Exemption Board, Morehead City, March 15, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to Local Exemption Board, Smithfield, June 12, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to E. W. Timberlake, June 28, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to W. B. Stone, Chairman of Local Exemption Board, Tyron, October 9, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵⁷J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," p. 148, Military Collection, World War I. Selective Service regulations defined deserters as: "Persons inducted into military service failing to report to a Local Board for transportation to a mobilization camp when directed to do so, or who fail to entrain, or who absent themselves from entrainment." Selective Service regulations defined a delinquent as: "Registrants who fail to return their questionnaire, or who fail to report for physical examinations and who cannot be located."

¹⁵⁸W. P. Moody to W. C. Hammer, February 2, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁵⁹Coleman C. Cowan to Charles A. Webb, March 30, 1918, Bickett Papers. The letter had been forwarded by Webb to Adjutant General Young; in turn he transmitted the message to Governor Bickett.

There are now twelve. . . deserters. . . in. . . Jackson County. Some of these men are dangerous men and we are informed that they are all well armed and supplied with ammunition. . . they stay together and have resolved that they will be killed before they are taken. These men have. . . their headquarters. . . along and near the dividing line between the counties of Macon, Swain and Jackson. . . If they are ever arrested, it will take a concerted effort. . . about six other men. . . have after repeated notices failed and refused to appear for physical examination, and if not already with this bunch of men they will join them as soon as posted as deserters. . .

When Governor Bickett received a letter from Marshal Charles A. Webb on the following day, he realized measures had to be initiated to curb the growing numbers of deserters in the western counties. United States Marshall Webb wrote: "The three counties in which I have had especial trouble are Jackson, Mitchell and Ashe." He confided: "My deputies and the local exemption boards there claim that the county officers will not render any assistance."¹⁶⁰ The Governor now decided to concentrate the initial efforts in Jackson County. All correspondence indicated it was the "hot-bed" of the draft dodgers. Bickett directed the sheriffs of Jackson, Swain, and Macon counties to join Marshall Webb and his deputies in an attempt to round-up all deserters in the Jackson County area.¹⁶¹

While sheriffs in the western counties of North Carolina advanced on the strongholds of the deserters, over 3,000 miles away the German Army began its advance toward Paris. America's allies now bombarded Washington with appeals for more men as the German Army swept within

¹⁶⁰Charles A. Webb to Thomas Walter Bickett, April 1, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁶¹Thomas Walter Bickett to sheriffs of Jackson, Swain, and Macon counties and Marshall Charles A. Webb, April 2, 1918, Bickett Papers.

cannonading distance of the "City of Light." The calls for men during the early months of 1918 had been insignificant compared to the quotas now issued by the War Department.¹⁶² On April 14 Provost Marshal Crowder issued quotas to Governors of the states for 49,843 men. North Carolina's quota was set at 481.¹⁶³ Then on May 3, 1918, Secretary of War Baker announced that during May, 233,000 men would be called by the selective service machinery throughout the nation. Governor Bickett was informed North Carolina must furnish 8,114 men for this draft;¹⁶⁴ and before the month was over additional calls had resulted in the mobilization of 373,000 men from the various states.¹⁶⁵

Accompanying the emergency draft calls, orders were issued by the Provost Marshall's Office to begin a vigorous campaign throughout the nation to apprehend all draft delinquents or deserters. Since class I was being rapidly depleted across the country it was necessary to insure that those scheduled to go to the front first complied with the regulations.¹⁶⁶

Major John D. Langston of North Carolina's Adjutant General's Office passed the new orders down to the local level. He estimated there were about 1,000 deserters or delinquents in North Carolina and he requested that local exemption boards forward to his office the names of

¹⁶²Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 149-151

¹⁶³The News and Observer, April 15, 1918.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., May 4, 1918.

¹⁶⁵Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, p. 151; see also The News and Observer, May 15, 1918.

¹⁶⁶The News and Observer, May 16, 1918; see also Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 150-151.

all deserters under their jurisdiction. But as the reports from the boards across the state flooded into the Adjutant General's Office, officials realized they had underestimated the number of deserters at large in North Carolina. Additional information was received that sheriffs in many counties were not cooperating with local boards in apprehending violators of the selective service law. The state's Adjutant General's Office declared that sheriffs in some of the western counties, especially Mitchell and Davie, had displayed an uncooperative attitude which showed they were "not only unpatriotic but guilty of malfeasance in office."¹⁶⁷

The emergency draft calls of May, 1918, added to the number of draft dodgers throughout the state; also the second registration of all men between twenty-one and thirty-one years of age. It took place across the nation on June 5, 1918. In North Carolina 16,248 men who had reached their twenty-first birthday since the first selective service registration, were eligible for the draft. The War Department had deemed this second registration necessary in order to fill the exhausted ranks of Class I.¹⁶⁸ It is, of course, mathematically evident that the greater number of men called, the larger the number of delinquents created. By late June there were nearly 4,000 draft dodgers in North Carolina.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷The News and Observer, May 18, 24, 29, 1917.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., June 7, July 2, 1918; see also Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 156-157.

¹⁶⁹Speech delivered by Mrs. Laura Holmes, during the Conference of the Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense, July 11-12, 1918, Greensboro, N. C., Bickett Papers.

In mid-June, 1918, the Adjutant General's Office of North Carolina believed a plan had been devised which would result in the voluntary surrender of all delinquents and deserters in the state. So convinced were the authorities that this plan would work, the local boards were officially notified to employ the method. The plan guaranteed to deserters their local board would intercede with military officials if they voluntarily surrendered. Boards were instructed to inform the mountain-roving deserters of this offer by messages carried to them by their friends and relatives. After this had been communicated to boards throughout North Carolina, state officials settled back to observe the results.¹⁷⁰

Late Sunday night, June 23, 1918, a group of Jefferson, North Carolina, citizens were in an exuberant mood as they walked along a dark mountain road. The men were returning to their homes after attending a patriotic rally. Suddenly, rounding a curve in the winding roadway, the Jefferson citizens confronted a second group of men. Recognizing them as deserters, the Jefferson residents quickly decided to capture the draft dodgers. The two groups merged as one and a free-swinging fight erupted. David Welch, one of the deserters, broke and ran; Wingfield Goss, filled with patriotic fervor, charged after him. Running, half-stumbling along the curving, rock strewn road, Welch outdistanced Goss by several hundred yards; then out of breath plunged off the roadway into a clump of stunted trees struggling in the stoney soil of the mountainside. Minutes later, Goss, who had lapsed into a rapid

¹⁷⁰The News and Observer, June 10, 13, 1918.

walk, passed by the waiting deserter. Welch discharged his pistol at almost point-blank range. Mortally hit, Goss fell, but when Welch emerged from his ambushade, the dying Goss triggered off four quick shots from his own weapon. Welch screamed and collapsed, also fatally wounded.¹⁷¹ No audience witnessed the tragic climax acted out on that lonely mountain road in the northwestern North Carolina county of Ashe.

When the bodies of patriot Winfield Goss and deserter Dave Welch had been carried down the mountainside and brought into Jefferson, Goss was dead; Welch lingered for a few brief hours, dying June 24.¹⁷² Earlier in the day the chairman of the Ashe County Exemption Board wired Governor Bickett the events of June 23:¹⁷³

Around forty deserters in Ashe County. One Civilian killed last night in attempt to arrest deserter. Situation serious. Home Guard selected but not yet organized. Can organize in few days and want authority. Have wired Washington for soldiers under military direction. Answer at Once.

Governor Bickett reacted deliberately. Before taking any action the Governor wanted a complete investigation of the situation and Adjutant General Lawrence Young immediately left by train for Jefferson. Both General Young and the Governor hoped the deserters could be persuaded to give up voluntarily. However, when the Adjutant General's train passed through Winston-Salem on June 25, he advised Colonel J. C. Bissent of the local home-guard that his troops should be prepared to move at a

¹⁷¹Ibid., June 25, 26, 27, 1918.

¹⁷²Ibid., June 26, 1918.

¹⁷³W. E. McNeil to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 24, 1918, Bickett Papers.

moment's alert.¹⁷⁴

General Young's train arrived in North Wilkesboro on the evening of June 25. From here he was driven by car over thirty-five miles of nearly impassable, rain-soaked, mountain roads. When he arrived in Jefferson he found the town still and quiet. General Young spent a good portion of the night conferring with local officials.¹⁷⁵ Early the following morning he telegraphed Governor Bickett:¹⁷⁶

Situation here appears to be acute. . .citizens of opinion. . . organized force in addition to local officers will be needed to cope with the deserters. . .Sheriff is reported to be in sympathy with fugitives. . .citizens report that approximately 30 deserters are around and in hiding ready to resist arrest. . . I am convinced that the only solution is to send an outside force. . .

The Governor probably read the communication several times; reflected on the capabilities of the ageing General Young; weighting the situation several times as he paced his office, he sat down at his desk and dashed off a message to the Adjutant General at Jefferson: "Will arrive North Wilkesboro Friday night. . . Have notices sent to every nook and corner [of] . . .Ashe County that I will address a mass meeting of the citizens of Ashe, at Jefferson, Saturday three p.m."¹⁷⁷ Governor Bickett clung to the hope the problem could be solved by peaceful means, and he made known this hope to the press.¹⁷⁸ Obviously, the plan recently

¹⁷⁴Thomas Walter Bickett to F. B. Hendren, June 26, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also The News and Observer, June 26, 1918.

¹⁷⁵The News and Observer, June 26, 27, 1918.

¹⁷⁶Adjutant General Lawrence Young to Thomas Walter Bickett, June 26, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁷⁷Thomas Walter Bickett to General Lawrence Young, June 26, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁷⁸The News and Observer, June 27, 1918.

promulgated to the local boards by the Adjutant General's Office was uppermost in his mind. On June 26 he also wired Ashe County officials requesting that his planned address in Jefferson on Saturday be well publicized. Particularly, he wanted local authorities to notify "all friends and relatives of delinquents."¹⁷⁹ Although he expressed himself publically as confident the problem of the draft dodgers could be solved peacefully, his deepest fears were revealed in a telegram to Provost Marshall Crowder on June 27: "A situation fraught with present danger and untold future evil has arisen in Ashe County. . . ." The Governor followed with a description of the "danger" and then stated: "I shall take every measure possible to relieve it without actual bloodshed." But if drastic measures had to be used and the deserters had to be ferreted out and shot down "it ought to be done by the Federal authorities and by troops." Consequently, Bickett concluded that he wanted ready at his call "a squadron of cavalry, and a battalion of about fifty infantry." Ending the lengthy wire, the Governor felt "that to a certain extent the future efficient administration of the selective service law is going to depend upon the way this Ashe County situation is handled."¹⁸⁰

On June 26 Frank Smethurst, The News and Observer reporter who had covered the draft resistance near Goldston the previous summer, sent the news from the scene of the violence. Smethurst believed the basis for

¹⁷⁹Thomas Walter Bickett to W. E. McNeil, June 27, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to G. L. Park, June 27, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁸⁰Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, June 27, 1918, Bickett Papers.

the current outbreak of anti-conscription sentiment lay in several factors. Numbers of people in the Ashe County vicinity, in sympathy with the deserters, had advised them to remain hidden until a Republican President was elected. The draft law would then be repealed and all deserters pardoned. This advice, Smethurst believed, was accepted by many of the delinquents since the majority were young, uneducated men, with little communication with the world beyond their mountains. Consequently, they held little knowledge of the cause, purpose or progress of the war; they remained unaware of their responsibilities as citizens. Smethurst once more saw a political factor involved. He intimated that one of the reasons the men had been allowed to roam unmolested was due to their political affiliation. The majority were Republicans, of the same political faith as Ashe County Sheriff T. L. Latham. This freedom, the "star" reporter asserted, coupled with stories they had been told of extreme punishment awaiting them when they surrendered, had contributed to the spirit of defiance. Thus, concluded Smethurst, neither was it a rebellion or insurrection in Ashe County, rather it was a case of forty or more boys "stirred by agreement for trouble and encouraged by outside influence of [a] sinister nature, [who] have sought the protection of their mountains."¹⁸¹

The day before Bickett was scheduled to arrive in Jefferson, the Governor's proposed address received wide publicity by posters and word of mouth. Because of political differences and divided opinions concerning the best methods of dealing with the deserters, the people of Ashe

¹⁸¹The News and Observer, June 27, 28, 29, 1918.

County awaited Governor Bickett's arrival with great confidence in his leadership, but with little confidence in each other.¹⁸²

The babble of voices faded into quiet in the packed Ashe County Courthouse in West Jefferson. Governor Bickett walked to the improvised speaker's stand, collected his notes before him, looked out over the myriad of friendly up-turned faces, and began: "Men of the mountains: I come to you today to save and not to destroy." The Governor addressed the crowd for over two hours---first speaking from his prepared notes, then extemporaneously.¹⁸³ Bickett pledged that any deserter who gave up voluntarily could return to camp with a personal letter from him asking the commanding officer for leniency. But, the Governor was also firm: "If. . . [the deserters] don't come in they will be brought in," by the combined effort of state and nation. Then Bickett lashed out at those who had planted the seeds of desertion in Ashe County. He declared his contempt was great ". . . for the man who sulks around in the bushes and whispers about this being a politicians war, a Wilson's War. . . ." His voice rising to a higher pitch he nearly shouted: "Such a man as that is a dastard and a traitor and deserves to be stood before a firing squad and shot to smithereines."¹⁸⁴

¹⁸²Ibid., June 28, 29, 1918.

¹⁸³Thomas Walter Bickett's Speech, West Jefferson, June 29, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also The News and Observer, June 30, 1918.

¹⁸⁴The News and Observer, June 30, 1918; see also ibid., July 2, 1918. In a private conversation with Ashe County officials he is reported to have remarked: "No man now has a right to an opinion unless it leads to the damnation of the Imperial German Government."

When he ended the speech, delivered with all the "feeling, fire and fury of his soul. . .," Frank Smethurst observed, the assemblage shook the courthouse walls with applause and shouts of ardent approval. Even before the Governor departed for his return to Raleigh one deserter voluntarily surrendered to local officials. Citizens of the county who heretofore asserted only force could bring the deserters in, were now convinced that the majority of men would come in peacefully.¹⁸⁵ A western North Carolina newspaper believed the trouble was quelled by the Governor's address and an editorial surmised "the best thing to do was exactly what [Governor Bickett]. . .decided to do---go over and talk to the Ashe County folks."¹⁸⁶

The flood waters of desertion were dammed. The local animosity toward the draft dodgers mounted after the heat of Governor Bickett's address seared across Ashe County. By July 8 seventeen deserters and delinquents had reported to local exemption board authorities.¹⁸⁷ Also in other counties throughout the state, the impact of the speech caused immediate reaction. Assurance that the Governor's policy of leniency would be extended to deserters in other counties, brought men into their local boards in Montgomery, Johnston, Transylvania, Guilford, Wake and Wilkes counties. Adjutant General Young elatedly declared: "It is easy to see that the handling of the situation in Ashe County has gone out over the state and is working an almost unexpectedly fine

¹⁸⁵Ibid., July 1, 1918.

¹⁸⁶The Times, July 1, 1918.

¹⁸⁷W. E. McNeil to Thomas Walter Bickett, July 8, 1918, Bickett Papers.

effect wherever there are deserters."¹⁸⁸

On July 10, Governor Bickett wrote to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker. Noting there remained a large number of deserters and delinquents in North Carolina, the Governor then enumerated the cause of this unfortunate situation: "Our people are not a military people. They are not accustomed to military discipline," the Governor wrote. "To take orders from any one is foreign to their experience and shocks their sense of independence." Another cause of the recent tense situation in North Carolina, Bickett continued, was owing to family ties or friendships of the young men with Confederate veterans. Many of these former soldiers had deserted the Confederate Army and returned to the mountains of North Carolina. Based on their own experience they advised the young mountaineers that they should hide until the war's end, then come out without fear of punishment. A third factor, the Governor wrote, affecting the desertion situation was the prevalence of "cheap two-by-four politicians in every section of the state. . ." who claim the war is a Democrat's fight and when a Republican becomes president "a general pardon [will be] granted to all delinquents and

¹⁸⁸The News and Observer, July 9, 1918; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to E. W. Moore, July 13, 1918, Bickett Papers. Typical of the letters sent to surrendering deserters were the two mailed to E. W. Moore. In the cover letter, Governor Bickett congratulated Moore for giving up voluntarily. The enclosure, addressed to his Commanding General, Camp Sevier, Greenville, S. C., concluded: "I sincerely hope that you will restore this soldier to ranks and give him another chance to make a good soldier. . . ."; see also The News and Observer, July 18, 1918. By July 17 only two deserters remained at large in Ashe County. These were believed to have fled to neighboring states.

deserters."¹⁸⁹

Mid-July found a decided relaxation in the tense atmosphere created in some sections of North Carolina by the draft evaders. But until the final days of the war, owing to the number of draft dodgers in the state, it was necessary for Governor Bickett to pursue his "fixed purpose to send every North Carolina deserter back to camp, peaceably if I can; forcibly if I must."¹⁹⁰ Following the tragedy in Ashe County, he continued to champion "a campaign among the friends and relatives of" the state's selective service violators. This campaign aided immeasurably the voluntarily surrender of hundreds of draft dodgers.¹⁹¹ Even in late October, 1918, Governor Bickett's letters in behalf of deserters in some western counties, continued to arrive at the Commanding Officer's desk, Camp Jackson, South Carolina.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹Thomas Walter Bickett to Newton D. Baker, July 10, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also The News and Observer, August 1, 1918. Secretary Baker wrote Bickett on July 31: "Your analysis of the cause of delinquency and desertion is undoubtedly sound. Your services in Ashe County were certainly most helpful and wise."

¹⁹⁰Thomas Walter Bickett to A. T. Delap, July 9, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁹¹Thomas Walter Bickett to Coleman C. Cowan, July 27, 1918, Bickett Papers.

¹⁹²Thomas Walter Bickett to Commanding Officer, Camp Jackson, S. C., October 8, 1918, Bickett Papers; see also W. L. Carrolison to Thomas Bickett, October 24, 1918, Bickett Papers. Some men refused to come in until they had received a copy of the letter Governor Bickett forwarded to their commanding officer; see also Bickett's Private Secretary for Governor Bickett to Carl Harp, November 1, 1918, Bickett Papers.

XII

To Draft or Not to Draft "Children"

By the first week in August, 1918, over 50,000 North Carolinians had been entrained for army camps through the state's draft machine. Still the calls came requesting more selectees for the insatiable maw of war. A quota of 4,500 men assigned to the state on August 7 was expected to exhaust the few remaining registrants in Class I.¹⁹³ This crisis was nationwide. The War Department realized that the continuing demands for troops would, within several months, exhaust the entire reservoir of Class I registrants in the various states. To counter this drain of registrants, government officials concluded the Selective Service Act had to be amended to require the registration of all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five. However, the civilian was initially reluctant to accept these plans.¹⁹⁴ North Carolinians were not exceptions.

The age extensions of the War Department's "New Man Power Measure" was not revealed to the general public until August 4. On this date, the first Sunday in August, papers from the slopes to the strands of North Carolina carried the news that the liable ages under the revised draft proposal would be eighteen to forty-five. On the following day the War Department's plan was introduced into an adjourned Congress, however, Senate and House Military Affairs Committees began hearings on the

¹⁹³The News and Observer, August 7, 8, 1918.

¹⁹⁴Crowder, The Spirit of Selective Service, pp. 168-169.

bills that were subsequently continued into late August.¹⁹⁵

When the officials announced the age extensions under the new draft proposal, North Carolina citizens turned to the usual recourse of Americans when confronted with repugnant legislation; they wrote their Congressional delegates. The First Citizen of North Carolina became the standard bearer of the opposition. Governor Bickett sent letters to each member of the North Carolina delegation in Washington on August 6, 1918. The Ashe County situation was still in his thoughts: "I am fearful that a blanket extension of the law so as to include all men between the ages of 18 and 45, will kindle anew the fires of opposition and result in more embarrassment than benefit." He felt the measure was unwise for several reasons: an acute labor shortage would result by drafting men between eighteen and twenty-one; colleges would close down since 75% of the students were between eighteen and twenty-one; the people felt a man should not be conscripted before he could vote; he doubted the fighting ability of men over forty; and Governor Bickett failed to see any pressing military need---under the existing law four million men were available, he commented.¹⁹⁶

Another high ranking state official opposed extension of the draft. George P. Pell, Commissioner of the State Corporation Commission, wrote Representative Claude Kitchin: "I trust you will do all in your power to defeat the attempt to lower the draft age below 21 years." He

¹⁹⁵The News and Observer, August 4, 5, 10, 16, 1918.

¹⁹⁶Thomas Walter Bickett to Edwin Yates Webb, August 6, 1918, Webb Papers; see also Thomas Walter Bickett to Lee S. Overman, August 6, 1918, Bickett Papers.

felt the proposed amendment would deprive too many young men of a college education. He also deemed the extension unnecessary "when there are thousands of old batchelors and thousands of rich young married men whose lives are not worth half as much. . .," as the younger set.¹⁹⁷

Lesser ranking citizens throughout the state expressed their dislike of the draft extension. From Kenly, a resident wrote that he hoped Representative Kitchin would oppose any downward revision of the selective service law: "I have not heard a single person express themselves as being in favor of making. . . [the draft] under twenty-one years," he added.¹⁹⁸ The Secretary-Manager of New Bern's Chamber of Commerce believed reduction of the age limit to twenty was sufficient: "It would seem a shame to send our green boys of 18 and even 19 overseas to be slaughtered by the enemy." And he conjectured that 75% of the people in Craven County shared his opinion.¹⁹⁹ Cotton ginner and buyer O. C. Wall, writing to Congressman Kitchin from Cooleemee, North Carolina on August 8, declared that in his trips "through several counties. . ." he had discovered the people are opposed to "such extreme as 18 to 45 for new draft limits."²⁰⁰

During the first weeks of August, North Carolina congressional opinion on the new draft proposal remained divided. Senator Lee S.

¹⁹⁷George P. Pell to Claude Kitchin, August 6, 1918, Kitchin Papers.

¹⁹⁸H. F. Edgerton to Claude Kitchin, August 5, 1918, Kitchin Papers.

¹⁹⁹Mandel Sener to Claude Kitchin, August 7, 1918, Kitchin Papers.

²⁰⁰O. C. Wall to Claude Kitchin, August 8, 1918, Kitchin Papers.

Overman did not object to registration of the eighteen to twenty-one year old group, yet he felt "they should [not] be available for foreign service until they arrive at the age of twenty-one."²⁰¹ Representative Robert L. Doughton was "convinced that it would be a greivous blunder if not a fatal mistake to draft children into military service. . . ." Doughton felt that unless he had a decided change of mind "I shall be compelled to oppose this . . . [new draft law] much as I deplore opposing anything the administration requests."²⁰² Representative Zebulon Weaver of the Twelfth Congressional District believed if the new selective service law were necessary to win the war: "I . . . feel that it. . . [is] my duty. . ." to vote for enactment.²⁰³

While committees in the House and Senate continued to hold hearings on the War Department's new proposal; while well-intentioned citizens flooded their congressmen with letters regarding the measure, newspapers during the early weeks of August carried streamer headlines and accompanying stories describing the holocaust raging on the Western Front. War Department officials demanded more manpower to swell America's embattled armies. So immediate was the need, a third registration was scheduled for August 24. All men attaining twenty-one years of age since the second registration, June 5, 1918, were required to register.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹Lee S. Overman to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 8, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²⁰²Robert L. Doughton to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 13, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²⁰³Zebulon Weaver to Thomas Walter Bickett, August 10, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²⁰⁴The News and Observer, August 15, 16, 1918.

Slowly public opinion began to change. Telegrams and letters which had initially poured into Representative Kitchin's office deploring the age extension, stopped completely. Between August 14-31, 1918, he received no formal communications relative to the proposed change in the selective service age limits.²⁰⁵ Mid-August found Governor Bickett, for all intents and purposes, favoring the pending change.²⁰⁶ Newspapers such as The Charlotte Daily Observer, initially reluctant to endorse the War Department's plan, urged enactment. Staff writers for the Charlotte paper were reassured by Secretary Newton Baker's announcement that the eighteen to nineteen year olds would spend most of their war in training camps. Hence the summoning of the young would be but "a safeguard and that the probability of active service in France is remote."²⁰⁷ The Morning Star editorialized that the United States could easily afford to raise an army of 5,000,000, eighteen to forty-five year olds to "crush Prussianism."²⁰⁸

Passage of the "New Manpower Bill" came in the House on August 24. Although North Carolina Representatives Edward M. Pou and John H. Small opposed the bill, they sacrificed their personal convictions to support the administration's plan. They voted with an overwhelming

²⁰⁵See letters and telegrams to Claude Kitchin between August 14 and August 31, 1918, Kitchin Papers.

²⁰⁶Thomas Walter Bickett to Lee S. Overman, August 15, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²⁰⁷Charlotte Daily Observer, August 19, 1918; on August 2, 1918, an editorial had verged on denouncing Secretary Baker's plan.

²⁰⁸The Morning Star, August 21, 1918; see also The News and Observer, August 11, 1918. Editorials in the Raleigh paper were among the first in the state to endorse the administration's proposal.

majority which sent the measure to the Senate with 336 "yeas" to 2 "noes."²⁰⁹ By a unanimous vote the bill passed the Senate on August 27. President Wilson signed the amendment to the Selective Service Act on August 31.²¹⁰

XIII

Meritoriously Completed

As the schedule for the registration of all men between eighteen and forty-five approached, North Carolina newspapers sought compliance with the new regulation. Western Carolina publications believed registration day, September 12, 1918, could be a day when their readers proved to the world that "men of the hill country are not 'slackers'."²¹¹ The eastern press admonished North Carolinians: "The Man Who Waits is a Slacker. The Man Who Evades is a Felon. Register."²¹²

The calls were heeded; the eighteen to forty-five age group responded with an enthusiasm surpassing that of the first registrants nearly fifteen months before. On September 12, 250,618 men were enrolled by registrars from "the mountains to the sea."²¹³ The enthusiasm of the registrants to "do their bit" was perhaps only exceeded in some places by that of the registrars to do theirs. The Winston-Salem Board completed the entire process of registering 4,761 men and delivering the

²⁰⁹The News and Observer, August 25, 1918.

²¹⁰Ibid., August 28, September 1, 1918.

²¹¹The Times, September 11, 1918.

²¹²The News and Observer, September 12, 1918.

²¹³Ibid., September 14, 17, 1918.

required forms to the Adjutant General in Raleigh within twenty-four hours²¹⁴—"thus establishing a record of promptness in the dispatch of this important task that has been unexcelled throughout the nation," commended Provost Marshal General Crowder.²¹⁵ General Crowder personally congratulated Governor Bickett on "the prompt and thorough manner in which the registration. . . was accomplished in North Carolina". . . .²¹⁶ The state's Chief Executive, often finding it embarrassingly necessary to inform the War Department of dissident elements in the state during the previous months, must have glowed with pride at the Provost Marshal's letter. The final phase in conscripting North Carolinians from all walks of life had been meritoriously completed.

XIV

The Last Steps in The Process

Less than eight weeks after the fourth and final registration, the war in Europe came to an end. During the intervening period the local draft boards began the enormous task of classifying the new 250,618 registrants while they continued to entrain selectees for the army camps.

In reviewing the exemption claims of the newly registered, greater emphasis was placed on the occupational status of prospective selectees. Following the final registration, the North Carolina Council of Defense advised the local boards that it was obligatory, as specified in the "New

²¹⁴J. S. Kuykendall, et. al., "Report of the Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem," pp. 65-78, Military Collection, World War I.

²¹⁵Ibid., p. 94.

Man-Power Bill," they insure that prospective draftees under their jurisdiction were employed in occupations essential to the war effort. If the board judged a registrant's job to be non-essential, the Council advised that he should be instructed: "Your present job is not helping to win the war. You have a week in which to find productive work;" and if the registrant did not comply he would be included among the draftees for the next quota. In other words, the Council of Defense emphasized, it was "work or fight."²¹⁷ Similarly, the North Carolina Attorney General's Office believed the problem of "slackers" could best be handled by the local draft boards. On October 25, the Attorney General outlined this position in a letter to a Beaufort County Resident:²¹⁸

The failure to work by those able to work in these strenuous times has to be dealt with largely by the Local Exemption Board under the Selective Service Rules.

All of these shirkers are probably within the age of 18 and 45 years and the local board can send them to camp when they come to deal with their claims for exemption.

At the height of the Influenza epidemic the process of classification and scheduling of entrainments was slowed. However, Governor Bickett encouraged the local boards to heed Provost Marshal Crowder's instructions; regardless of the flu conditions in their areas "men must

²¹⁷Pratt, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense", II, 217-218.

²¹⁸North Carolina Attorney General to R. L. Bonner, October 25, 1918, Attorney General Papers, State Archives, Raleigh. Bonner had requested information on what course to pursue to induce "slackers" to work.

be forwarded [to camp] on scheduled time periods."²¹⁹ Less than a week before the cessation of hostilities the influenza epidemic had so abated that the classification and entrainment process was resumed at virtually the previous pace.²²⁰

Soon after the Armistice was signed, the War Department quickly planned to reverse gears and engage their machinery for its demobilization phase. The demanding tasks that had confronted North Carolina's draft board members during the previous nineteen months were over. The job of demobilization passed to Washington. The Federal government had "to bring the boys home." But the "Tar Heel" conscripts of every "rank and file," reluctantly or willingly sent "to the front," looked to the Old North State's chief executive for assistance. Letters streamed in to Governor Thomas Walter Bickett. They urged his personal intervention: Would he use his authority to accelerate the process of exchanging military garb for civilian?²²¹

²¹⁹General E. H. Crowder to Thomas Walter Bickett, November 4, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²²⁰Thomas Walter Bickett to General E. H. Crowder, November 5, 1918, Bickett Papers.

²²¹Thomas Walter Bickett to Newton D. Baker, November 16, 1918, Bickett Papers.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

I

When President Woodrow Wilson's war message committed the United States to active participation, students in colleges throughout North Carolina patriotically demonstrated their willingness to serve the holy crusade. Student battalions were promptly formed, and by commencement, 1917, a stream of seniors and undergraduates had moved off the campuses to the reserve officer training grounds.

After the colleges recessed for the summer holidays, North Carolina educators became acutely aware of the effect of the war on enrollments. Consequently, when President Wilson in midsummer, 1917, urged all youths below the age of twenty-one to return to colleges in the fall, the "Tar Heel" academicians loudly endorsed his plea. They echoed the President throughout the remaining months of the war and constantly reiterated that college educated citizenry would be needed to rebuild the post-war world.

In September, 1917, the vast majority of students enrolled in colleges and universities across the state were freshmen. They entered their first year of collegiate education charged with the same patriotic enthusiasm which had sent seniors and upperclassmen to training camps. Student publications, that exhorted the younger men to their responsibilities, echoed the educators' theme: educated architects would be needed to rebuild a shattered world after the battle had been won for democracy.

Institutions of higher learning in North Carolina revised their curriculums for the 1917-1918 academic year to schedule training periods for military instruction. Drilling and classroom work were supervised by professionals schooled in the art of war. The students, surrounded by a din of patriotism sounded by college officials and publications, responded enthusiastically to the military training. What motivated some students apparently was the vision of themselves, resplendant in officer garb, leading troops "over the top."

During the academic year 1917-1918 an electric atmosphere of dedicated patriotism enveloped campuses throughout the state. It was manifested in fund raising campaigns for the Red Cross, Liberty Loan and War Friendship Fund drives, "Gospel of the Clean Plate" pledges, and other student activities in support of the war effort. Academicians constantly exhorted students to redouble their efforts in support of the cause "to make the world safe for democracy." The vibrant chauvinism inspired student authors to extol in idealistic terms the holy crusade of embattled armies on Flander's Fields. The young writers encouraged their fellows, often in carbon copy phrases of the educators, to rededicate their lives to the cause of universal democracy. The exodus to training camps and the self-sacrificing spirit in which students launched summer projects during 1918, evidenced the extent to which the patriotically charged campus atmosphere had influenced their outlook.

As colleges and universities across the state prepared for the opening of the 1918-1919 school year, the War Department formally announced plans for a Student Army Training Corps. In the same vociferous chorus

which had championed President Wilson's "stay-in-college" plea of barely a year before, educational leaders of North Carolina expressed their delight with the SATC. Under this program, the educators asserted, any ambitious, patriotic student could attain a college education. To them the SATC was "the essence of Democracy." However, Judge Walter Clark vigorously dissented. Clark's public exchange of letters with President Edward Kidder Graham emphasized that the War Department plans were biased in favor of the academically superior student. Although he took no public stand, Governor Thomas Walter Bickett concurred with Judge Clark. The SATC was implemented, although influential North Carolina citizens remained uncompromisingly divided on its democratic concepts.

With the announcement that Student Army Training Corps would be established at North Carolina colleges and universities, college age youths responded in vast numbers. Applications for admission to SATC became so great that educators sifted out with care only those well prepared for college level work. Although the state institutions of higher learning reported record enrollments, hundreds of hopeful SATC members were denied admission.

The military training program was introduced to campuses across the state on October 1, 1918. Under the chauvinistic exhortations of the educators the SATC members quickly adapted themselves to the strict discipline imposed by the military regimes. Campus editors observed that the morale of the student-soldiers remained at a high level during the

seven weeks of militarily oriented education. Only when the war ended and plans for deactivation of the Student Army Training Corps were promulgated did the student-soldiers reveal a wholesale aversion to military discipline and training. Similarly, student writers, who had previously echoed the praises of college administrators for the War Department's plan, now condemned the SATC "to the autocratic junk pile," and its usefulness, they declared, was exhausted. In addition to this sudden reversal of editorial opinion, the exodus of former student-soldiers from the campuses following demobilization of the SATC proved the validity of arguments offered by Judge Walter Clark and Governor Thomas Bickett. As they had predicted hundreds of youths had been denied enrollment in the SATC who were unable to meet the academic standards. High school graduates, however, were welcomed into the "bomb proof" units and the "less fortunate" entrained for the front. Consequently, with the termination of hostilities the SATC sanctuary, no longer needed to harbor the academically superior or the conscription shy, was viewed as an outmoded concept by college administrators and the former SATC members who, Judas-like, turned their backs on the War Department program.

Following the Armistice the swift tides of patriotism which had surged across the campuses during the previous nineteen months rapidly receded.

II

On April 7, 1917, the War Department made public its plans to raise an army through conscription. Across North Carolina voices of the "rank and file" both denounced and praised the concept of compulsory military

service. As the Wilson administration's proposal for selective service was hotly debated in the halls of Congress, some North Carolinians asserted that the proposal represented vested interest groups and that the plan was basically un-American. Others urged their congressmen to support the Selective Service Bill. Newspapers across the state and Governor Thomas Walter Bickett emphatically endorsed the proposed measure as the most equitable plan for raising an army. And by late April when the Selective Service Act passed Congress with large majorities, public opinion in North Carolina had, with some exceptions, crystallized in its favor.

After President Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law on May 18, 1917, North Carolina's chief executive moved swiftly to establish the state's draft machinery in accordance with federal regulations. By May 20, Governor Bickett had named boards in every county of the state to perform the task of registering all men twenty-one to thirty-one years of age on national registration day, June 5, 1917. However, when Provost Marshal E. H. Crowder directed that registration boards and two additional citizens appointed by the Governor would serve as exemption board officials, Governor Bickett differed with the Provost Marshal. The North Carolina chief executive contended that appointment of registration board members to exemption boards would result in unfair judgments on deferment claims. Governor Bickett felt that the decisions of local officials would be dictated by their opposition to the draft act. Although he reluctantly carried out the Provost Marshall's instructions, Governor Bickett was elated when notified that the War Department's revised

plans called for gubernatorial appointment and presidential approval of the local draft board members.

The initial registration of men under the Selective Service Act was completed in North Carolina on June 5, 1917, without a "trace of opposition or disturbance." Launching into their task with vigor, local boards across the state began notifying registrants of their assigned serial numbers by early July. Following the lottery held in Washington on July 20, 1917, to determine the liability for selective service registrants, the state exemption boards began to summon registrants for physical examinations. Although the vast majority of the registrants responded to the call by their local boards, large numbers claimed exemptions from the draft on grounds of dependency and occupation. Due to the large amount of draft deferments claimed and the number of men rejected for physical defects, many local boards found it necessary to issue second and third calls to meet their quotas. But in late August the majority of the North Carolina draft boards had secured their required numbers of prospective soldiers.

Although some registrants used devious methods to avoid conscription, it was not until the first week in August that the long-smouldering sentiment against conscription burst out into the open. Overt hostility to the draft was encouraged among prospective inductees by a small, highly vocal, hardcore element. These opponents of compulsory military service employed the same arguments used by various citizens who denounced the conscription plan when it was introduced. Reaction to the anti-draft agitators was immediate. Newspapers throughout the state editorially

lashed out at those who would defame the state's name by their condemnation of the draft law. Governor Bickett authoritatively declared that the names of draft opponents would be "forever pilloried in a people's contempt." Those opposing the law, he asserted militantly, "will be made to feel the strong arm of the law." Encouraged by the Governor to report all cases of "treason" uttered by opponents of conscription, citizens in the state moved swiftly to renounce opposition. After the arrest of several purported opponents of the law and the issuance of threats and warnings to the anti-draft agitators, the outspoken critics were silenced.

When the first entrainments for camps began in September, 1917, prominent citizens and draft officials were able to create only a superficial patriotism among friends and relatives who bade the selectees farewell. The departing draftees, preoccupied with thoughts of military life, exhibited little enthusiasm as their trains departed the depots. However, as the war advanced and a groundswell of patriotism rose across the state, entrainments progressively became occasions of patriotic exhortations, martial music, and cheering crowds. Similarly, this contagious patriotism motivated the draftees and by September, 1918, they requested their local boards to accelerate their draft status so that they might "do their bit."

Draft boards were confronted with an unsavory and demanding task. The boards not only selected the men to be sent "to the front," but they were responsible for the entrainment of draftees at their scheduled times. The demands on board members were increased in November, 1918,

when a questionnaire was adopted for classifying the registrants. Governor Bickett sympathized with the board members but exhorted them to their duties. For the Governor the new selective service regulations were "the legislative embodiment of 'equal justice to all and special privileges to none.'" As did War Department officials, Governor Bickett sought a more equitable and humane draft law after the implementation of conscription. Consequently, the Governor praised the classification plan that was based on a questionnaire. But soon after the new draft policy was launched, the well-intentioned Governor began an individual jihad which he felt supported the government's revised conscription plan. He appealed to the local board members and to the "womanhood" of North Carolina to assist him in sending to the front any man "not habitually and cheerfully supporting his family." He mixed chauvinism with idealism; he relentlessly pursued his course to send "slackers," recommended by disenchanted wives, to the fields in Flanders.

With the advent of spring, 1918, the German juggernaut advanced on Paris. The French and British armies moved to counter the Kaiser's thrust, but Allied commanders, aware of their desperately low reserves, appealed to Washington for manpower. The calls went out to the states for more selectees. The North Carolina draft machinery was required to furnish over 8,000 men for the emergency quotas issued in May. On June 5, 1918, the second nation-wide registration took place. In the Old North State, 16,248 men who had reached their twenty-first birthday since June 5, 1917, became liable under the selective service machinery. These increased demands for draftees obviously added to the number of draft

dodgers within the state. By late June, 4,000 deserters and delinquents were at large in North Carolina. Although the conscription shy were scattered in counties across the state, large numbers of the draft dodgers were concentrated in the western counties of Jackson, Swain, Macon, Mitchell, Davie, and Ashe. And in the northwestern county of Ashe open violence finally erupted between the patriotic majority and the anti-conscription minority on June 23, 1918.

When Governor Bickett was notified of the critical Ashe County situation on June 24, he took decisive, deliberate action. Unsatisfied with the report of North Carolina's Adjutant General Young, who was immediately dispatched to the scene, Governor Bickett traveled to Ashe to view the trouble at close range. Aware that the deserter problem was "frought. . .with danger," Governor Bickett played his trump card in a speech to the Ashe County citizens gathered at the West Jefferson courthouse on June 29, 1918. The Governor told the "mountain men" that any draft dodger who voluntarily surrendered to a local board would receive a personal letter from him asking for leniency. The impact of the speech brought immediate results. By mid-July the deserter crisis in Ashe County had abated and other draft dodgers throughout the state voluntarily surrendered to selective service officials in their areas. However, the deserter and delinquent problem in the state was never completely resolved. Until the final days of the war draft dodgers remained at large in many counties.

In order to meet the continuing demands for troops on the Western Front, War Department officials publically announced on August 4, 1918,

that Congress would be asked to amend the Selective Service Act to make liable for induction all men from eighteen to forty-five years of age. Led by Governor Bickett, citizens of every "rank and file" in North Carolina opposed any extension of the draft age. Initially the state's congressional delegation was divided on the proposed selective service amendment. Some newspapers were unwilling during the first weeks of August to endorse the War Department plan. But as the need for an age extension was brought home to people by newspaper reports of the severe action on the Western Front, public opinion gradually swung behind the age extension measure. By mid-August Governor Bickett realized the pressing need for more manpower and sanctioned the amendment. Newspapers, initially reluctant, began to stress the necessity for an age extension to swell America's embattled armies. And when the measure passed into law on August 31, 1918, North Carolina's congressional delegation had voted with the majority.

The final nation-wide registration, September 12, 1918, was meritoriously completed in North Carolina. Registrants between the ages of eighteen and forty-five numbered 250,618. Provost Marshall Crowder commended Governor Bickett on "the prompt and thorough manner in which the registration. . . was accomplished." During the eight week period following the final enrollment of prospective draftees, the local boards exerted a strong influence on their registrants to "work or fight." When the flu epidemic struck North Carolina Governor Bickett continued to exhort board members on their patriotic contribution. Although the classification and entrainment process slowed perceptibly,

a week before the Armistice the disease had subsided to such an extent that the selective service machinery virtually resumed its former schedule.

With the November, 1918 Armistice the tasks of draft boards were completed. The conscription of North Carolinians was over. The responsibility "to bring the boys home" devolved on the federal government. But Governor Bickett entertained the pleas of North Carolina conscripts of every "rank and file." They enlisted his aid to insure their speedy return to the civilian world they had known before Armageddon brought conscription.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscript Collections

- Attorney General of North Carolina Papers. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Bickett, Thomas Walter Papers. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Clark, Walter Papers. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Graham, Edward Kidder Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Kitchin, Claude Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Military Collection, World War I Papers, 1903-1933, V. Recruiting and the Draft Boards in North Carolina. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- North Carolina Council of Defense Papers. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Small, John Humphrey Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Smith, Clayton Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- University of North Carolina Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- University of North Carolina Trustee Minutes, 1917-1918. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Webb, Edwin Yates Papers. The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Public Documents

- Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 1st Sess., Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917.

Newspapers and Journals

The Times (Asheville)

Charlotte Daily Observer

Newspapers and Journals (cont'd)

The Morning Star (Wilmington)

The News and Observer (Raleigh)

The New York Times

The Progressive Farmer (Raleigh)

Virginian Pilot and Norfolk Landmark

Student Newspapers

The Tar Heel, University of North Carolina, April, 1917-November, 1918.

The Trinity Chronicle, Trinity College, April, 1917-May, 1917.

College and University Journals

The North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering Alumni News
IV (October 1, 1918); II (December 1, 1918).

The Training School Quarterly, IV (April-June, 1917); IV (July-September, 1917).

The University of North Carolina Alumni Review, VI (October-December, 1917);
VI (January, 1918); VI (June, 1918); VII (October-December, 1918).

The University of North Carolina Magazine, XXXV (November-December, 1917).

The University of North Carolina Newsletter, (December 25, 1918).

The University of North Carolina Record, No. CXLIX (August, 1917); No. CL
(September, 1917).

Wake Forest Student, XXXVII (October, 1917); XXXVII (December, 1917);
XL (January, 1918); XXXIX (February, 1919).

Yackety Yack, XVIII (Chapel Hill, 1918)

Books

Crowder, Major General E. H., The Spirit of Selective Service. New York:
The Century Company, 1920.

Kolbe, Parke Rexford, The Colleges in Wartime and After. New York:
D. Appleton & Company, 1919.

Lingle, Walter L., Memories of Davidson College. Richmond: John Knox Press,
1957.

Nowell, Elizabeth (ed.), The Letters of Thomas Wolfe. New York: Charles
Scribner's Sons, 1956.

Books (cont'd)

Paschal, George Washington, History of Wake Forest College, 1905-1943, vol. III. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1943.

Salley, Katherine Batts (ed.), Life at St. Mary's. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942.

Terry, John Skally (ed.), Thomas Wolfe's Letters to His Mother. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943.

Wilson, Louis R., The University of North Carolina, 1900-1930: The Making of a Modern University. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1957.

Articles and Essays

Adams, Agatha Boyd, "Thomas Wolfe: Carolina Student, A Brief Biography," The University of North Carolina Extension Publication, XV (1950).

Coates, Albert M., "The University Purpose in War Education," The University Magazine, VI (December, 1917).

Hutchinson, Glen, "Carolina Goes to War: A Lesson from Campus History, 1915-1919," The Carolina Magazine, LXVII (December, 1937).

Q., Re., "Sketch of the S. A. T. C. at Wake Forest," Wake Forest Student, XXXIX (February, 1919).

Tate, Mable and Naomi Neal, Women and the War In North Carolina, N.P., 1918.

Unpublished Studies

Kuykendall, J. S., et. al., "Report of Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem." Unpublished Report. File Box 4, Military Collection, World War I Papers, 1903-1933, V. Recruiting and Draft Boards in North Carolina. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Pratt, Joseph Hyde, "History of the North Carolina Council of Defense." Unpublished three volume work, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.