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ABOUT WISCONSIN

Menomonie residents celebrated local members of the Wisconsin National Guard who served during the Great War. As Wisconsin soldiers demobilized, policymakers reevaluated the meaning of wartime service—and fiercely debated how the state should recognize veterans' sacrifices. WHS IMAGE ID 103418

A Hero's Welcome

How the 1919 Wisconsin Legislature overcame divisions to enact innovative veterans legislation following World War I.

BY JILLIAN SLAIGHT

The Great War seemed strangely distant to Ira Lee Peterson, even as his unit camped mere miles from the front lines in France. Between drills and marches, the twenty-two-year-old Wisconsinite swam in streams, wrote letters home, and slept underneath the stars in apple orchards. Even in the trenches, the morning of Sunday, June 16, 1918, was "so quiet . . . that all one could hear was the rats running around bumping into cans and wire." Peterson sat reading a book until a "whizzing sound" cut through the silence, announcing a bombardment that sent him and his comrades scurrying "quick as gophers" into their dugout.[1] After this "baptism with shell fire," Peterson suffered a succession of horrors: mustard gas inhalation, shrapnel wounds, and a German

COURTESY LINDA PALMER

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Before 1914, faith in scientific progress led people to believe that twentieth-century war would be less brutal. In reality, new technologies resulted in unprecedented death and disability. (*left*) American soldiers suffered the effects of chemical warfare despite training in the use of gas masks. (*right*) Life in the trenches also meant frequent exposure to enemy shellfire—as these men from Antigo soon discovered.

sniper's bullet. "I feel like a stranger on earth," he later reflected, adding, "we are veterans now and ready for anything."[2]

To their surprise, many veterans found themselves less ready for the challenges that awaited them *off* the battlefield. "I have found it more difficult to get used to civilian life than it was to become used to the army," Peterson confided in May, 1919.[3] He and hundreds like him returned home with minimal discharge pay and poor job prospects. Physical and psychological traumas further compounded these problems. When state legislators convened in Madison for the 1919 legislative session, they assumed the demanding task of crafting policy that not only acknowledged the sacrifices these men made for their country, but also eased their transition back into civilian life.

On the centennial of the 1919 session, this article tells the story of how Wisconsin legislators enacted groundbreaking veterans policy that would serve as a model nationwide. Together, the bills they passed—which encompassed disability compensation, cash payments, and educational investments—exemplified a stronger commitment to veterans than ever before. The accomplishments of the 1919 Legislature placed Wisconsin at the forefront of innovative change, even anticipating the future GI Bill.

Part I of this story begins during World War I, when critics condemned Wisconsin as a bastion of pacifists and pro-German sympathizers. The state's embattled reputation motivated legislators to prove their patriotism with legislation in support of the war effort—and later, in support of veterans. With the end of the war, legislators soon realized the challenges veterans policy would entail;

members of a welcome committee in New York relayed dispiriting news about the obstacles soldiers encountered upon arriving stateside.

Part II turns to the Legislature itself, tracing key policies from inception to implementation. Early on, legislators made only halting progress, reluctant to pass wide-sweeping bills with staggering price tags. They underestimated the extent to which Wisconsinites would support generous veterans policies, even at the cost of higher taxes. Ultimately, returning soldiers secured the enactment of these policies by reframing debates about the meaning and value of wartime service.

Finally, Part III explores the legacy of the most noteworthy veterans bills enacted in 1919. It describes veterans' personal experiences with newly founded programs, outlines how these programs outshone their predecessors, and identifies ways in which Wisconsin surpassed other state and federal policies.

The veterans policies passed in 1919 represented a watershed moment in Wisconsin history. But this outcome was hardly guaranteed. It was the product of a hard-fought legislative process, one in which the public participated at every turn. Heated debates jeopardized the enactment of this legislation but simultaneously invited scrutiny and revision that made enacted policies more generous, accessible, and popular over the long term. Accordingly, this article not only depicts a specific moment in state history, but also tells a broader story about how the people of Wisconsin and their representatives reached wide-sweeping consensus on a divisive issue.

I

IN 1916, AMERICANS remained sheltered from the horrors of war that they heard and read about daily. That year, the Battle of Verdun alone had claimed 350,000 French and 330,000 Germans.[4] Thousands of miles away, Wisconsin men and women—especially those of German descent, under pressure to renounce their native country—hoped the conflict would end before ensnaring the United States. After the United States entered the war in April 1917, critics increasingly regarded Wisconsin—and its firebrand anti-war politicians—as insufficiently patriotic, even labelling it the "Traitor State." Wisconsin's embattled reputation motivated state legislators to enact laws that proved their patriotism—not only during the war, but also during the session that followed in 1919.

From late 1914 through 1916, Wisconsin politicians lobbied for peace in ways that eventually cast suspicion on the state. Governor Emanuel Philipp, a stalwart Republican, opposed American entry into the war, but advocated for "preparedness," arguing that the nation should ready itself for war, even while standing on the sidelines.[5] By contrast, U.S. Senator Robert La Follette attacked the war

hounds. The progressive Republican—and Philipp's rival for control of the party—condemned the "predatory special interests" pressuring the country to declare war, namely businesses that stood to profit from industrial mobilization. Still, he offered a less trenchant critique than Victor Berger, a prominent Socialist and Milwaukee newspaper editor, who characterized war as an aggressive instrument of capitalism.[6] Such staunch commitment to neutrality barely raised eyebrows in the early part of 1916. Indeed, President Woodrow Wilson won reelection later that year on a campaign that boasted, "He Kept Us Out of War."

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President Wilson championed neutrality during his 1916 reelection campaign, but changed course after a series of German submarine attacks in early 1917.

Soon, however, many Americans experienced a change of heart. At the start of 1917, Germany intensified its submarine attacks against unarmed cargo ships. A chorus of voices now called for war. Despite this change in public opinion, Wisconsin's politicians in Washington still insisted on neutrality. In a speech on the Senate floor on April 4, Senator La Follette protested that the American people had made clear their "deep-seated conviction that the United States should not enter the European war."[7] Their representatives in government, he argued, must obey the popular will. But the senator failed to sway his colleagues, who voted 82 to 6 to approve President Wilson's declaration of war. On April 6, the House of Representatives concurred, with most Wisconsin members voting in the minority.[8]

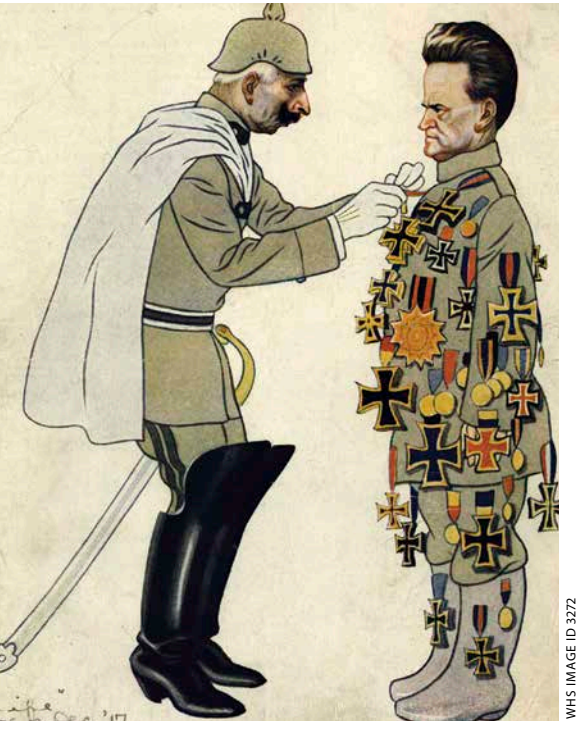
These votes came to haunt Wisconsin. It hardly mattered that support for American entry into war remained scant in many states outside the northeast.[9] By advertising their neutrality, Wisconsin politicians summoned a barrage of criticism that their state was unpatriotic at best and traitorous at worst. This reaction opened new rifts within the state's political landscape. Even before his fiery April speech, La Follette embarrassed some of his constituents; "Whenever he speaks in the Senate," an editorial in the *Eau Claire Leader* lamented, "Wisconsin groans and hides her face."[10] Both La Follette and Philipp exacerbated the problem when they expressed opposition to conscription—the former on principle, the latter

out of concern that it would turn popular opinion against the war effort.[11] Every slight note of dissension seemed to chip away at the state's good name.

Even if its politicians had enthusiastically embraced the war effort, Wisconsin's demographics placed its loyalty in question. The 1910 census classified the vast majority of Wisconsin residents as foreign-born or having at least one foreign-born parent. Of these, half were German by birth or blood, easily surpassing lineage groups from other parts of Europe.[12] These proportions raised alarms among Americans for whom pro-war patriotism and anti-German sentiment had become seamlessly intertwined.

German Americans found their actions subject to intense scrutiny even before the official declaration of war. In February 1917, the German-American Alliance of Milwaukee issued a statement affirming its neutrality, but pledging to support the United States if it waged war against Germany. Like many of his peers, member Otto Schilffarth felt compelled to profess his undivided loyalty even while expressing apprehension about the dilemma such a choice entailed: "We are Americans first of all, although we hate to see our country fight against the land of our birth."[13] As entry into the conflict appeared more and more inevitable, some German Americans shifted strategy, organizing patriotic rallies in Milwaukee.[14]

This cartoon depicts the Kaiser honoring Senator La Follette for his anti-war stance. Some Americans viewed pacifists as German sympathizers at best, traitors at worst.



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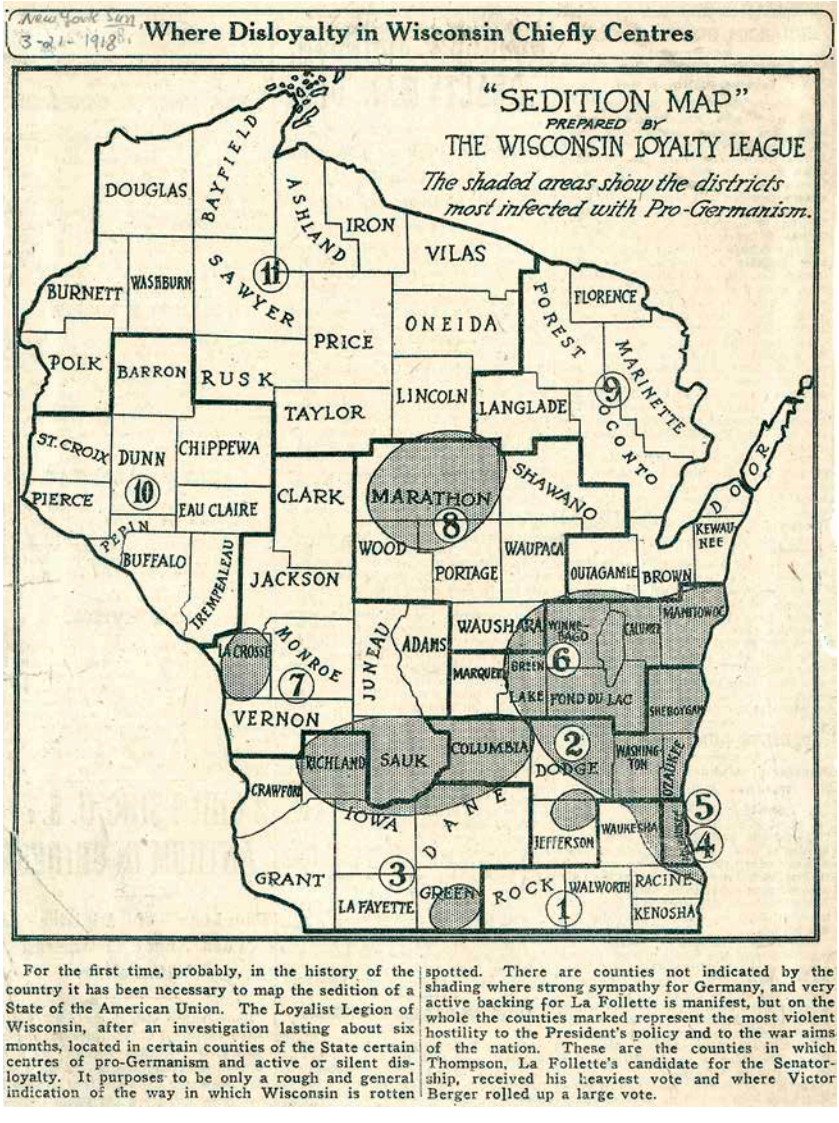
This strategy may have softened opinions of German Americans, but did nothing to protect Germans who were not yet naturalized. Under banner headlines announcing "War Is Declared," late edition newspapers on April 6 published Wilson's proclamation restricting "alien enemies," i.e., nonnaturalized German males 14 years of age and older.[15] Immigrants likely received this news with equal parts fear and uncertainty. How broadly would these restrictions be applied? Could the slightest mistake brand someone a traitor? Responding to these concerns, the United States Attorney General, Thomas Watt Gregory, offered



Hyperpatriot groups claimed to expose "pro-Germanism" within Wisconsin by identifying "infected" areas of the state. Unsurprisingly, most of these areas were counties with sizeable German immigrant populations.

sobering advice: "Obey the law; keep your mouth shut."[16] Wisconsin papers published comparatively reassuring headlines in subsequent days and weeks; the *La Crosse Tribune-Press* announced "Aliens Are Safe Here" and "Department of Justice Official Says Peaceful Non-Citizens Have Nothing to Fear." But the content of these articles often undercut the headlines, reporting on a "round-up of German citizens and sympathizers" and noting that "every pro-German utterance is anti-American."[17]

This mood of mistrust transformed into outright hostility over the course of the spring. To the dismay of Wisconsin Germans, President Wilson made little effort to sooth suspicion of immigrant residents. Instead, his Flag Day speech that year sowed paranoia that Germany had "filled our unsuspecting communities with vicious spies and conspirators."[18] Wilson also warned against "generous naturalization laws" that allowed foreigners to "[pour] the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life."[19] Statements like these placed impossible demands on naturalized immigrants, pressuring them to assimilate while simultaneously categorizing them as "other," no matter

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German immigrants and their American-born children found themselves subject to intense scrutiny and suspicion as potential agents of "Kaiserism." This series ran in the Milwaukee Journal despite that city's German heritage.

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Though there were efforts to suppress it, an accepted use of the German language during the war was to promote the purchase of war bonds, as in this poster from Sheboygan County.

After the official declaration of war, anti-German suspicion manifested itself in efforts to suppress use of the German language. President Wilson himself referred to German conspirators' efforts "to corrupt the opinion of our people" in his Flag Day speech. The notion that foreign-born residents sought to sway public opinion on the Kaiser's behalf ultimately justified strict censorship of the press. Federal laws like the Trading Act of 1917 compelled German newspaper editors to publish all editions of their papers in both German and English, a requirement that strained the foreign language press in Wisconsin.

Source: John D. Stevens, "When Sedition Laws Were Enforced: Wisconsin in World War I," Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters 58 (1970), 39–60.

The war placed immigrants in a difficult position—stigmatized as "other" while simultaneously expected to sacrifice for the war effort. This poster called on immigrants to support their adoptive country by conserving food.

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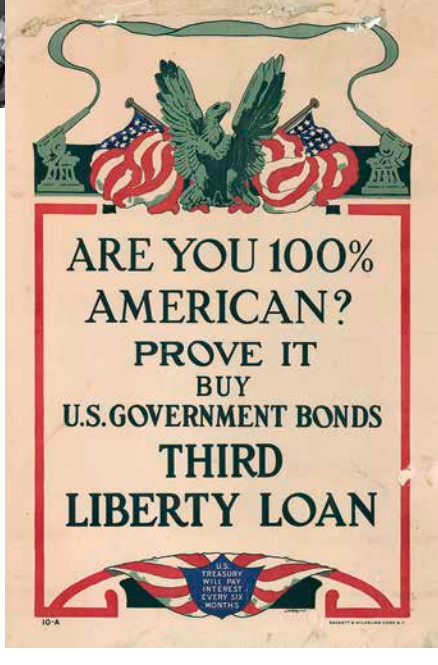

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(*left*) Posters for Liberty Loan bonds suggested that purchasing them would "prove" one's patriotism. (*top*) Local events—like this parade in Hartford—reinforced the same message.

how hard they strove to become American.

In all, thousands of Wisconsin citizens attracted scrutiny by virtue of their ethnicity.[20] Soon, the state itself—by virtue of its foreign-born populations—found its loyalty questioned. The *Milwaukee Journal* reported that businessmen in eastern cities considered Milwaukee a "hotbed of sedition," devoting a three-part series to these allegations in February.[21] Rather than reject these charges outright, prominent Milwaukee figures largely accepted them but blamed "pro-German fanatics and extremists."[22] Months later, an Indiana newspaper levied similar accusations against the entire state, inventing the term the "Traitor State" and decrying Wisconsin's alleged "pro-Germanism."[23] In hindsight, such scathing attacks proved exceptional. At the time, however, they reverberated loudly.[24]

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Recruits from Antigo trained at Camp Douglas, Wisconsin, before shipping out to France as part of the 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company. Despite the state's draft registration rate of 98 percent, critics continued to question Wisconsin's patriotism throughout the war.

These allegations exasperated Governor Philipp. "To undertake to fight all the falsehoods that have been circulated concerning the state," he complained, "is not unlike fighting the wind."[25] In this atmosphere, the governor himself stood on shaky ground. The son of Swiss immigrants near Sauk City, he rose from humble origins to accumulate a fortune from refrigerated train cars and came to embody the state's business interests. His company helped carry Wisconsin-made beer across the country, and Philipp forged close ties with the Schlitz family, among other German American brewers.[26] Those associations carried him into office in 1914, but imperiled his popularity in 1917. For all these reasons, Philipp sought to prove not only the state's patriotism, but his own.

As early as mid-April, Governor Philipp signed into law a bill establishing the nation's first State Council of Defense (Chapter 82, Laws of 1917). This body would support the federal war effort by addressing potential labor, food, and fuel shortages and promoting the purchase of Liberty Bonds.[27] By June, Philipp had also shepherded legislation through both houses of the Legislature to provide monthly financial support for dependents of enlisted men for the duration of the war (Chapter 487, Laws of 1917). That same month, an impressive 98 percent of Wisconsin's draft-age men had registered, by comparison to about 92 percent nationwide.[28] Meanwhile, Wisconsinites raised over $360 million for the war effort, vastly exceeding bond quotas set by the federal government.[29]

But no proof of patriotism silenced the state's critics. Worse, the most potent

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Even children contributed to the war effort; for example, these boys from Milwaukee's Riverside High School collected periodicals to send to the troops in France.

accusations of disloyalty came from within the state. Self-styled patriots filled the ranks of the fiercely pro-war Wisconsin Defense League, which hurled accusations at public figures and private citizens alike. In one incendiary speech during an August 1917 gathering, a member argued that seditious men "should be shot down or hanged."[30] Occasionally, words like these escalated into outright violence, as in several incidents in which masked men tarred and feathered individuals who they believed were German.[31]

More commonly, concerned citizens reported neighbors and acquaintances whom they suspected of disloyalty to the authorities. These accusations carried serious consequences: federal laws promised prison sentences to those found guilty of disparaging the war effort. In one instance, a Wisconsin farmer and father to seven children faced a year in prison for dissuading young men from registering for the draft. "We have no business in this war," he reportedly said, adding, "We went into it to protect the money that was loaned to the Allies." Under the Espionage Act of June 1917, thirty-two Wisconsinites would be indicted for characterizing the conflict as a "Rich man's war," and another thirty-six for speaking positively of Germany. Although small, these numbers dwarfed comparative figures for other states.[32] Wisconsinites clearly placed inordinate pressure on themselves to root out disloyalty in their midst.

Suspicion also pervaded the political domain, where candidates questioned their rivals' patriotism as a matter of course. The Loyalty Legion formed in 1917

Within the Legislature, concerns about loyalty culminated in a Senate vote to expel Socialist Frank Raguse of Milwaukee for uttering purportedly disloyal remarks in April 1917. The German American legislator had invoked the sinking of the USS Maine in 1898—a catalyst of the Spanish-American war—to imply that war hawks manipulated "the destruction of property or the destruction of lives" to drum up support for war. Raguse also questioned the uneven toll that war took: his brother lost a leg during the Spanish-American conflict and had to "[cut] down a tree to make himself a wooden leg," whereas President William McKinley remained "[surrounded] by silks and satins." Legislators clearly hoped to advertise their own patriotism by punishing a colleague who dared doubt the war effort. In retrospect, they silenced one of the few who foretold the problems legislators would collectively face when a generation of men returned from war broken in body and spirit.

Source: Kathleen R. Kepner, Seating, Unseating and Censuring Members of the Wisconsin Legislature, 1842–1955, Informational Bulletin 154 (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library, June 1956).

for the purpose of defeating purportedly unpatriotic politicians, or "slackers" as the Legion termed them. The group cast a wide net, disparaging any public figure who failed to conform to its "inflexible . . . standard of loyalty."[33] It targeted progressive Republicans like Senator La Follette, as well as Socialist Victor Berger, who ran for the U.S. Senate late in 1917.[34] Although some Legion-endorsed candidates flopped, Republican Irvine Lenroot defeated Berger by echoing Legion principles, touting Wisconsin's war record while castigating "socialist, pacifist, and other theoretical objectors to the sentiment of war."[35]

Even Governor Philipp faced allegations of insufficient patriotism. State Senator Roy Wilcox of Eau Claire mocked his reputation as a "War Governor" when he challenged Philipp in the 1918 Republican gubernatorial primary. Philipp fought back, deriding Wilcox as the "Tar and Feather Candidate" and repudiating vigilante justice of any kind. Ultimately, Philipp eked out a primary win over Wilcox, but not without a draining fight.[36]

Privately, some public figures expressed discomfort with hyperpatriotic political bluster. In personal correspondence, one state assemblyman wrote of Wilcox, "He may be patriotic enough, but in my estimation it is what a man does and not what he says that counts for patriotism." To illustrate this point, he contrasted Wilcox with his only son, who had joined the service and would personally help "win

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(*above*) A sign in Monroe identified alleged "slackers"—people thought to be insufficiently patriotic—alongside an effigy of the Kaiser. (*below*) Elsewhere, self-professed patriots derided anti-war political candidates like Victor Berger—seen here in campaign materials defaced to represent Berger as a Russian Bolshevik and German sympathizer.

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this war."[37] Publicly, most hesitated to take any stand that might attract negative attention. One Stoughton lawyer reflected in August 1918, "it behooves anyone with a German strain of blood in his veins to be exceedingly careful not to give politician demagogues an opportunity to charge him with being pro-German and disloyal."[38] However baseless they may have been, accusations of pro-Germanness remained rampant. Granted, they were not always effective, as Socialist Victor Berger eventually won a seat in Congress in November 1918.[39]

When the conflict came to a halt on November 11, 1918, people across the state shared a collective sense of relief; the bloody battles overseas had ended, and the war of words on the home front might soon cease as well. Fights over loyalty had derailed productive policy making and sapped the energy of politicians and constituents alike. But the memories of these tense times remained fresh long after the Armistice, and the sting of "Traitor State" accusations lingered. Before the 1919 legislative session even began, Wisconsin politicians eyed it as their final chance to combat the state's "maligned" reputation and prove its patriotism once and for all.[40]

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Shortly after German representatives signed an agreement to cease fighting at precisely 11:11 am on November 11, 1918, telegrams announcing the Armistice

Wisconsinites celebrated the end of war with impromptu parades on November 11, 1918. This New Lisbon parade included a soldier who had returned stateside after suffering the effects of chemical warfare.

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zipped across the Atlantic, reaching the Midwest in the middle of the night. But its late night arrival did not stop the news from causing a stir. In Madison, hundreds emerged from their homes for a spontaneous "nightly procession" that lasted until daybreak. A report in the *Capital Times* depicted it as a parade of sorts, with "Tin pans, tea kettles, old dish pans tied on the back of automobiles, girls hanging on every available perch of every car on the streets, flags galore, noise more than galore," and some still sporting their pajamas.[41] In nearby Janesville, unlikely revelers participated in "wild scenes" at 2:00 am: "Elderly women who have not left their homes for months were seen dancing the latest steps with young youths on the streets."[42] Impromptu gatherings elsewhere featured drums, bugles, and even "the Kaiser in effigy."[43] The following day, a writer for the *Eau Claire Leader* humorously remarked that "mother looks in vain for tubs to do the belated washing," as every pot, pan, or tub had been "commandeered" as a makeshift drum the prior evening.[44] Across the state, Wisconsinites expressed collective euphoria, bursting through the silence of night with joyous, unrestrained noise.

One group was notably absent among these riotous crowds: soldiers. Most would not return until spring 1919. Until then, men like Columbia County native Elton Morrison wrote long letters home from Germany and France. Although they would not stoop to complain, the troops "would like to be home tomorrow and are anxiously waiting for that order," Morrison told his parents on Christmas Eve.[45] Frustratingly, the United States lacked the ships to bring back its boys; they

Across the state, people gathered in the streets to express collective euphoria at the news of an armistice. Here, Menomonie residents marched downtown, led by women triumphantly carrying an American flag.

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(*above*) Throughout the war, soldiers posted their letters home at Red Cross canteens. (*below*) In the months following the Armistice, those letters increasingly expressed impatience to return home. Most servicemen did not leave France until late April or early May 1919—like these soldiers from Antigo.

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had crossed the Atlantic on English vessels, now busy delivering Australians home. Ultimately, converted American cargo ships—and former German ships—carried Americans to the East Coast, with most leaving Europe between April and August 1919.[46] In the interim, the troops *and* their families became increasingly impatient. Loved ones pressured public officials to bring the boys home.[47] As the planting season approached, farmers also demanded their return. "A great many of our soldiers over there are farmers," an Evansville man told Governor Philipp, "which are very much needed from the first of April on."[48]

This delay—although exasperating to many—may have been a boon to legislators. It provided time to study and debate policies that would help soften servicemen's landing in Wisconsin. Help in this endeavor came from an unexpected source: a group of Wisconsin-born women who spearheaded an effort to welcome Wisconsin soldiers as they arrived in New York.[49] This group became the governor's and Legislature's first source of information about the unanticipated problems veterans faced, financial hardship chief among them. Ultimately, these women helped position veterans policy not only as a means to reestablish the state's reputation, but also as a necessary acknowledgment of the servicemen who had sacrificed their own safety for that of the country.

It all began with a Wisconsin transplant to New York who expressed concern that her home state was not measuring up to its Midwestern peers. In late February 1919, Mary Sabin penned a letter to Governor Philipp, informing him that various states had designated meeting places in Manhattan where servicemen could congregate while awaiting their discharges. At a "Hall of States" located in a spacious private residence at 27 West 25th Street, women volunteers from these states welcomed the boys who had already returned with doughnuts and warm coffee. But Wisconsin had made no such effort, and Sabin politely but insistently asked Philipp to request an appropriation from the Legislature, lest the state's inaction expose it to unfavorable comparisons.[50] Her appeal succeeded. Within a fortnight, Philipp signed a bill granting $5,000 toward welcoming Wisconsin servicemen in New York.[51]

By mid-March, a speedily formed welcome committee had been "officially recognized" in the Hall of States.[52] Katherine Frederickson, President of the Wisconsin Women's Society, took the helm as committee secretary,[53] and recruited remaining committee members by March 21.[54] From the start, she won high praise from Wisconsin Adjutant General Orlando Holway, who complimented Frederickson and treasurer Mary Foote as being "very practical and business like."[55] These remarks confirmed a tendency for officials in Madison to bestow full trust in the volunteers on the ground to direct the funds in whatever way they saw fit.[56]

Volunteers keenly understood that those funds should be directed toward

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Members of the state's welcome committee in New York assisted soldiers in myriad ways—supplying stamps and stationery for letters home, providing local Wisconsin newspapers, and helping secure discharges.

soldiers' basic needs. George Russell, an insurance magnate and colonel in the Wisconsin State Guard,[57] explained to Philipp that soldiers had little cash on hand and invariably wound up broke after arriving stateside:

> Any man who has been in New York recently and has had his heart's strings torn seeing thousands upon thousands of these brave boys aimlessly wandering around the streets, thousands upon thousands of them crippled, feels that we have let down too much. We sent these boys off with bands and promises, and not enough real necessary assistance and interest is being taken in them upon their return.[58]

With these words, Russell suggested a larger dilemma: policymakers had not foreseen the dismal condition of soldiers upon their return or planned for their reintegration into civilian life.

Russell did not propose solutions, but reminded Philipp that "people do not want any Wisconsin boys returning from France penniless alone." Accordingly, the committee would keep Wisconsin men afloat—financially and emotionally—until they returned home. It would not only provide material assistance to soldiers, but "a little companionship among their own people."[59]

To this end, the committee would need to advertise the welcome headquarters as widely as possible. Members posted notices at train and ferry stations, sent

radiograms to ships offshore, and wrote letters to Wisconsin soldiers laid up in nearby hospitals.[60] Once at the Hall of States, servicemen could take warm baths, launder their clothes, write letters on free stationery, and eat hot breakfasts. The Hall was conveniently located near accommodations where beds cost a mere twenty-five cents per night—fees the welcome committee would pay for those who could not afford them.[61] The return of the 32nd Division—which boasted the largest number of Wisconsin men—remained several weeks away, but some sixty soldiers from Wisconsin had already enjoyed these amenities by late March.[62]

During this same period, the committee publicized Wisconsin's patriotism by participating in parades to welcome newly arriving troops. For example, Mary Foote directed $100 toward a wreath on display at festivities celebrating the 27th Division.[63] She and her colleagues continued to stress the importance of welcome festivities ahead of the arrival of the 32nd Division in early May. "We would like to do the State proud on that occasion," Frederickson wrote just a week before its slated entry into New York. Ultimately, she helped persuade Philipp to personally greet the troops of the 32nd Division in New York with "as royal a welcome as possible."[64] In this instance, committee members shaped the governor's understanding of demobilization, convincing him that formal ceremonies showed servicemen that their state government supported them wholeheartedly.

By this measure, the welcome ceremony proved a triumph. Although some ships carrying the 32nd Division were diverted to Boston, others landed in New York, where festivities proceeded as planned.[65] Newspapers back home reported that on May 5, the governor's guestrooms at the Pennsylvania Hotel teemed with officers from the 127th Infantry, including Major George O'Connell of Madison, whose battalion members fought "like demons" at the Battle of Château Thierry.[66] The following day, the governor proceeded to Camp Merritt, New Jersey, to meet Major General Haan and survey the 32nd Division. Haan told Philipp, "They are a pretty good crowd of fighters"—a comment that likely pleased the once-embattled "Traitor State" governor. Following his inspection, the governor welcomed the troops:

> Boys, Wisconsin has always given good soldiers to the nation. You men lived up to all the fine traditions of the past, and the brilliant record you made—and God knows it was a great sacrifice—will live forever.[67]

After other formal appearances and an official parade, the welcome committee hosted more lighthearted fare, including a comedy show at the Hippodrome.[68]

These festivities succeeded so well in advertising the welcome center that the trickle of men into the Hall of States quickly became a torrent. From a mere sixty men in late March, Frederickson reported a total of 1,110 visitors by June.[69] By July

GEORGE P. HALL, NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY ID 73367

The Wisconsin welcome committee hosted frequent outings to places like Luna Park, a Brooklyn amusement park, to stave off homesickness among soldiers awaiting discharge in New York.

1, that figure rose to 1,475.[70] Most of these men were happy to return stateside, but anxious to be home. "We have lived and slept in mud up to our knees and gone without food and drink for hours," Leo Levenick exclaimed, "just to get one more glimpse of the old state capitol."[71]

Against this backdrop, volunteers at Wisconsin's headquarters in the Hall of States sought to keep men like Levenick busy and entertained. The committee covered subway and bus fare for anyone who wished to explore the city. It also paid for theater tickets at venues like the Winter Garden, where $1.75 treated a soldier to the top entertainers of his day, or Luna Park, a theme park on Coney Island.[72] In addition to these excursions, servicemen could chat with "volunteer hostesses" who staffed the Hall of States between 9 am and 10 pm. There, homesick men could also read about goings-on in their native towns and cities from around ninety local newspapers.[73] As Katherine Frederickson put it, "[we] do all we can to make the stricken heroes from our home state comfortable."[74]

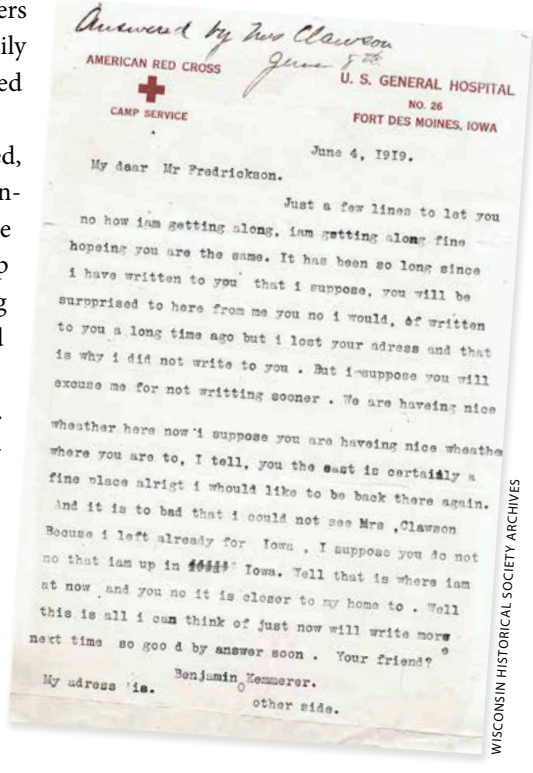
In many respects, Frederickson and her allies served as stand-ins for the boys' mothers. They doted on servicemen to relieve women back home who agonized about the well-being of their distant sons. "No Wisconsin mother need worry," Frederickson told the *Wisconsin State Journal*, "about the attention her son receives while in an army hospital here." She added reassuringly, "We have the names of every boy and call upon him twice daily."[75] The same women exhibited

motherly persistence toward men who initially declined their assistance. Mary Sabin remarked that some men would "go without a meal rather than say they are hungry," adding that she used "adroit questioning to get facts from them." Even reluctant recipients of help, Sabin continued, would be "made to feel at home."[76] Observers noticed and appreciated this quasi-maternal dynamic. Early on, Adjutant General Holway commented that a "society of ladies" was uniquely capable of forging close relationships on a short-term basis.[77]

On the basis of such relationships, volunteers provided material and emotional support to men who were acutely vulnerable. For example, Bernard Dostal discovered his wallet was stolen just moments after learning his father had died. "They were holding up funeral arrangements until they heard from him," Frederickson explained in a letter to Governor Philipp that described Dostal as "very depressed." Springing to action, the committee not only supplied the serviceman's train fare home to Milwaukee, but also purchased him a new pair of shoes.[78] Frederickson and her colleagues not only helped servicemen return home, but also found accommodations for Wisconsin men and women who travelled to New York City to personally welcome their boys.[79] Clearly, committee members understood the importance of family reunion among men long isolated from their loved ones.

In the various roles they played, volunteers served as important conduits between servicemen and the state. They kept Governor Philipp abreast of the challenges facing newly returned troops, and alerted him to problems he might solve through his personal intervention. In one instance, Katherine Frederickson alerted Governor Philipp to the case of Otto Brown, an Eau Claire man who desperately sought his discharge so he could return home to support his wife and three children. Brown's father had looked after his son's

Letters attest to the welcome committee volunteers' success in establishing meaningful relationships with soldiers. Here, Benjamin Kemmerer, struggling to use a typewriter, accidentally addressed Katherine Frederickson as "My dear Mr Frederickson."



Answered by Mrs Clawson June 5 '19

AMERICAN RED CROSS
CAMP SERVICE

U. S. GENERAL HOSPITAL
NO. 26
FORT DES MOINES, IOWA

June 4, 1919.

My dear Mr Fredrickson.

Just a few lines to let you no how iam getting along, iam getting along fine hopeing you are the same. It has been so long since i have written to you that i suppose, you will be surprised to here from me you no i would, of written to you a long time ago but i lost your adress and that is why i did not write to you . But i suppose you will excuse me for not writting sooner . We are haveing nice wheather here now i suppose you are haveing nice wheathe where you are to, I tell, you the east is certainly a fine place alrigt i whould like to be back there again. And it is to bad that i could not see Mrs .Clawson Because i left already for Iowa , I suppose you do not no that iam up in [redacted] Iowa. Well that is where iam at now and you no it is closer to my home to . Well this is all i can think of just now will write more next time so goo d by answer soon . Your friend?

Benjamin Kemmerer.

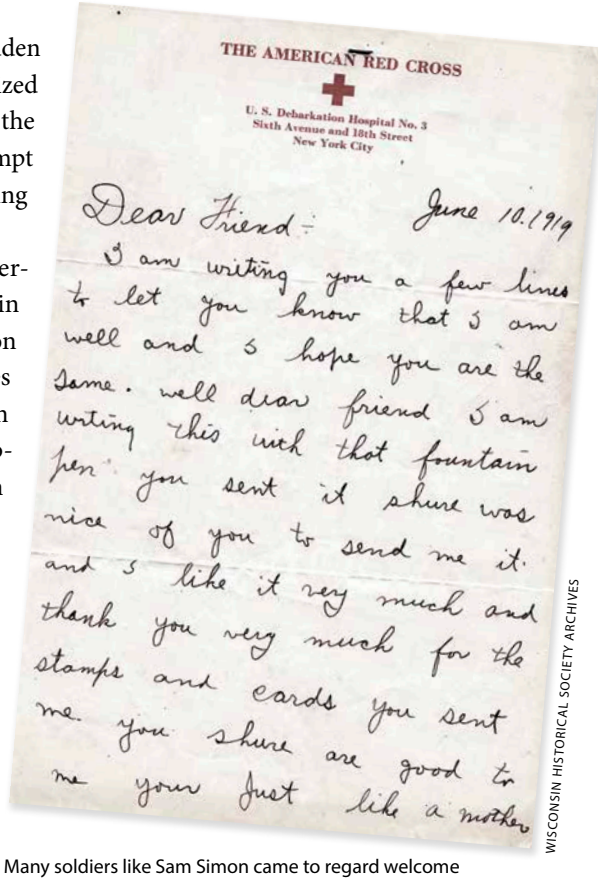
My adress is.

other side.

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

family during the war, but his sudden death in November 1918 jeopardized their well-being.[80] A reply from the governor's office promised prompt contact with Brown's commanding officer to secure his discharge.[81]

In another instance, Frederickson recruited Philipp's help in defense of Private Samuel Simon of Milwaukee, who faced charges of desertion after failing to return from leave due to health problems.[82] Frederickson felt Simon lacked the mental capacity to grasp the gravity of his actions. She also knew the soldier had no other advocates, and thus took up his case wholeheartedly: "He clings to me as his only friend and I assure you, I will leave no stone unturned to see that justice is done him."[83] Meanwhile, Frederickson fielded letters written by Simon's younger sister on behalf of their parents. "My father and mother want to know if you will please help Sam," the girl wrote in large, scrawling letters: "my mother feels so sorry for Sam she crys every day for him. . . . We have so much work and we need Sam so bad."[84] In the meantime, the committee supplied Simon with stamps and a fountain pen to ensure he kept his parents apprised of his situation.[85] Ultimately, Frederickson prompted Philipp to help secure Simon a lighter sentence in lieu of prison time at Fort Leavenworth.[86]


THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

U. S. Debarkation Hospital No. 3
Sixth Avenue and 18th Street
New York City

Dear Friend:- June 10.1919

I am writing you a few lines to let you know that I am well and I hope you are the same. well dear friend I am writing this with that fountain pen you sent it shure was nice of you to send me it. and I like it very much and thank you very much for the stamps and cards you sent me. you shure are good to me your just like a mother

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

Many soldiers like Sam Simon came to regard welcome committee volunteers as surrogate mothers—women who fiercely advocated on their behalf.

Responses from men like Simon illustrate the committee's success in making men feel at home before their return to Wisconsin. Simon poured out profuse thanks in long letters from his hospital bed. "Well a fellow always meets a good friend," he told Frederickson, "but you are the best one of them all." To another member of the welcome committee, he professed, "you shure are good to me your just like a mother."[87] Like Simon, other men—some clearly unaccustomed to writing letters—expressed their thanks upon returning home. John Kronberger

praised "the great work you's are doing there for those coming home," adding, "you can't imagin how much we injoyed that time which you ladies had for US."[88] W. C. Smith echoed the same sentiments, thanking the committee for keeping him afloat until his "happy reunion" with his wife: "When I arrived in New York I was still far from home, and I certainly appreciated the kindness shown me by you."[89] Servicemen and volunteers were not the only ones pleased with the welcome effort; legislators recognized the committee's success with an additional appropriation of $5,000 and a joint resolution honoring their work.[90] Joint Resolution 62 cited the "enthusiastic praise" of Wisconsin's servicemen for the women who "made them feel at home as soon as they landed upon our shores."

Although temporary by nature, the welcome committee created an impression among servicemen that the state would look after them over the long term.[91] It also provided valuable insight into the challenges these men faced, including financial insecurity and emotional trauma. This insight, in turn, could inform effective veterans policy. But what policies precisely would adequately address these challenges? And who would pay for them? Reaching consensus on these questions proved more complicated than handing out coffee, doughnuts, and newspapers. As the committee members worked long hours in New York, legislators in Madison struggled to match their efforts in the spring and summer of 1919.

II

BACK HOME, THE spirit of spontaneous Armistice celebrations had carried over into 1919, and Wisconsinites sloughed off months of tension about who was adequately loyal, patriotic, and American. But new debates embroiled the state, and the end of war hardly softened the tenor of public dialogue. As Wisconsinites waged an ongoing battle against the deadly Influenza virus, they also dealt with divisive issues like temperance, women's suffrage, labor disruptions, and the perceived threat of Bolshevism following the Russian Revolution of 1917.[92] Disagreements on these issues carried over into debates about veterans legislation, which stalled as members of the Legislature argued over the best means to recognize veterans and simultaneously serve the state—for example, by preventing unemployment or addressing farm labor shortages. Key proposals gathered momentum only as soldiers returned home to Wisconsin and voiced their opinions, often to challenge legislators' assumptions about them.

Those confrontations remained on the distant horizon when legislators first convened in Madison in January 1919. Governor Emanuel Philipp greeted returning and newly elected legislators on January 9 with an address that laid out his agenda for the 1919 session.[93] Philipp began by touting the state's war record and

WHS IMAGE ID 43009

Governor Philipp (seated at center of desk, with secretary L. C. Whittet seated to his right) praised Wisconsin soldiers but declined to make veterans policy a key part of his agenda as the 1919 legislative session began.

the impressive number of Wisconsin men who had served. These men, he declared, deserved government loans to clear and cultivate land for their own benefit. However, he implied that responsibility for such a program fell to the federal government.[94] Then, without sketching further plans with respect to veterans, Philipp transitioned to other matters: settlement of wage disputes, privatization of railroads, and foreign language education in grade school.[95]

Veterans featured only marginally on the governor's list of priorities, and their concerns soon became lost in a sea of legislative proposals. Early reports forecast that an unprecedented number of bills would be introduced in the 1919 session on a vast array of issues.[96] The *Capital Times* confirmed these predictions, announcing in mid-February that an "avalanche" of legislation was in play—about two hundred bills, many pertaining to labor relations and railroads.[97] By then, the Legislature had received the formal report of the Special Legislative Committee on Reconstruction, responsible for devising "a comprehensive social and economic welfare program of Reconstruction after the war."[98] This report touched on a wide range of issues, including collective bargaining, farming cooperatives, rural schools, the eight-hour workday, and women in the workplace. But soldiers seemed to be an afterthought, meriting only a brief mention in one paragraph.[99]

Why was veterans policy so far down the list of policymakers' concerns? An editorial published months later in the *Wisconsin State Journal* pointed blame in one direction: "Political jealousies have been batted about like ping pong balls," the author complained, "and legislators have maneuvered for political advantage or to

register political spite." Political ambitions had quashed "big, broad, constructive and patriotic measures" simply because they failed to serve a personal career or party faction. The author even alleged that some members had "[chosen] to kill good legislation rather than give their opponents credit for doing good things." Granted, the Legislature had considered an astounding amount of legislation by then—but its main failing, the author concluded, was its inability to move on matters pertaining to ex-soldiers.[100]

Meanwhile, legislators contended with the clock. The 32nd Division remained in Europe, but some discharged men had already arrived stateside by January 1919, and their circumstances troubled legislators. As Senator Lawrence Cunningham of Beloit informed his colleagues, France's heroes were arriving home to cities like Madison without "money . . . to buy a square meal."[101] The same men also faced the distinct possibility of unemployment.[102] They had risked their lives overseas, only to miss out on the wartime economic boom back home. Charles McCarthy, head of Wisconsin's Legislative Reference Library, put it this way: "they have sort of lost step in the procession while they have been away."[103] Successful legislation, he reasoned, would reward both their patriotic deeds and help them keep pace in the "procession."

Granted, many returned servicemen were eligible for newly created federal programs. However, these programs focused primarily on rehabilitating the

Governor Philipp faced another unexpected dilemma during the spring of 1919. After arriving in New York, some Wisconsin servicemen simply stayed there. "The boys in many cases will not go home," Mary Sabin informed Philipp. This revelation confounded the governor, who replied, "It is not clear to us just why Wisconsin men would ask for employment in New York City." Katherine Frederickson explained that the "attractions of a city like New York" compelled some to stay. (In hindsight, scholars have pointed to well-paying urban industrial jobs as another deciding factor.) Whatever the cause, the governor and his allies devised strategies to lure reluctant servicemen home, including coordinating with local chambers of commerce to secure jobs for them. Above all, Philipp relied on the welcome committee in New York to make the boys "genuinely homesick for their own people."

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folders 1 and 2.

quarter of a million men who returned home wounded and disabled.[104] Many of these men could not resume their prior professions, a reality that jeopardized their position as breadwinners. Against this backdrop, the federal government sought to support families while remaking disabled men into self-sufficient workers.[105] Two policies attempted to fulfill these goals. First, the War Risk Insurance Act of 1917 compensated American service personnel for "loss of life or personal injury by the risks of war." Soldiers who purchased policies paid for them as deductions from their paychecks. Those who lost their lives ensured that their dependents would receive monthly support payments, continuing until children reached adulthood or wives remarried. Those who returned home sick or injured would receive monthly payments for the duration of their disability, capped at twenty years.[106] Second, the Soldiers Rehabilitation Act of 1918 entitled disabled servicemen to training and education toward future employment.[107] The Federal Board for Vocational Education promised not only to aid injured men, but to make them superior to their pre-war selves. "If he is willing to learn," one informational brief boasted, "he can usually get a better position than he had before entering the service."[108]

Although more comprehensive than their predecessors, federal programs did not address the hardships of all former servicemen as they transitioned back into civilian life. Some state legislators recognized this oversight as an opportunity. Senator Cunningham encouraged his colleagues to assist Wisconsin soldiers and thereby set a standard for other states. He told the *Wisconsin State Journal*,

Here, soldiers convalesced in a French church used as a hospital during the war. Few men escaped combat physically or psychologically unscathed, and in all, about a quarter of a million American men returned home wounded.

COURTESY LINDA PALMER

WHS IMAGE ID 130790

The federal government urged employers to hire former servicemen who had missed out on the wartime economic boom and returned home with minimal discharge pay.

"I am strongly in favor of Wisconsin taking the lead in showing the nation how the returning heroes should be treated."[109] To this end, Cunningham recruited Charles McCarthy to draft legislation that would grant those who served a one-time cash benefit equivalent to three months' pay. The governor would make individual appropriations of $25,000 to pay for the program incrementally.[110] By early March, the *Wisconsin State Journal* proclaimed that people "all over the state and nation" had requested copies of Cunningham's bill, implying the legislation would serve widely as a model.[111] But the bonus proposal barely made waves within the state Legislature, fighting for attention against a deluge of bills that flooded both houses.[112]

Other legislators, for example, supported alternative forms of cash relief. Representative Albert Pullen of Fond du Lac—who had served in the Medical Reserve Corps during the war—protested that Cunningham's bill paid greater sums to higher ranking men, for whom three months' pay was considerably higher.[113] He proposed a bill that based payments on duration of service, allotting $10 to each serviceman per month served.[114] At the same time, other members of both houses approved of cash relief, but believed the federal government should provide it.[115]

Meanwhile, additional legislation addressed another arena in which servicemen had "lost step in the procession," as McCarthy put it: education. Senator Ray Nye of Superior noted that the conflict had cut short the college careers of many young servicemen. In early February, he introduced a bill that would help those men resume their studies by waiving tuition at state institutions.[116] The policy proposal was novel, albeit limited—after all, it offered assistance only to those already able to access higher education. But it also promised to delay the reentry of certain men into the workforce—and stave off potential spikes in the unemployment rate—by diverting them to college.

During the war, women built army trucks at the Four Wheel Drive Auto Company in Clintonville. Most employers expected women to leave these positions once the soldiers returned.

The federal War Risk Insurance program reflected Progressive Era ideals and echoed state legislation in workers' compensation and workplace safety. If dangerous work made a man unable to support himself or his family, his employer—in this case, the government—would step in to help him fulfill his duties as a husband or father. The program also reflected deep-seated social values, especially faith in a model of family within which men earned wages and women oversaw household tasks like cooking, cleaning, and childcare. The war endangered this model by raising the possibility that women whose husbands had died or become disabled might seek employment outside the home as a matter of necessity. But monthly War Risk Insurance payments averted the problem, ensuring that women would remain in the domestic sphere and not infringe unnecessarily upon the predominantly male working world.

Source: K. Walter Hickel, "War, Region, and Social Welfare: Federal Aid to Servicemen's Dependents in the South, 1917–1921," Journal of American History 87 (2001), 1362–1391.

Similarly, farming-oriented programs sought to assist soldiers while addressing larger labor issues. Elsewhere across the West, lawmakers devised policies designed to stall mass migration to urban industrial centers and simultaneously fill rural labor shortages. In North Dakota, for example, a newly created "Returned Soldiers' Fund" promised financial assistance to aspiring farmers.[117] Veterans like Ben Mooney, equipped with a "mechanical arm" following injuries suffered at the Battle of Cantigy, became homesteaders with the state's sponsorship.[118] With men like Mooney in mind, the Wisconsin Assembly created a committee in February to investigate the possibility of acquiring agricultural lands for former soldiers for whom "exorbitant prices" otherwise posed barriers.[119] That same month, Representative Pullen drafted a bill to help servicemen purchase land or

find employment in rural areas of the state.[120] Ultimately, Representative Orrin Fletcher of La Crosse authored the bill that gained the most traction.[121] It provided for an agricultural loan program operated by a state board that would exercise the power of eminent domain and procure land on the state's behalf. The sole responsibilities of approved participants would be to farm the land, keep the property in "good order," insure the land and buildings against fire, and make regular loan payments. On the whole, the bill sought to eliminate "the evil of unemployment" through land ownership.[122]

But the proposal faced objections that such a program would stifle soldiers' work ethic. Unconvinced by the example of Ben Mooney, Fletcher's colleagues worried that generous loans would attract loafers. F. W. Ploetz of Coloma professed his admiration for the returning soldier, but asserted that the bill "would tempt him into a life of idleness."[123] This claim likely perplexed Fletcher, a farmer keenly aware of the backbreaking effort the profession entailed. Still, many legislators subscribed to the logic that any form of direct support would suppress soldiers' drive to work.

That notion was not isolated to legislators, but shared widely throughout the state. Although only a trickle of men had returned to the state by April, their would-be employers issued recurring complaints to the governor about ex-soldiers' supposed laziness. Their correspondence conveyed a collective accusation that this younger generation of men felt themselves entitled to cushy jobs and unreasonably high wages. Farmer H. T. Christenson reported in March that "it is impossible this spring to get help on the farm" because young men refused hard, physical labor; "they want Uncle Sam to feed them or give them a soft job, short hours and big pay." At the rates they demanded—$65 per month, plus room and board—he groused, "We might as well give them the farm."[124]

Factory owners also bemoaned the work ethic of ex-servicemen. Industrialist Theodore Vilter fielded frequent letters from members of his Milwaukee community requesting employment for former soldiers.[125] But these men often quit upon learning their wages. Some, he grumbled, desired $40 a week.[126] Worse, "soldier boys" often shunned work in favor of "soliciting," that is, "going around the houses pleading with the house wife to buy this and that and the other thing."[127] To Vilter, high expectations posed more significant problems than unemployment. As he put it, "It will require some talking and some education to get these boys away from their ideas."[128] State support would only embolden the boys and their "ideas."

Soldiers themselves told a different story. Their testimonies suggested that an abrupt return to the working world following months of hardship could provoke distress. Ira Peterson confirmed the challenges of readjustment in a letter to Katherine Frederickson back in New York. Peterson explained that he had initially accepted a "strenuous position" but came close to a "nervous breakdown." As a

result, he opted for temporary work as a desk clerk at the YMCA in Madison. His advice for fellow soldiers? "It is better that they do some light work at first than to be idle."[129] Although advising against it, Peterson framed idleness differently than employers like Vilter. It was not evidence of laziness, but the natural inclination of men whose lives in the service were both regimented and traumatic. Other servicemen echoed the same sentiment. "I stay out until 12 each night," John Kronberger confided in a letter, "just to see how it all feels again."[130] Released from the constraints of military life, men like Kronberger sought to enjoy their newly regained autonomy. Employment was not foremost in their minds.

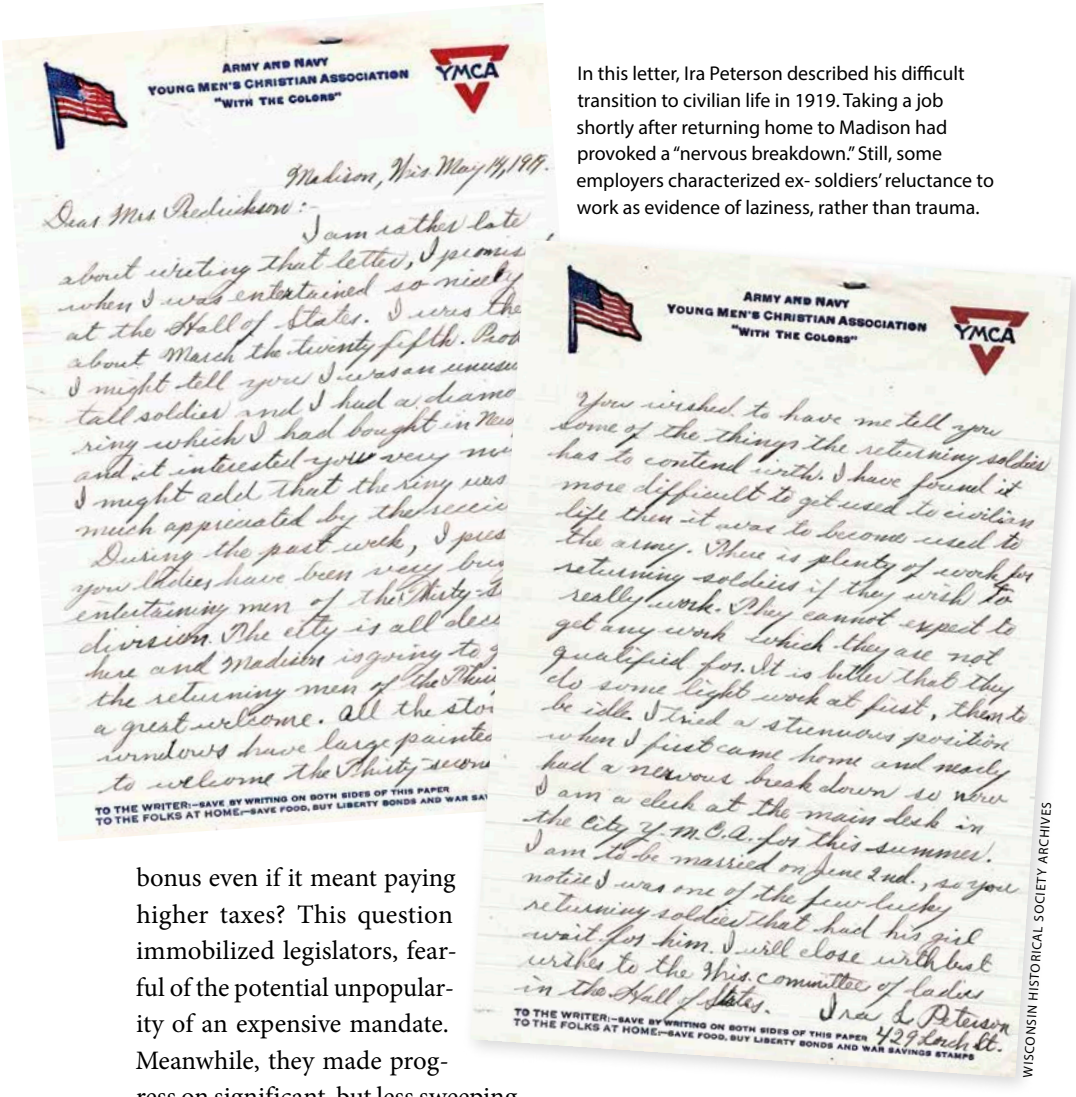
Perspectives like these remained absent from debates at the state capitol before the arrival of the 32nd Division in early May. Still, pressure had steadily mounted for the Joint Committee on Finance to "do something more substantial than play bands and cheer."[131] Well-attended hearings indicated that the servicemen who had already come home largely supported the cash bonus.[132] Correspondence from the Wisconsin welcome committee confirmed enthusiasm for this policy among soldiers and sailors waylaid in New York.[133] In early May, the Joint Committee on Finance hosted another round of hearings on the cash bonus, merging myriad competing proposals into a single bill.[134] Under this new legislation, the amount of the bonus would reflect an individual's length of service during the conflict.

By late May, servicemen had finally arrived in Wisconsin *en masse*. There, they confronted the claims legislators made about them, and powerfully asserted the sacrifices they had made for their country. As an example, one ex-soldier drew a stark contrast between conditions in the trenches and those in munitions factories. He reminded readers of the *Milwaukee Journal*, "We sacrificed our lives, parents, wives, sweethearts, friends, our all, to make the world safe." Nevertheless, he continued, "We (the returned heroes) worked for $30 a month while the men at home were paid enormous wages."[135] Members of the Legislature seemed to ignore these sacrifices when they complained of "idleness" and "soft jobs." Together, testimonies like these posed a powerful counterweight to arguments about soldiers' supposedly lacking work ethic.

Those arguments—voiced by their state legislators—may have shocked servicemen after their warm welcome in New York. Still, disparaging comments did not dissuade them from participating in debates about the proper way to recognize their service. After months of legislative delay, soldiers and sailors began to apply pressure that would shape the fate of veterans policy to come.

★ ★ ★

By June, legislators had begun to better understand veterans' needs, but they still wrangled with cost. Was the public willing to reward its war heroes with a cash


ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"
YMCA

Madison, Wis May 17, 1919.

Dear Mrs Redlickson:

I am rather late about writing that letter, I promised when I was entertained so nicely at the Hall of States. It was the about March the twenty fifth. I might tell you I was an unusu tall soldier and I had a diamo ring which I had bought in Mex and it interested you very mu I might add that the ring was much appreciated by the recei

During the past week, I pres you ladies have been very bus entertaining men of the Thirty-S division. The city is all dece here and Madison is going to the returning men of the Thir a great welcome. All the sto windows have large paintes to welcome the Thirty-seven

TO THE WRITER:—SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER
TO THE FOLKS AT HOME:—SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SA

ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"
YMCA

You wished to have me tell you some of the things the returning soldier has to contend with. I have found it more difficult to get used to civilian life then it was to become used to the army. There is plenty of work for returning soldiers if they wish to really work. They cannot expect to get any work which they are not qualified for. It is better that they do some light work at first, than to be idle. I tried a stenuous position when I first came home and nearly had a nervous break down so now I am a clerk at the main desk in the city Y.M.C.A. for this summer. I am to be married on June 2nd., so you notice I was one of the few lucky returning soldiers that had his girl wait for him. I will close with best wishes to the Wis. committee of ladies in the Hall of States.

Ira L. Peterson
429 Loch Ct.

TO THE WRITER:—SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER
TO THE FOLKS AT HOME:—SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

In this letter, Ira Peterson described his difficult transition to civilian life in 1919. Taking a job shortly after returning home to Madison had provoked a "nervous breakdown." Still, some employers characterized ex- soldiers' reluctance to work as evidence of laziness, rather than trauma.

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

bonus even if it meant paying higher taxes? This question immobilized legislators, fearful of the potential unpopularity of an expensive mandate. Meanwhile, they made progress on significant, but less sweeping legislation, precisely because cost posed fewer obstacles. Ultimately, Governor Philipp proposed a solution to the cash bonus stalemate; if passed by both houses, the bonus would be submitted to the people of Wisconsin for their approval. This referendum plan worked in wildly unpredictable ways. First, it dredged up wartime doubts about Philipp's patriotism and prompted questions about his commitment to the men who had helped win the war. Second, it revealed the extent to which legislators had underestimated their constituents' support for veterans.

Policymakers had assumed that most Wisconsinites would balk at the bonus's imposing price tag, despite soldiers' resounding enthusiasm for the policy. Governor Philipp's office predicted that the sums necessary to finance such a measure

WILLIAM WESSA, LANGLADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The 107th Trench Mortar Battery Company marched down Fifth Avenue in Antigo upon their return home. Wisconsinites welcomed their "boys" with great fanfare, but legislators were unsure whether the same people would willingly shoulder a heavier tax burden to fund costly veterans policies.

were "so great" that raising them through a tax levy would be "inadvisable."[136] The Joint Committee on Finance confirmed these concerns in May, estimating that the bonus would cost $10 million at minimum.[137] Its members initially proposed to foot the bill by popular subscription, much like war bonds. Each county would be responsible for raising a portion of the total goal of $12 million.[138] Authors of this plan explained that it avoided tax levies that potentially ran afoul of the state constitution.[139] Still, legislative progress lagged. Although ultimately recommended for passage, the bill suffered delays in the Senate.[140] Some members seemed to hope that the federal government would resolve the issue first; a resolution adopted on June 26 urged the U.S. Congress "to enact legislation providing adequate compensation for soldiers, sailors and marines."[141]

While they fumbled for a solution on the cash bonus, legislators moved forward with less costly policies. The most significant of these was a program to aid disabled servicemen awaiting delayed War Risk Insurance payments from the federal government. In theory, policyholders were supposed to have received their first monthly checks, but in practice, few had. State legislators grasped the urgency of providing short-term support for these men and their families, and the Joint Committee on Finance recommended an appropriation of $500,000 to pay up to $30 per month to "sick, wounded or disabled soldiers, sailors or marines during their period of convalescence."[142] Shortly after the bill's passage in early July, the newly founded Service Recognition Board began processing applications for temporary relief.[143]

This bill joined a host of smaller, piecemeal measures passed earlier in the session. Those included temporary aid for indigent soldiers, as well as preference to Great War veterans in civil service hiring.[144] Legislators acknowledged soldiers whose high school educations were interrupted by the war, granting diplomas to those who missed their final semester of instruction.[145] For the dead, legislators took steps to ensure "proper and decent care" of gravesites. Other legislation enabled counties and local municipalities to construct memorials honoring their fallen hometown heroes.[146]

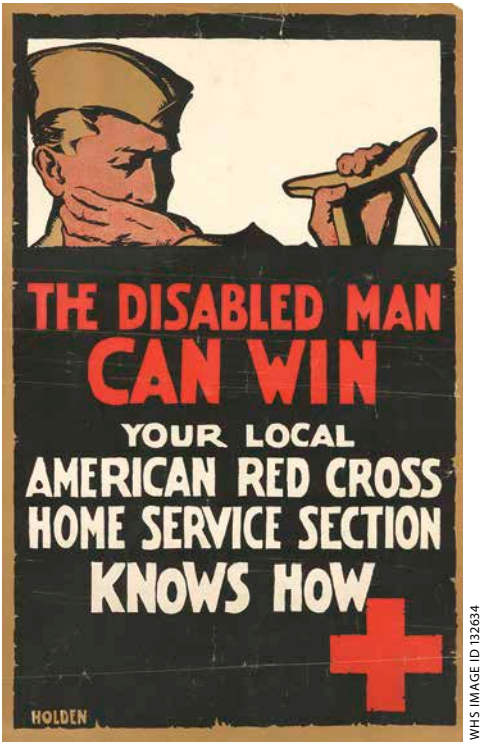
Despite progress on these other policies, the cash bonus remained at an impasse. Recognizing this inertia, Governor Philipp floated a new strategy in late June; he proposed to fund the bonus through a tax levy *after* asking the people of the state to approve the levy at a referendum. This method provided a compelling solution to legislators, who would shift responsibility for a potentially unpopular tax off of themselves and onto voters. If enacted, the multimillion-dollar appropriation would be "the largest that ever was made in a state of two and one-half million people," the governor said in a message to the Assembly. "While we all feel grateful to our soldier boys for their patriotic services," he continued, "I feel that we should not appropriate these tremendous sums of money without consulting the people." Immediately following the governor's speech, Representative Thomas Nolan of Rock County introduced a bill "embodying the idea of the executive" that slated the referendum for late August.[147]

This moment represented a turning point after which members of both the press and the Legislature politicized the bonus in ways that brought more veterans into the debate. Few journalists were more vocal than Fred Holmes—a former state representative, progressive Republican, and correspondent for the *Capital Times*.[148] Holmes portrayed the proposed referendum as a poison pill—a way for Philipp to quash the cash bonus without vetoing it himself. Legislators like Senator John Conant of Marquette County agreed, characterizing the referendum as "simply a way of getting out of paying these boys."[149] According to the *Wisconsin State Journal*, Conant hardly stood alone, as other legislators heaped "bitter criticism" on Philipp during debate on the bill.[150]

Why would Philipp seek the bonus' failure, as these critics alleged? The editorial pages of the *Capital Time*s pointed the finger at big business interests.[151] Taxes to fund the cash bonus would fall disproportionately on industry, and critics assumed that Philipp—a magnate himself—secretly sided with his prosperous peers. One characteristic editorial railed against "the hungry horde of profiteers who grind the faces of the poor." Another pilloried politicians "loud in their acclaim of the heroism of the Wisconsin soldier" until asked to make sacrifices on the soldier's behalf.[152] The referendum plan had threatened to pit soldiers against

taxpayers, but a handful of vocal critics portrayed the proposal as one that pit soldiers against big business—and challenged policymakers to choose sides.

Still more voices in the Legislature and the press opposed the referendum on the grounds that it demeaned soldiers. Senator Oscar Olson of Blanchardville, among others, believed that the vote reduced proud military men to beggars. "The soldiers are not the kind of men who will go to the polls and ask for a gratuity," Olson explained in a floor speech: "The very suggestion of such a procedure is repugnant to their manhood and an insult to their sense of fairness and justice." Olson concluded by reminding his colleagues that during the war, soldiers had earned minimal pay while people back home prospered. By publishing his speech in its entirety, the *Wisconsin State Journal* indicated its support for his position.[153] Overall, proponents of Philipp's plan found few allies in the press.



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While Wisconsin legislators bickered over a cash bonus for veterans, they managed to pass legislation to support disabled servicemen who were unable to work.

Meanwhile, a new round of debate around the referendum proved damaging for legislators who opposed the bonus. Speaking against the measure, Representative John Markham of Independence predicted that men who received the bonus would decline work. "As long as the soldiers have any money," he reportedly said, "they will refuse to take off their coats and put their shoulders to the wheel." Instead, they would "warm the benches."[154] These comments inadvertently galvanized veterans around the issue. In short order, the *Wisconsin State Journal* published soldiers' indignant replies. One letter included the following remarks:

> If these men who think we are a lot of loafers want to experience a little of what we went through let them pick out some cold rainy night in November, then go out in the woods or field and dig a little hole deep enough to lay in and shelter their body and head and then have three or four men try and

> sneak up on him from in front with high powered rifles with the intention of killing him or being killed themselves. Let them lay there night after night with nothing but the dismal pattering of the rain and the whine of shells and the terrible concussion as one bursts near him, killing one or two of his buddies.

Another soldier reminded Markham "We were not 'bench warmers' going over the top."[155] Whether or not the referendum plan constituted an intentional attempt to kill the bonus, debate on the subject resulted in increasingly vocal support for the bonus from soldiers and civilians alike.

Ultimately, a compromise bill passed both houses on July 14. The bill provided a cash bonus for soldiers, sailors, marines, and nurses who had served during the war "as a token of appreciation of the character and spirit of their patriotic service." This "token" amounted to $10 per month of service, and payments to deceased service personnel would be directed to their surviving spouses, dependents, or parents.[156] Critics conceded the issue of the referendum, which remained a key provision of the legislation. Perhaps they gambled that public support had turned toward the soldiers. Moreover, by successfully lobbying to push the vote back from August 19 to September 2, bonus boosters won more time to consolidate this support.[157]

The governor had successfully overseen the bill's passage, but in the process, his political rivals had reframed the issue and cornered him into supporting the bonus at all costs. Philipp found himself hard pressed to prove that he supported soldiers over big business—and lest he confirm suspicions to the contrary, he actively campaigned for the bonus throughout July and August. Newspapers favorable to Philipp reported that he participated in an "organized campaign" to sway voters, and dismissed accusations that he opposed the measure "but lacked the courage to kill it."[158]

That summer, legislators of all political persuasions bent over backward to publicly promote the bonus.[159] Newspapers also encouraged Wisconsin voters to cast their ballots for the bonus. "Now is the time," read one *Capital Times* piece, "for every man to talk with his neighbor on the justice of the soldier bonus plan."[160] Elsewhere, journalists emphasized that soldiers had sacrificed prosperity and suffered extreme hardships. As one *Wisconsin State Journal* writer put it, servicemen endured "death and rats and lice" only to earn "one-quarter to one-half what they would have earned had they remained safely at home—as WE DID." The bonus promised not only to compensate for their "pitiably inadequate fighting wage," but also to help secure them "a new start."[161]

At this point, legislators had made assumptions about what sacrifices the public would make for the sake of returning soldiers without any means of gauging public opinion, lacking the tools of modern polling. This uncertainty heightened

the suspense leading up to September 2. Would the people enthusiastically endorse the "token of appreciation" for those who so valiantly served the war effort? Or would a resounding "no" further blemish Wisconsin's tarnished wartime reputation?

The supporters prevailed. When Wisconsinites opened their newspapers to read the vote results on September 3, they discovered that the measure had passed by a decisive margin, 165,762 votes to 57,324.[162] Some newspapers published vote counts by the county, as if to praise (or shame) certain localities. The *Milwaukee Journal*, for example, publicized that in working-class "down town wards," the bonus passed 6 to 1 and 9 to 1, compared to a 3 to 1 vote in "well-to-do" wards.[163] This outcome may have surprised legislators. After all, many of their reservations about the policy had stemmed from the assumption that the public would not wish to foot the bill for such far-reaching policy. In short, they had underestimated public support for veterans.

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As quickly as legislators realized their miscalculation, they moved to enact another wide-sweeping policy on the heels of the cash bonus's success: the educational bonus. Earlier that summer, both houses had passed a bill to make grants of $30 per month to any soldier, sailor, or marine who wished to pursue his college degree. This monthly value exceeded that of the cash bonus ($10 per month) as an incentive to pursue education.[164] But Governor Philipp had vetoed the measure on the grounds that it treated veterans unequally, excluding those who had not completed high school. This latter group stood to receive only $240 each from the cash bonus, whereas educational bonus recipients could receive as much as $1,080. Philipp pressed legislators to craft an educational bonus for all, "regardless of their educational qualifications." He suggested funding "special schools" where former servicemen might complete their elementary education among other adults, rather than children. In the meantime, he recommended that the state conduct research on soldiers' educational aspirations in order to better serve them.[165]

Within days of Philipp's veto, state officials hastened to devise and send questionnaires to former servicemen. The resultant document, mailed on July 25, briefly described the concept of the educational bonus before asking simply, "do you intend to take advantage of this offer?" The form then instructed respondents who answered in the affirmative to name the institutions they might attend.[166] The State Board of Education processed responses almost immediately, but the compiled data was limited at best. Questionnaires reached only a small subset of the 118,000 men who served, and fewer than five thousand men returned

completed forms.[167] Those problems aside, completed forms attested to the measure's popularity. A majority of respondents (72 percent) expressed interest in the educational bonus, and of those, many sought nonuniversity education, preferring the "special schools" Philipp had proposed.[168]

With this data in hand, Philipp met with the State Board of Education on August 21 and tasked the agency with providing policy recommendations ahead of the September 4 special session he had called for the Legislature to reconsider the issue. Ultimately, the agency's recommendations mirrored Philipp's stated priorities, i.e., that the legislation should "provide the widest kind of educational opportunity under the most elastic conditions." It should accommodate the most people possible by facilitating education full-time, part-time, in-person, long-distance, nights, summers, and at grade school, high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Moreover, the agency recommended expanding proposed legislation to cover nurses.[169]

Ultimately, the governor's veto had made the proposal even more radical and far-reaching. Program costs would be higher than those for the cash bonus, including not only direct payments to recipients, but state investments in special schools, correspondence courses, and increased administration and instruction. All told, the State Board of Education projected a price tag of about $3.6 million the first year and $2.7 million the second year, sums that required taxes over and above those funding the cash bonus.[170]

Legislators confronted these imposing costs when they reconvened for the special session. Just two days earlier, however, Wisconsin voters had pledged to support veterans, even if doing so entailed a heavier tax burden. The results of the cash bonus referendum seemed to tip the scales in favor of its educational counterpart. Moreover, the proposal positioned education as a right veterans had earned in sacrificing their safety for the nation—a novel idea at the time. Its passage presented yet another opportunity to prove the state's commitment to—and investment in—its returning heroes.

With these considerations in mind, legislators overwhelmingly approved the measure. One senator and twenty-two representatives voted against the bill, arguing that the costs were too burdensome. Still, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* confidently reported that, "There was never any doubt about the passage of the bill at the special session."[171] Governor Philipp promptly signed Chapter 5, Laws of 1919 Special Session, into law, entitling service personnel who enlisted before November 1, 1918, to $30 for each month enrolled at an educational institution, a benefit capped at nine months per year over four consecutive years.

Together, Philipp's veto and the cash bonus referendum secured the fate of the educational bonus. The veto paved the way for the program's expansion and

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Socialist legislators—seen here outside the state capitol in 1919—opposed the country's entry into war in 1917 and attracted their colleagues' criticism as a result. War politics continued to divide members of the 1919 Legislature, which meant that each enacted bill was the product of hard-won consensus.

delayed legislators' vote on the issue until September. By then, the cash bonus referendum had affirmed voters' commitment to veterans and made passage of the educational bonus much more likely.

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Even after enactment, the bonuses faced another hurdle: legal challenge. Over the summer, public officials had disagreed over whether the bonuses violated the state constitution, particularly various sections under article VIII, which delineated the state's power to raise and spend funds.[172] Senator Timothy Burke, for example, reminded his colleagues that taxes could be collected for public purposes only, and questioned "whether the courts would hold [the cash bonus] to be a public purpose." By contrast, Attorney General John J. Blaine confidently affirmed the measure's constitutionality.[173] Only the state supreme court could lay to rest the question of whether the bonuses passed constitutional muster. But the court might invalidate these laws, crushing the hard-won consensus legislators had finally reached on veterans policy and destroying the achievements they relied on to restore Wisconsin's reputation.

Earlier in the session, concerns about constitutionality had torpedoed other popular proposals. Representative Fletcher's agricultural land grant program, for example, underwent several rounds of revision for this reason. Early drafts risked

contravening public purpose spending requirements because they restricted loans to soldiers, sailors, and nurses. Later drafts addressed this issue by expanding eligibility to include any unemployed persons as "public necessity" demanded.[174] Attorney General Blaine reassured members of the Legislature that the bill aimed "to prevent or minimize unemployment," and those goals constituted "public purposes."[175] But critics remained unconvinced.[176] Siding with them, Governor Philipp vetoed the version that passed both houses, citing the constitutional prohibition against "internal improvements."[177]

On similar grounds, bonus legislation faced legal challenge—orchestrated by the governor himself—immediately following the September referendum and special session. Philipp depicted the suit as a "friendly" action designed to avoid "the results that might follow if at some later date a taxpayer . . . should come to the court and the court should set aside either or both statutes."[178] To this end, he asked David Atwood to serve as plaintiff. Atwood was managing editor of the *Janesville Gazette* and Philipp's appointee to the State Printing Board; his grandfather and namesake had founded the *Wisconsin State Journal*.[179] Madison attorney Harry Butler would argue on Atwood's behalf, as Blaine refused to represent him.[180] Atwood himself appeared to be a reluctant challenger at best. A front-page article in the *Wisconsin State Journal* stated, "Atwood has no bone to pick with the soldiers," and implied that he had been pressured to act as plaintiff.[181] Even Philipp characterized the challenge as a mere formality, reassuring soldiers that they should not "feel in the least alarmed."[182] Despite these claims, the suit revived accusations that Governor Philipp and his allies secretly wished to defeat the bonuses—if not by popular vote, then by judicial intervention. Such rhetoric indicated that to many Wisconsinites the bonuses signified something more than legislation. Instead, they stood for the state's collective endorsement of expansive veterans policy. In this context, the suit not only challenged the laws, but the will of the people.

Mobilizing behind the bonuses once again, progressive politicians and members of the press publicized the matter as a battle between humble soldiers and big business interests. Attorney General Blaine characterized the plaintiff as a pawn of private parties, pushed into filing a "friendly" suit on behalf of less-than-friendly interests.[183] The *Capital Times* depicted the suit as a veiled attempt to block the law from going into effect, describing Butler as "one of the ablest corporation lawyers in the state" and "a friend of the profiteers."[184]

Accusations like these seemed to strike a nerve. In a letter to the editor dated October 15, Governor Philipp insisted that he "was not importuned either by big business or little business to have these laws tested by the court." If indeed he had truly opposed the bonuses, Philipp told readers, he would have vetoed both

measures. The letter concluded with a jab at armchair policymakers: "It is all well for a man who has no responsibility to talk loud about what ought to be done or what he would do." The governor, unlike his detractors, had sworn an oath to obey the constitution and would not shirk this responsibility.[185]

The court challenge had once again placed Philipp on the defensive. As with the referendum, anything but a positive outcome for the bonuses threatened to confirm his critics' allegations. As the *Wisconsin State Journal* worded it, a decision striking down either piece of legislation would amount to "political suicide" on Philipp's part.[186] Criticism of the governor's position on the bonus now broadened to encompass his entire record in office. The *Capital Times*, for example, dismissed Philipp as a man who "has great wealth and lacks vision," and "can not see over and beyond the mere dollar measure of greatness."[187] Privately, some Wisconsinites dredged up wartime allegations of his "pro-hun" stance and inadequate patriotism.[188]

More problematically, the lawsuit also threatened the reputation of the state constitution itself. A decision overturning the bonuses, read one piece in the *Capital Times*, would prove that "the constitution is a protection for the rich and a stern instrument to keep the common people in their place."[189] Other papers spoke in less hyperbolic terms, simply expressing confidence that the legislation would be upheld and entertaining no other possible outcome.[190] Whatever the justices decided, the people had already decided in the bonuses' favor. This sentiment represented a sea change in thinking about veterans benefits—a radical shift from prior decades when people across the country complained loudly about the costs of veterans pensions.[191] Practically speaking, it also placed enormous pressure on the justices of the state supreme court to affirm the law.

Long after the war ended, Governor Emmanuel Philipp faced accusations of insufficient patriotism for his allegedly lukewarm attitude toward veterans policies.

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On the morning of November 8, 1919, the justices filed into a courtroom "crowded by ex-soldiers" to hear oral arguments that lasted nearly seven hours.[192] Attorney Harry Butler opened, speaking for the plaintiff, David

Atwood. Butler disputed the notion that the bonuses fulfilled a public purpose because they encouraged voluntary military service; such service was made to the United States, not Wisconsin, and benefitted the federal government rather than the state.[193] This argument echoed an idea that members of the Legislature had articulated earlier in the session, i.e., that the nation, not the state, owed soldiers for their service.

Defending the cash bonus, Deputy Attorney General M. B. Olbrich disputed Butler's conception of public purposes, arguing that the national war effort fell under this category. To this end, the cash bonus enhanced patriotism among the general population and would aid further war efforts by encouraging service in the armed forces.[194] In short, Olbrich argued for an expansive, rather than restrictive, notion of public purposes—one that encompassed general incentives to military service.

Olbrich then yielded the floor to Charles H. Crownhart, an attorney speaking on behalf of 305 ex-soldiers seeking the educational bonus.[195] Crownhart emphasized that soldiers themselves had neither asked nor campaigned for these laws: "These defendants seek no charity and they wish no gifts as such from the state treasury." He then proceeded to establish legal and historical precedents to prove that the bonus fulfilled a public purpose, even invoking ancient Rome to argue that reward for soldiers' sacrifices was a "public duty," and that governments failing to perform this duty "[had] already begun to decay."[196] With this remark, Crownhart touched on the anxieties of those who believed the bonuses' failure would stain the state's reputation.

By this point in the afternoon, the patience of all present had worn thin. When Senator Roy Wilcox requested to speak as a "friend of the court," one justice jokingly replied, "you are no friend of the court if you want to talk now!" provoking bursts of laughter in the courtroom. Wilcox spoke for a mere five minutes, and the session concluded around 5 o'clock.[197]

The first decision came swiftly on November 17—just over a week after oral arguments. Justice James Kerwin wrote the opinion, confirming that the cash bonus *did* constitute a public benefit. "When a war is waged by the nation," Kerwin explained, "those supporting it are performing service as well for their respective states as for the nation." Moreover, Kerwin noted the Legislature's "very broad discretion" to tax and concluded that the additional taxes to fund the bonuses were not "arbitrary or whimsical."[198]

The court simultaneously ruled in favor of the educational bonus, although that opinion came months later, in February 1920.[199] In it, Justice Aad John Vinje asserted the public purpose the legislation performed by inspiring future volunteers: "The main purpose was to stimulate patriotism, to

April 4, 1917

Two days after President Wilson asks Congress to declare war against Germany, U.S. Senator Robert La Follette urges his colleagues in the Senate against going to war. Many Wisconsinites blame La Follette for exacerbating perceptions of Wisconsin as an unpatriotic state.

WHS IMAGE ID 10531

WHS IMAGE ID 10758

April 6, 1917

Congress votes overwhelmingly to declare war against Germany. Later in the year, it will vote to declare war against Austria-Hungary as well.

February 1918

The 32nd Division—made up of soldiers from Wisconsin and Michigan—arrives in France. Since the declaration of war by Congress, 98 percent of eligible Wisconsin men have registered for the draft, compared to 92 percent nationwide.

WHS IMAGE ID 132644

WHS IMAGE ID 132646

November 11, 1918

The war stops with the declaration of an armistice. It will end formally when the Treaty of Versailles is signed in June 1919.

March 4, 1919

Both houses of the Wisconsin Legislature pass an appropriation of $5,000 to fund "a committee to welcome Wisconsin soldiers" in New York (Chapter 22, Laws of 1919).

WHS IMAGE ID 7032

WHS IMAGE ID 54244

May 1919

Most soldiers of the 32nd Division return stateside, arriving in Boston and New York, and Governor Philipp welcomes them at Camp Merritt, New Jersey. Many will struggle to resume their civilian lives.

June 1919

Wisconsin legislators enact a bill to provide temporary support to veterans with disabilities (Chapter 452, Laws of 1919).

WHS IMAGE ID 126152

WHS IMAGE ID 25348

July 14, 1919

Members of the Wisconsin Legislature vote to pass a bill that would provide a cash bonus to all Wisconsin veterans (Chapter 667, Laws of 1919). On September 2, Wisconsinites will approve the required referendum on the bonus..

September 4, 1919

The Wisconsin Legislature convenes in special session to consider—and ultimately pass—an educational bonus program for returning veterans (Chapter 5, Laws of 1919 Special Session).

WHS IMAGE ID 47926

WHS IMAGE ID 45142

November 17, 1919

Nine days after hearing oral arguments in the legal challenges to the cash and educational bonus laws, the Wisconsin Supreme Court rules that both laws are constitutional.

quicken the perception in our citizens that there is a sacred duty to defend the government in term of need." Vinje also dismissed the argument that the draft made such "stimulation" unnecessary. To this end, he evoked French heroism during an early allied victory: "[T]hink you the French soldiers at the battle of the Marne exclaimed 'They shall not pass,' because they were drafted, or because they loved France?" To this rhetorical question, he answered, "their heroic and successful defense sprang from desire, not from compulsion."[200]

As with the referendum, the court decisions reassured the widening circle of Wisconsinites who shared a stake in the bonuses. One lawyer wrote confidently to attorney Charles Crownhart that this outcome would surely redeem the state's "unenviable reputation" during the war. Despite that reputation, he noted with some relief, "its Supreme Court has at all times been pro-American."[201] Similar sentiments echoed in official state publications. The official mouthpiece of the State Board of Education heaped praise on the justices and declared that the bonus laws "brought glory to the name of Wisconsin."[202]

Over just a few months, Wisconsinites had reached consensus on the importance of veterans policies. Until November, however, few veterans had reaped any benefits. Now, having overcome court challenges, the bonuses could finally take effect. Wisconsin veterans would learn how these policies measured up to their lofty goals in subsequent days, months, and years.

III

THREE POLICIES ENACTED during the 1919 legislative session proved exemplary, each in its own way: temporary disability payments marked a turning point from an earlier, Civil War-era program; the cash bonus outshone the federal government's commitment to veterans in the aftermath of the war; and the educational bonus not only surpassed similar programs adopted by other states, but also inspired future federal legislation. No program was perfect—and administrators sometimes underestimated the challenges veterans faced. Together, however, they signaled the state's unprecedented commitment to its veterans.

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Chapter 452, Laws of 1919, supported disabled soldiers awaiting War Risk Insurance payments, and in so doing, continued a tradition for the state government to serve as a resource for veterans struggling to access federal benefits. Following the Civil War, the state adjutant general served as an intermediary between Wisconsin and Washington as disabled Union Army veterans sought federal pensions.[203] Through the adjutant general, soldiers and their surviving family

members requested the proof of service required to file an application. But many among them proved ill-equipped to cut through the "voluminous amount of red tape" the process entailed.[204] Meanwhile, no formalized system existed to process these requests in an efficient and timely manner.

By contrast, a glimpse into records related to Chapter 452 reveals a vastly more effective system. The Service Recognition Board developed standard forms prompting applicants to provide required information in an orderly, straightforward way. Acknowledging mistakes of the past, administrators ensured that the application process itself posed no barriers to benefits. To more easily answer inquiries about individual applications, they retained all files and correspondence within folders labelled with applicants' names. Moreover, they kept in frequent contact with aid beneficiaries to inform them of any changes in their status or benefits.[205]

Facing fewer bureaucratic hoops than their Union Army forebears, Great War veterans promptly accessed benefits that bridged the gap before federal funds kicked in. As an example, Gustave Hildebrandt of Beloit suffered from what his doctor described as a "deformed, painful right ankle and foot" resulting from bullet wounds. Hildebrandt planned to begin training in electrical work as soon as he felt "physically able to enter," but in the meantime, he received $30 per month from the state. After five months, that support ceased when his $80 per month War Risk Insurance payments began.[206] In another case, August Buchholz of Ripon accepted lower paying clerical work after a gunshot wound to the abdomen prevented him from resuming his former occupation as a paper hanger. The state supplemented his salary until January 1, 1920, when he began receiving federal funds.[207]

Administrators often addressed recipients with harsh words, but their tone belied a level of support previously unavailable to veterans. For example, a letter from the Service Recognition Board reminded Oscar Dettmeyer that his $30 monthly allowance was "temporary only and should in no manner be considered as a pension." The same letter reprimanded the veteran for failing to pursue his War Risk Insurance benefits, and counseled him against becoming dependent on state support. At the same time, the administrator spelled out what Dettmeyer should do next, instructing him to contact his local Red Cross to settle the claim and expedite federal funds.[208] This approach likely borrowed from rehabilitation theories that advocated for stirring injured men into self-sufficiency rather than treating them as objects of charity.

Of course, this program recognized only the physical wounds of war as obstacles to rehabilitation. The Service Recognition Board followed the lead of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance in defining disability with reference to "capacity

for productive labor."[209] Application questions centered around work and training, asking "Are you well and strong enough to work?" Nowhere did they address psychological barriers to rehabilitation. A Milwaukee veteran named Leo Kwasniewski attempted to explain as much in his response to a letter scolding him for failing to work:

> I am wholly dependent upon [state aid] for help as I am not able to work at my former occupation, that of a motorman, because of my general nervousness. I am improving, but still have spells of nervousness and weakness come over me lasting for a period of four or five days.[210]

It is possible that "nervousness" referred to the condition eventually known as "shell shock" and later called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Whatever the case, Kwasniewski's remarks hint at the ways post–World War I veterans programs—at both state and federal levels—ignored thorny problems like mental injury and trauma.

These issues aside, Chapter 452 provided a much-needed safety net for disabled Wisconsin servicemen. The law enabled its beneficiaries to support themselves and their families during the summer and fall of 1919, long before other policies materialized, and its efficient administration helped veterans access aid without undue delay or confusion. In this instance, state policy succeeded because it complemented an existing federal program, recognizing that program's shortcomings—namely, a slow, bureaucratic process—and intervening to fill the gap.

★ ★ ★

The cash bonus bill—Chapter 667, Laws of 1919—pledged support for veterans in ways that notably surpassed the federal government. Earlier in 1919, Wisconsin legislators had looked to Congress to provide some form of lump sum payment to demobilized servicemen. When no policy materialized, they moved ahead with their own legislation. Over the long term, this comparatively prompt action worked to Wisconsin's favor. The cash bonus of 1919 affirmed the state's appreciation of veterans' sacrifices during the war and preempted protest against the state based on claims to the contrary. Meanwhile, failure to pass a satisfactory federal bonus led to resentment and outright revolt against their representatives in Washington, D.C., who seemed to have forgotten the heroes of the Great War.

In Washington, as in Madison, advocates for the bonus insisted that it would place returning soldiers on an even footing with civilians who had benefited from the wartime boom in industry. But opponents argued that it would discourage work by offering an easy handout.[211] Veterans groups lobbied for bonuses through the 1920s and '30s, but each interwar president opposed the policy and vetoed

WHS IMAGE ID 49240

Federal rehabilitation programs promoted the idea that wives, mothers, sisters, and "sweethearts" could help wounded men overcome their disabilities with tough love. Brochures asked women, "Are you going to spoil him and pamper him with your pity? Do you want him to be dependent upon you, and possibly later an object of charity, dissatisfied with life, broken in spirit?" The intended reply was "no." A woman should restore her broken hero by prodding him to become "self-supporting" and "self-respected." This message was premised on the notion that anyone could overcome disability with the right mental attitude, a theory popularized by Elizabeth Upham of Milwaukee-Downer College. Upham argued that the "chief obstacle" to recovery was not physical disability, but "the mental condition which the physical handicap is apt to bring about." This theory created potentially unrealistic expectations among disabled servicemen and their loved ones.

Sources: Federal Board for Vocational Education, To the Sweethearts, Sisters, Wives, and Mothers of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors (Washington: Government Printing Office, December 1918); Elizabeth G. Upham, Desirability of vocational education and direction for disabled soldiers (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Extension Service, September 1917).

successful legislation. Congress occasionally overrode vetoes to pass compromise measures, but these paltry concessions embittered veterans groups and culminated in mass protests. During the summer of 1932, thousands of veterans assembled in a "Bonus Army" that encamped in Washington, D.C. Problems had worsened with the onset of the Depression, when veterans disproportionally faced unemployment.[212] "This generation," writes historian Jennifer Keene, "faced the prospect of starting over, not just once, but twice in their lives."[213] Realistically, a federal bonus could not have preempted these problems. But federal inaction only embittered veterans unable to attain lasting economic stability after returning home in 1919.

State-level action on the bonus helped avert the tense confrontations that had occurred at the federal level. With Chapter 667, Wisconsin joined several other state legislatures that recognized the policy's value as a goodwill measure,

worth its high price.[214] Over time, the state granted monthly payments to 116,000 veterans and their families. These payments amounted to an astounding total of $20,748,462, which far exceeded initial estimates.[215]

Despite resounding support for the bonus in 1919, its popularity declined within Wisconsin and few lobbied to reintroduce the policy in the wake of World War II. This change of heart did not reflect disapproval of the policy itself, but anger over perceived mishandling of bonus funds. Almost immediately, the Legislature diverted surplus tax revenues toward programs unrelated to veterans.[216] For example, Chapter 30, Laws of 1920 Special Session, allocated over $1 million to build the Wisconsin General Hospital.[217] Later legislation tapped the bonus fund to support the University Medical School. Although certain bill provisions directly assisted veterans in some way, critics objected that any diversion of bonus funds amounted to a broken promise.[218] By the early 1930s, a group of legislators pushed to renew the state's commitment to its veterans and cease unrelated diversions of bonus funds.[219] But the reputation of the cash bonus would not recover before the state sent soldiers off to fight in another global conflict.

Still, the policy had very likely played an important role in individual veterans' lives, easing the transition into civilian life and relieving pressure to find immediate employment. That said, its legacy remains difficult to discern, largely because the state did not compile data about use of the cash bonus the same way it had for other programs. Names of cash bonus recipients were quietly entered into administrative rolls, unseen beyond state agency offices.

★ ★ ★

The educational bonus—Chapter 5, Laws of 1919 Special Session—benefitted enormously from the fact that people across the state witnessed it in action. The mere presence of soldiers, sailors, marines, and nurses in classrooms, libraries, and laboratories reminded Wisconsinites of the pledge their lawmakers had made to these men and women. Participation lent itself easily to publicity—an unforeseen feature of the policy that enhanced its reputation and ultimately positioned it as a model for future federal legislation.

From the start, the educational bonus prompted enthusiastic reports. Fred Holmes penned one particularly glowing tribute, highlighting the case of Frank Kupris, one of the program's earliest enrollees. After surviving the Battle of the Somme, his next challenge was graduating from high school. The thirty-one-year-old had emigrated with his parents from Russia at a young age and was quick to contrast the educational opportunities of his homeland with those of his adopted country: "In Russia, there are no chances for any kind of education for a self-supporting man. But I found that it is not so in this country."[220] In

clear terms, Kupris revealed the capacity of education, like military service, to Americanize immigrants and instill them with fierce patriotism. His comments demonstrated the bonus' great potential; by solidifying newcomers' allegiance to the nation, it would dispel the kinds of doubts about patriotism that Wisconsin had endured during the war.

As of January 1920, some three hundred of Kupris's peers filled high school classrooms, with hundreds more opting to pursue college educations. Of that group, 1,829 enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, 465 at Marquette University, and 393 at the Milwaukee School of Engineering. Other beneficiaries dotted the country at schools like Harvard or the University of Chicago. Those who worked or remained homebound took night classes (300) or correspondence courses (1,223).[221] In the program's first nine months, the state disbursed $811,580 to applicants.[222]

Women received these funds as well, though state statistics are silent on precisely how many participated. In the program's infancy, state officials often spoke of beneficiaries using male pronouns exclusively, as if forgetting that the legislation included female nurses. But as the policy went into practice, agency publications increasingly mentioned women. For example, a State Board of Education publication detailing course subjects did so under the heading, "Special Classes and Short Courses for Ex-Service Men and Women."[223] Despite this effort, the press primarily portrayed the educational bonus as an opportunity for soldiers, sailors, and marines.

How well did these men and women adjust to academic life? School administrators across the state weighed in, and the State Board of Education publicly reproduced their comments. On balance, testimonies conveyed confidence in these students, even if they did not dramatically outpace their civilian peers as GI Bill beneficiaries would following World War II. For example, the Engineering College at the University of Wisconsin compiled grade statistics to report that bonus recipients performed slightly better than the general population in most subjects. A less precise assessment from Ripon College judged bonus students to be "a little better" than the average, and another from Beloit College as "rather better." One administrator from Campion College in Prairie du Chien offered only lukewarm praise: "While none are brilliant, and one or two have shown a lassitude and wandering of mind, the majority have gone at their work with determination."[224]

Schools held former service personnel to high standards; they closely monitored attendance and performance, notifying the Board of Education of circumstances that warranted cessation of funds. University of Wisconsin students who attended classes "irregularly" prompted formal faculty decisions that they

be "dropped." Those students received terse notifications from the faculty secretary, informing them, "you will not receive any educational bonus." At the same time, faculty also mobilized to bend the rules for exceptional students. Although Herman Deutsch had enrolled in fewer credits than required, the UW History Department advocated on his behalf; as the chair explained, Deutsch performed "investigation of such quality" that the department had authorized him to conduct independent scholarly research on a full-time basis.[225]

To faculty and administrators, exceptional students like Deutsch embodied the legislation's promise and potential. For him and others, military service became a pathway to an education he could not otherwise afford. Success stories like these prompted positive assessments of the program as a whole. As one Stevens Point State Normal School official put it, "I honestly believe that the law is a fine one and that the students are measuring up to the spirit of the law."[226]

The spirit of the law itself seemed to surpass that of any other state legislation. Before the bonus became law, the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library identified similar policies in neighboring states, but most either limited eligibility or restricted benefits to higher education only. For example, Iowa provided a public college education only to those men whose service began before they reached the age of twenty-one; Minnesota law covered tuition at state colleges and universities to men and women who served in the armed forces or Red Cross.[227] Nationwide, only Oregon came close, passing a bill to provide broad, flexible educational benefits. Even so, its funding fell short of Wisconsin's educational bonus.[228] Wisconsin stood poised to offer universally accessible educational benefits in a way no other state had to date. Unsurprisingly, the State Board of Education fielded inquiries about the bonus from other states following its enactment in September 1919.[229]

In subsequent years, nationwide reporting championed the policy's ingenuity and generosity. The *New York Times*, for example, provided a state-by-state comparison of veterans benefits and singled out Wisconsin as having created "the most comprehensive educational program worked out by any State."[230] A piece in Henry Ford's journalistic mouthpiece, the *Dearborn Independent*, dubbed it "the most comprehensive piece of bonus legislation offering educational opportunity adopted by any of the states."[231] More recently, historians have singled out the policy as evidence that Wisconsin "went beyond the federal government" in terms of the benefits it provided to veterans.[232]

Why was the educational bonus so remarkable? Other policies focused on practical issues, like preventing unemployment or other forms of distress. This policy was idealistic by comparison, framing education as both a pathway to employment and a valid investment in itself. Board of Education publications consistently emphasized that work need not preclude the pursuit of knowledge.

Some college administrators hinted that soldiers' readjustment to student life proved more difficult than they would publicly acknowledge. An official from Lawrence College described educational bonus recipients as producing "good average work" after an initial period of "considerable restlessness." Another observed that "it was difficult for them to settle down to work" at the start of the semester, when most performed "quite poorly." Nevertheless, he added, "most of these men have retrieved themselves since then." These comments echoed the same sentiments soldiers like Ira Peterson had expressed in their letters back to the welcome committee in New York. As Peterson put it, it was "more difficult to get used to civilian life than it was to become used to the army."

Sources: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 5/2/7 S41M9: World War I Bonus Records, 1919–1939; Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

After all, distance learning courses were available in subjects ranging from plant histology and bookkeeping to Shakespeare and railway engineering. These publications normalized the pursuit of education at all ages, reasoning, "the education of man . . . is never finished." Indeed, the man who neglected his education did so at his peril: "He must either progress and go forward, or he begins to retrograde and rust and consequently falls behind his fellows."[233] Never before had the state so resoundingly endorsed the importance of adult education.

Moreover, the educational bonus repaid the sacrifices soldiers had made to their country, wagering that such an investment would serve the state over the long term. Specifically, those who implemented the policy framed it as a means to produce more active participants in democracy. As Edward A. Fitzpatrick of the State Board of Education explained to recipients, the policy prolonged their "public duty" by demanding "a further investment of your time and your money to fit yourself to become even a better citizen, and to render in peace time the quality of service you rendered in war." An early report on implementation reinforced this message with a potent epigram that referred to knowledge as "the precursor and protector of republican institutions."[234] The educational bonus ensured that ex-servicemen continued to share a stake in their country's future, both on and off the battlefield.

Over succeeding decades, the popularity of this policy and its underlying principles helped reshape ideas around the value of education and the meaning

Although the educational bonus law expired on July 1, 1924, legislators in subsequent sessions revived its spirit. Chapter 305, Laws of 1931, extended benefits to orphaned children of otherwise eligible applicants who had fallen in action or died from war-related causes. Beneficiaries of this law included sisters Dorothy and Betty Jean King of Green Bay, who pursued coursework in pharmacy and physical education at the University of Wisconsin in 1932. Their father, George, had died nearly ten years earlier as the result of injuries incurred overseas.

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Series 1566 MAD 3/39/H7: Orphans' educational bonus applications, 1919–1945, Box 1.

of military service. Historian Jennifer Keene explains that, across the nation, veterans' battles for recognition paved the way for a reimagining of soldiers' relationship to the state. Policymakers and members of the public increasingly understood that they owed a great debt to those who had sacrificed individual safety for that of the country. With this bar set, when servicemen returned from Europe in the wake of World War II, they reaped the benefits of this new way of thinking: unprecedented access to education. The GI Bill, one of the most important legislative accomplishments of the twentieth century, enabled this generation to pursue higher education in greater numbers than ever before. As Keene concludes, "For the first and perhaps only time, wartime military service became a stepping-stone to a better life."[235] From this vantage point, Wisconsin's educational bonus served as an important precursor to the GI Bill.

Epilogue

With memories of the welcome committee fresh in his mind, Ira Lee Peterson wrote a letter of thanks to Katherine Frederickson in New York after he returned home to Wisconsin in the spring of 1919. "I was entertained so nicely at the Hall of States," he told her, identifying himself as the "unusually tall solder" with a diamond ring.[236] In fact, Frederickson made such a positive impression on Peterson, that he would eventually follow her lead. By early 1924, the Red Cross had formally recognized his work organizing "many entertainments for disabled war veterans" at the psychiatric hospital in Mendota.[237] The former soldier who had relied on the YMCA to send letters home from France now served as its membership secretary in Madison, helping fellow veterans in that role and as an

active member of the American Legion.[238] Remarkably, when the United States entered World War II, Peterson answered the call of duty a second time, this time serving with the Air Force.[239]

Peterson and others like him embodied the spirit of veterans legislation enacted by the 1919 Wisconsin Legislature. These innovative policies looked forward rather than backwards; they did not reward past deeds, but sought to "stimulate patriotism" in the uncertain future.[240] On this score, the personal biographies of many World War I veterans, Peterson included, bear testimony to the success of these laws. Moreover, Wisconsin legislators—unlike their predecessors or peers in other states—came to understand that successful rehabilitation to civilian life required more than short-term material assistance. Instead, they implemented more comprehensive programs that affirmed the value of veterans' service to the state and the nation. To achieve this goal, legislators invested in veterans' physical health, financial stability, and education. Although far from complete, legislation enacted in 1919 formed a solid foundation upon which veterans policy continued to evolve over the next century. BB

NOTES

1. Ira Peterson, "Journal of a World War Veteran," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 8 (1924), 199–220: 214.

2. Ira Peterson, "Journal of a World War Veteran," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 8 (1924), 328–348: 334.

3. Letter from Ira L. Peterson to Katherine Frederickson, May 14, 1919. Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

4. For a brief but helpful overview, see Chapter 26 of Jackson J. Spielvogel, *Western Civilization: A Brief History Volume II: Since 1300* (New York: West/Wadsworth, 1999). See also David Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

5. Richard L. Pifer with Marjorie Hannon Pifer, *The Great War Comes to Wisconsin: Sacrifice, Patriotism, and Free Speech in a Time of Crisis* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2017), 49–50. See also Robert S. Maxwell, Emanuel L. Philipp: Wisconsin Stalwart (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1959), 113.

6. Paul Glad, *The History of Wisconsin, Volume 5: War, A New Era, and Depression, 1914–1940* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1990), 21/9/11.

7. "La Follette's speech in the U.S. Senate against the entry of the United States into the World War, April 4, 1917," *Congressional Record—Senate* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1917), 223–236.

8. Pifer, The Great War Comes to Wisconsin, 65.

9. Kennedy, Over Here, 21–22.

10. Eau Claire Leader, March 16, 1917. Cited from the original in Lorin Lee Cary, "The Wisconsin Loyalty Legion, 1917–1918," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 53 (1969), 33–50: 34.

11. Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 24.

12. Department of Commerce and Labor, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910: Statistics for Wisconsin* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913), 593–4.

13. "Pledge Loyalty of Allegiance," *Milwaukee Journal*, February 8, 1917.

14. Mary Antonette Henke, "World War I: Dissent and Discord in Milwaukee" (master's thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1966), 88.

15. "War Is Declared," *Wisconsin State Journal*, April 6, 1917.

16. "Obey Law; Keep Mouth Shut," *Grand Rapids Daily Leader*, April 10, 1917; "Good Advice," *Racine Journal News*, April 11, 1917.

17. "Uncle Sam Generous Says Attorney Wolfe Aliens Are Safe Here," *La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press*, April 15, 1917.

18. Woodrow Wilson, The President's Flag Day Address: *With Evidence of Germany's Plans* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1917), 4.

19. Quoted in Kennedy, *Over Here*, 24.

20. For a brief synopsis, see David Zonderman, "Over Here: The Wisconsin Homefront during World War I," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 77 (1994), 296–300.

21. Alvin P. Kletzsch, a prominent Milwaukee businessman and chairman of the German-American Bazaar Association, relayed this news, "Says City Has a Black Eye," *Milwaukee Journal*, February 21, 1917, WHS Library, Microfilm P70-2227.

22. "'Black Eye' Due to Fanatics?" *Milwaukee Journal*, February 23, 1917.

23. "The Traitor State," *Princeton Democrat* (Indiana), July 17, 1917. Another article seems to indicate that the editorial had also been published in the Louisville, Kentucky *Courier-Journal*, and possibly elsewhere, "Governor Philipp Defends State's War Record," *Eau Claire Sunday Leader*, July 29, 1917.

24. Many thanks to Leslie Bellais of the Wisconsin Historical Society for sharing her valuable insight concerning the use and perceptions of the term "Traitor State" in 1917.

25. Pifer, *The Great War Comes to Wisconsin*, 210.

26. Maxwell, *Emanuel Philipp*, xiii/125/32.

27. Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 29; Karen Falk, "Public Opinion in Wisconsin during World War I," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 25 (1942), 389–407: 399.

28. Falk, "Public Opinion in Wisconsin during World War I," 390. Of those nearly 220,000 men, 118,000 would serve. Pifer, *The Great War Comes to Wisconsin*, 203.

29. Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 45.

30. Ibid., 28.

31. See, for example, "Another Tar and Feather Party Is Staged," *Ashland Daily Press*, April 11, 1918.

32. Federal laws included the Threats Against the President Act, Selective Service Act, Espionage Act, Trading-with-the-Enemy Act, and the Sabotage Act. See John D. Stevens, "When Sedition Laws Were Enforced: Wisconsin in World War I," *Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters* 58 (1970), 39–60.

33. Cary, "The Wisconsin Loyalty Legion, 1917–1918," 33.

34. Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 42.

35. Irvine L. Lenroot, "The War Loyalty of Wisconsin," *The Forum*, June 1918, 695–702.

36. Pifer, *The Great War Comes to Wisconsin*, 212–4; Maxwell, *Emanuel Philipp*, 175; Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 50–2.

37. Letter from John T. Williams to Charles D. Rosa, August 20, 1918, WHS Archives, Mss VV, Charles D. Rosa Papers, Box 1.

38. Letter from H. A. Huber to Charles D. Rosa, August 15, 1918, WHS Archives, Mss VV, Charles D. Rosa Papers, Box 1.

39. Cary, "The Wisconsin Loyalty Legion, 1917–1918," 43.

40. Charles McCarthy, head of the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library, described the state as "maligned" despite its notable contributions to the war effort. Letter from Charles McCarthy to James S. Benn, February 18, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss KU Series A, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 18, folder 1.

41. "Joy Reigns in Madison," *Capital Times*, November 11, 1918.

42. "Citizens Go Wild as News of Truce is Received Here," *Janesville Daily Gazette*, November 11, 1918.

43. "Peace Celebration Greatest Event Ever Witnessed," *Sheboygan Press*, November 12, 1918.

44. "Overjoyed Crowds Here Celebrate Victory Day: Parades Then Carnival," *Eau Claire Leader*, November 12, 1918.

45. Letter from Elton Morrison, December 24, 1918, WHS Archives, Mss 97.153, Elton Morrison Papers, folder 14.

46. Burl Noggle, *Into the Twenties: The United States from Armistice to Normalcy* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 14.

47. As an example, see Walter Kohler's letter to Governor Philipp, February 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

48. A. H. Roepke to Emanuel Philipp, January 21, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1. The agricultural sector had already lost 2.5 million workers to military and industry following the nation's entry into war. See Harry Schwartz, "Farm Labor Adjustments after World War I," *Journal of Farm Economics* 25 (February 1943), 269–277: 269.

49. Mrs. Victor Frederickson, "History of the Wisconsin Women's Society in New York, 1916 to 1936" (n.d.), 7, WHS Pamphlet Collection 54-6189. Of twenty-two members listed, five were men.

50. Letter from Mary Sabin to Governor Philipp, February 22, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

51.Letter from L. C. Whittet to A. H. Wilkinson dated February 28, 1919; Letter from L. C. Whittet to Mary Sabin, March 5, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1. Chapter 22, Laws of 1919 was published on March 14, 1919.

52. Telegram from Mary Sabin to L. C. Whittet, March 16, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

53. Telegram from Katherine Frederickson to Emanuel Philipp, March 15, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

54. Letter from Mary Sabin to L. C. Whittet, March 21, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

55. Letter from Orlando Holway to Emanuel Philipp, March 31, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

56. Letter from L. C. Whittet to Mary Sabin, March 5, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

57. John William Leonard, ed., *Who's Who in America, Volume 11* (1920), 2459.

58. Letter from L. Grieb, Secretary to George Russell, to Emanuel Philipp, March 5, 1919; Letter from George Russell to Emanuel Philipp, March 11, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

59. The appropriation would be a "revolving fund rather than one that is gradually exhausted," since most men repaid small loans after returning to Wisconsin. Letter from L. Grieb, Secretary to George Russell, to Emanuel Philip, March 5, 1919; Letter from George Russell to Emanuel Philipp, March 11, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

60. Letter from Orlando Holway to L. C. Whittet, March 7, 1919; Letter from Mary Sabin to L. C. Whittet, March 21, 1919, WHS Archives; Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, March 27, 1919; Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, March 27, 1919; Letter from Mary Sabin to L. C. Whittet, March 21, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

61. Letter from L. Grieb, Secretary to George Russell, to Emanuel Philipp, March 5, 1919; Letter from George Russell to Emanuel Philipp, March 11, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

62. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, March 27, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

63. Telegram from E. L. Philipp to Mary Sabin, March 14, 1919; Letter from Mary Sabin to Emanuel Philipp, March 26, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

64. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, April 28, 1919; L. C. Whittet to Katherine Frederickson, April 30, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

65. Both the Executive II Wilhelmina and the Battleship Georgia were diverted to Boston, at which point the men were sent to Camp Devens, west of Boston. Still, other men arrived in New York on May 5, 6, and 10. Memoranda, undated [May 1, 1919]; Telegram from Adjutant General Harris to Adjutant General Holway, May 2, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

66. G. Earl Wallis, "Major O'Connell Lauds Madison Heroes," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 6, 1919.

67. "Governor in Visit to Camp Welcomes Men," *Capital Times*, May 7, 1919.

68. "Madison Boys Leave Merrit Thursday," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 7, 1919, Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, April 28, 1919; Letter from C. C. Smith to Lt. Col. James McCully, May 14, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

69. Additionally, volunteers had paid nearly one hundred in-person visits to men in hospitals. "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to June 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

70. "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to July 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

71. "Madison Boys Leave Merrit Thursday," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 7, 1919.

72. "Wisconsin Committee to Welcome Returning Soldiers," WHS Archives, Series 304, MAD 4/44/I1; "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to July 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2. For more on the Winter Garden, see William D. Miller, *Pretty Bubbles in the Air: America in 1919* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 109/113.

73. "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to July 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

74. G. Earl Wallis, "Major O'Connell Lauds Madison Heroes," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 6, 1919.

75. Ibid.

76. Letter from Mary Sabin to Emanuel Philipp, April 8, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

77. Letter from Orlando Holway to Emanuel Philipp, March 31, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

78. A grateful Dostal later wrote a letter of thanks, promising to pay the money back. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to Emanuel Philipp, June 2, 1919; Letter from Katherine Frederickson to Emanuel Philipp, June 17, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

79. "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to June 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

80. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, April 23, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

81. Unsigned letter to Katherine Frederickson, April 25, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

82. Telegram from Katherine Frederickson to Emanuel Philip, May 27, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

83. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to Emanuel Philipp, June 2, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

84. Letter from Anna Simon to Katherine Frederickson, June 9, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

85. Sam Simon to unnamed recipient, June 10, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

86. "Report of Work Done at Headquarters up to July 1st, 1919," Wisconsin Headquarters, Hall of States, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

87. Sam Simon to unnamed recipient, June 9, 1919; Sam Simon to unnamed recipient, June 10, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

88. Letter from John Kronberger to Mrs. B. R. Clawson, June 14, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

89. Letter from W. C. Smith to Katherine Frederickson, May 22, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

90. L. C. Whittet to Katherine Frederickson, May 15, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2. Additional appropriations were enacted under Chapter 387, Laws of 1919.

91. The welcome effort formally ceased on September 15.

92. See, for example, "Chapter 2: An Uneasy Peace Comes to Wisconsin" in Glad, *History of Wisconsin, Volume 5*, 55–82.

93. News of the governor's inauguration would be overshadowed by the death of former president Theodore Roosevelt. "Gov. Philipp Begins his Third Term," *Capital Times*, January 6, 1919.

94. "Philipp Proposes State Fair Wages Board for Future," *La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press*, January 9, 1919.

95. The front page of the *Journal* provided a useful summary of his points. "What Governor Advocates in Message," *Wisconsin State Journal*, January 9, 1919.

96. "Under the Big Dome," *Wisconsin State Journal*, January 9, 1919.

97. "Avalanche of Bills on Final Assembly Day," *Capital Times*, February 12, 1919.

98. Policymakers in Washington, D.C., frequently deployed the term "reconstruction" following the war to encompass a broad range of policies—especially nationalizing industry, reforming labor practice, and investing government resources in infrastructure—that would remake the country anew. But little would come of the so-called Reconstruction Congress of 1919, which reasserted the pre-war status quo. See Noggle, *Intro the Twenties*, 44–53; Chapter 5 of Kennedy, *Over Here*.

99. This committee had formed as the result of a resolution adopted during the February 1918 special session. Roy P. Wilcox, Chairman, "Report of Special Legislative Committee on Reconstruction," filed in Wisconsin State Legislature, February 5, 1919, WHS, Government Documents, Z3 Rec.1 1919.

100. Granted, newspapers—as we will discuss later—were highly politicized, and often subsidized in part or full by elected officials who used them as mouthpieces to advocate for certain policies. "In Mid-June" (Editorial), *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 11, 1919.

101. "Asks State to Give Soldiers Bonus," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 13, 1919.

102. Unemployment rates among servicemen exceeded 40 percent according to a 1919 estimate by the War Department. Nancy Gentile Ford, "'Put Fighting Blood in Your Business': The U.S. War Department and the Reemployment of World War I Soldiers," in *Veterans' Policies, Veterans' Politics: New Perspectives on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. Stephen R. Ortiz (University Press of Florida, 2014), 121. Still, the federal government would soon cease job placement services provided through the U.S. Employment Service, despite warnings from Wisconsin employers that doing so would wreak "extreme hardship on returning soldiers." WHS Archives, Series 1702 MAD 3/43/B6, "Emergency employment situation in Wisconsin, 1918–1919." On U.S. Employment Service functions, see Henry P. Guzda, "The U.S. Employment Service at 50: It too had to wait its turn," Monthly Labor Review (June 1983), 12–19.

103. Letter from Charles McCarthy to Fred Keppel, Third Assistant Secretary of War, February 17, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss KU Series A, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 18, folder 1.

104. John M. Kinder, *Paying With Their Bodies: American War and the Problem of the Disabled Veteran* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 5; John Maurice Clark, *The Costs of the World War to the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), 188.

105. For a broad discussion of rehabilitation's goals, see Beth Linker, *War's Waste: Rehabilitation in World War I America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

106. The act was initially passed in June but became known as the War Risk Insurance Act following October 1917 revisions. Quoted from the original in Samuel McCune Lindsay, "Purpose and Scope of War Risk Insurance," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 79 (1918), 52–68: 53. See also Jessica Adler, *Burdens of War: Creating the United States Veterans Health System* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 13; Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 63–4; Thomas B. Love, "The Social Significance of War Risk Insurance," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 79 (1918), 46–51. Within five years of the armistice, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance would field more than 930,000 applications from policyholders. K. Walter Hickel, "Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare: The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I," in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, ed. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 236–267: 238.

107. Kathlyn L. Reed, "History of Federal Legislation for Persons With Disabilities," *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* 46 (1992), 397–408, 398; Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Pub. L. No. 65-178 (1918), https://www.loc.gov; "Vocational Education," Monthly Labor Review 10 (1920), 138–153: 139.

108. "Every Disabled Soldier and Sailor Should Know," *Journal of Education* 89 (May 22, 1919), 578.

109. "Asks State to Give Soldiers Bonus," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 13, 1919.

110. "Rough notes on Senator Cunningham's bill providing three month's pay for soldiers," February 13, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss KU Series A, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 25.

111. "Under the Big Dome," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 6, 1919.

112. *Capital Times* buried the bill's introduction in a short notice on the 7th page of the paper. "3 Months' Pay for Soldiers," *Capital Times*, February 12, 1919. See also Fred Holmes, "Has Plan to Aid Returning Yanks," *Stevens Point Daily Journal*, February 17, 1919.

113. Paul F. Hunter, ed., *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1919* (Madison: Democrat Printing Co. State Printer, 1919), 467.

114. "Senate Reconsiders 'Secrecy' Vote," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 5, 1919.

115. Both houses passed resolutions like 1919 Joint Resolution 13, "Urging the Congress of the United States to enact necessary legislation to allow soldiers, sailors and marines, who served in the war against Germany and her allies, six months' pay after discharge."

116. Fred Holmes, "Has Plan to Aid Returning Yanks," *Stevens Point Daily Journal*, February 17, 1919.

117. Chapter 55, Laws of 1919. *Laws Passed by the Special Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: Bismarck Tribune Company, 1920), 94–5.

118. "League State Has Real Soldier Plan," *Nonpartisan Leader*, March 10, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

119. "Land Clearing Aid Asked in House," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 11, 1919.

120. The bill would appropriate $500,000 to create a Wisconsin Soldier Settlement fund. "Asks State to Give Soldiers Bonus," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 13, 1919.

121. "The Soldier and His Bonus Are Live Subjects," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, June 4, 1919; "Senate to Pass on the Soldiers' Bonus Law," *Racine Journal News*, June 13, 1919.

122. "Rough notes of a bill," n.d. [1919]; "A Bill," n.d. [1919], WHS Archives, Mss KU, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 25. Early drafts included nurses but later drafts excluded them from eligibility.

123. "Soldier Air Bill Is Returned," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 13, 1919.

124. Letter from H. T. Christenson to Emanuel Philipp, March 21, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1. Ultimately, American farmers would raise wages 40 percent to compete with industrial pay. Harry Schwartz, "Farm Labor Adjustments after World War I," *Journal of Farm Economics* 25 (February 1943), 269–277: 269.

125. See Euring Brian Roberts, "Theodore Vilter," unpublished manuscript accessed on May 11, 2018, http://www.hevac-heritage.org.

126. Letters from Neele B. Neelen to Theodore Vilter, March 20 and 21, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

127. Letter from Theodore Vilter to Emanuel Philipp, April 4, 1919; letter from Theodore Vilter to George Bruce, April 4, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

128. Letter from Theodore Vilter to Emanuel Philipp, March 22, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 1.

129. Letter from Ira L. Peterson to Katherine Frederickson, May 14, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

130. Letter from John Kronberger to Mrs. B. R. Clawson, June 14, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

131. "Bonus Assured Badger Fighters," *Racine Journal News*, April 11, 1919.

132. "A large delegation of soldiers" had already attended earlier March hearings of the same bills. "Soldiers to Attend Senate Hearing," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 10, 1919.

133. Katherine Frederickson reported that she had been "asked repeatedly" about the bonus. Letter from Katherine Frederickson to L. C. Whittet, April 23, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

134. "Soldier Bonus Problem," *Grand Rapids Tribune*, May 1, 1919.

135. "Soldier Defends State Bonus for Returning Yanks," *Milwaukee Journal*, June 1, 1919.

136. Unsigned letter to Katherine Frederickson, April 25, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

137. "Soldier Bonus Problem," *Grand Rapids Tribune*, May 1, 1919.

138. B. A. Hoffman, "State Drive to Pay War Bonuses," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 20, 1919. See also, "Show Appreciation," *Door County Advocate*, May 23, 1919.

139. "Report of the Sub-committee of the Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature Relating to Bonuses for Soldiers and Sailors," (Madison, WI: Assembly Chief Clerk, May 27, 1919).

140. "Two Vital Bills Up Before Senate," *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 8, 1919; "Senate to Pass on the Soldiers' Bonus Law," *Racine Journal News*, June 13, 1919.

141. 1919 Joint Resolution 85, WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1.

142. "Will Print Copies of Soldier Aid Plan," *Capital Times*, May 23, 1919; "To Ask $500,000 of Senate to Aid Crippled Soldiers," *Eau Claire Leader*, May 27, 1919.

143. Chapter 452, Laws of 1919.

144. Chapter 42, published March 28, 1919, "relating to temporary aid for honorably discharged indigent soldiers, sailors and marines"; Chapter 18, published March 14, 1919, "relating to preference to veterans in the civil service."

145. Chapter 427, Laws of 1919.

146. Chapter 336, published June 20, 1919; Chapter 598, published July 24, 1919.

147. Fred Holmes, "Philipp Requests Referendum Vote on Soldier Bonus," *La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press*, June 30, 1919.

148. Holmes served as a correspondent for 19 or 31 papers covering the capitol. Paul F. Hunter, ed., *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1919* (Madison: Democrat Printing Co. State Printer, 1919), 450; Biographical note, WHS Archives, Mss OC, Fred Holmes Papers, Box 1. Like most reporters of this period, he was closely associated with a political faction and openly advocated for policies and politicians. Burt, "'Conflicts of Interests,'" 97–8.

149. "Double Cross is Charged in Soldier Bill," *Capital Times*, July 9, 1919, TBL, Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

150. "Referendum Bonus Plan Hits Snag," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 9, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

151. Former state representative William Evjue founded his paper in 1917 as a statement of protest against the *Wisconsin State Journal* after that paper withdrew its support from Robert La Follette due to his anti-war position. The paper frequently broadcast progressive criticisms of stalwart Republicans like Governor Philipp. Elizabeth Burt, "'Conflicts of Interests': Covering Reform in the Wisconsin Press, 1910–1920," *Journalism History* 26 (Fall 2000), 95–107: 101. See also Falk, "Public Opinion in Wisconsin during World War I," 396; William Theodore Evjue, *A Fighting Editor* (Wells Print Company, 1968), 301.

152. "Finis," *Capital Times*, July 14, 1919; "Starting to Gig," *Capital Times*, July 18, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

153. "Substitute Dies After Fights," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 15, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

154. Later, Markham would dispute the stenographer's account of his remarks in an effort to reverse the damage these remarks caused. "Substitute Dies After Fights," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 15, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

155. "Mr. Markham Forgets, Say Returned Badger Heroes," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 16, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

156. Chapter 667, Laws of 1919. *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1962* (Madison: State of Wisconsin, 1962), 232–233.

157. "Bill Passes Both Houses Minus Fight," *Capital Times*, July 16, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

158. "Legislators Plan Bonus Campaign," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 22, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

159. "Bonus for Wisconsin Soldiers Has Indorsement [*sic*] of Legislative Members," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 26, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

160. "Starting to Gig," *Capital Times*, July 18, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

161. "The Soldier Speaks to You," *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 26, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

162. *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1962* (Madison: State of Wisconsin, 1962), 234.

163. "Soldiers Bonus Vote Carries," *Milwaukee Journal*, September 3, 1919. See also "State Vote Is 5 to 1 For Bonus," *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 3, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

164. Fred Holmes, "Has Plan to Aid Returning Yanks," *Stevens Point Daily Journal*, February 17, 1919.

165. Emanuel L. Philipp, "The Governor's Veto Message," July 19, 1919, TBL, Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z. This request was formally affirmed by law: Chapter 699, published August 8, 1919, "relating to the adjutant general and the securing of information concerning Wisconsin residents who fought in the war against Germany and her allies."

166. Circular letter from O. Holway, Wisconsin Adjutant General, to all Wisconsin veterans, dated July 25, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.

167. "Educational Opportunities for Soldiers and Sailors," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (September 1919), 9–10.

168. "Soldiers Favor Education Bill," *Wisconsin News*, August 19, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library, Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.

169. "Educational Opportunities for Soldiers and Sailors," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (September 1919), 23–24.

170. "Educational Opportunities for Soldiers and Sailors," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (September 1919).

171. "Soldiers' Aid Bill Passes Legislature," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, September 6, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library, Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.

172. *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1917* (Madison: Democrat Printing Company State Printer, 1917), 25–6.

173. "Bill Passes Both Houses Minus Fight," *Capital Times*, July 16, 1919, "State Bonus to Soldiers Held Valid," *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 25, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

174. Copy of letter from John J. Blaine to Orin [*sic*] Fletcher, April 2, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss KU, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 25.

175. Fred Holmes, "Senate Has Measure to Provide Lands for Returned Troops," *Janesville Daily Gazette*, April 9, 1919. See also "Fletcher Offers Bill of Sweeping Character to Give Soldiers Land," *La Crosse Tribune and Leader*

Press, April 11, 1919; copy of letter from John J. Blaine to Orin [*sic*] Fletcher, April 2, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss KU, Charles McCarthy Papers, Box 25.

176. "Fletcher of *La Crosse Fathers Bill to Give Land to Veterans of the State*," La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press, June 19, 1919; William Kirsch "Fletcher Bill Is Unconstitutional? Faces Veto, Rumor," *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 29, 1919.

177. "Wisconsin Legislature Completes Its Work and Adjourns Sine Die," *Racine Journal News*, July 31, 1919.

178. Fred L. Holmes, "Start Action in Supreme Court Today," *Capital Time*s, October 15, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

179. "Bonus Test Leader Has 200-LB Smile," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 16, 1919.

180. Fred L. Holmes, "Start Action in Supreme Court Today," *Capital Times*, October 15, 1919; "Titles of Bonus Test Cases Now in Supreme Court," unidentified newspaper, n.d., LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

181. "Bonus Test Leader Has 200-LB Smile," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 16, 1919.

182. Fred L. Holmes, "Start Action in Supreme Court Today," *Capital Times*, October 15, 1919, LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

183. John J. Blaine, "Rewarding Soldiers By Bonus," *La Follette Magazine* 11 (December 1919), LRB, Theobald Legislative Library Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

184. "Who Is to Blame," *Capital Times*, October 16, 1919; "The Governor Is Peeved," *Capital Times*, October 17, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

185. Letter from E. L. Philipp to William T. Evjue, dated October 15, 1919, as published in *Capital Times*, October 16, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z. The governor later tried to emphasize these points by promising to call a special session if the laws were declared unconstitutional after all. "Assurance Is Given on Soldier Aid," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 16, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

186. "Pay the Soldiers Now," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 23, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

187. "A Tragedy and a Disgrace," *Capital Times*, October 25, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

188. Letter from H. H. Dean to Charles Crownhart, November 19, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1.

189. "Sovereign: The People or the Profiteers," *Capital Times*, October 20, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

190. "Pay the Soldiers Now," *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 23, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

191. See, for example, Carl R. Fish, "Back to Peace in 1865," *American Historical Review* 24 (1919), 435–443.

192. "Ex-Soldiers Pack Chambers at Bonus Case," *The Madison Democrat*, November 9, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

193. "Here Is Gist of Arguments of Lawyers in Bonus Cases," *The Madison Democrat*, November 9, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

194. "Here Is Gist of Arguments of Lawyers in Bonus Cases," *The Madison Democrat*, November 9, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

195. "Ex-Soldiers Pack Chambers at Bonus Case," *The Madison Democrat*, November 9, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z. Some of these men had already enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, but received no monthly reimbursement while the legislation remained in legal limbo. "Nye Act Students May Be Forced Out," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 21, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.

196. "State of Wisconsin in Supreme Court, August Term 1919" No. 160-161 (Madison, WI: Blied Printing Company, 1919), 2–6, WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1. Crownhart had read Legislative Reference Library materials on court challenges to similar legislation in Connecticut (where a bonus was struck down) and Massachusetts (where a bonus was maintained). Irma Hochstein, "Citations and Quotations From Various Cases in the States of the U.S. Upholding or Disputing the Constitutionality of Acts Appropriating Money Rewards to Soldiers in Recognition for Services" (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library, October 1919), WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1.

197. "Ex-Soldiers Pack Chambers at Bonus Case," *The Madison Democrat*, November 9, 1919, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.82 Z.

198. State Ex. Rel. Atwood v. Johnson, State Treasurer, et al. Supreme Court of Wisconsin, 170 Wis. 218, 175 N.W. 589 (1919).

199. "Legality of School Aid Explained," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 10, 1920, LRB, TLL Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.

200. State Ex Rel. Atwood v. Johnson, State Treasurer, et al. Supreme Court of Wisconsin, 170 Wis. 251, 176 N.W. 224 (1920).

201. Letter from H. H. Dean to Charles Crownhart, November 19, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1.

202. "Education as Wars Reward: A Wisconsin Contribution," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (January 1920), 1.

203. As of 1862, federal laws provided pensions for men with disabilities "incurred as a direct consequence of . . . military duty. Within decades, the federal pension extended to include nearly all veterans with the Dependent Pension Act of 1890. Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 126, 108–110. See also Mary Dearing, *Veterans in Politics: The Story of the G.A.R.* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1952); William H. Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1918).

204. Various factors—illiteracy, poverty, and unfamiliarity with pension laws—raised barriers to successful pension applications. See WHS Archives, Series 1927, Box 29 (January 1879).

205. In the post–Civil War era, the adjutant general organized pension-related correspondence by date, which meant that letters pertaining to a single soldier were often scattered across multiple places, rather than an individual file.

206. WHS Archives, Series 1567: Disabled soldiers correspondence, 1919–1923, Box 1, case #24 (Gustave Hildebrandt).

207. WHS Archives, Series 1567: Disabled soldiers correspondence, 1919–1923, Box 1, case #4 (August Buchholz).

208. WHS Archives, Series 1567: Disabled soldiers correspondence, 1919–1923, Box 1, case #17 (Oscar Dettmeyer).

209. Hickel, "Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare," 236.

210. WHS Archives, Series 1567: Disabled soldiers correspondence, 1919–1923, Box 1, case #35 (Leo Kwasniewski).

211. Jennifer D. Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 162–3. For a concise summary of bonus legislation's proponents and opponents, see Chapter 5 of John F. Cogan, *The High Cost of Good Intentions: A History of U.S. Federal Entitlement Programs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017). See also Chapter 1 of Glenn Altschuler and Stuart Blumin, *The GI Bill: The New Deal for Veterans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

212. The 1924 World War Adjusted Compensation Act provided for deferred compensation to veterans, but provoked protest in 1932 when veterans sought to cash out benefits that would otherwise only be available upon death or in the year 1945. In 1936, Congress successfully overrode President Roosevelt's veto to enable veterans to access their benefits early. Altschuler, *The GI Bill*, 35–6. For more on veterans' groups efforts to lobby for these measures, see Stephen R. Ortiz, "The 'New Deal' for Veterans: The Economy Act, the Veterans of Foreign wars, and the Origins of New Deal Dissent," The Journal of Military History 70 (2006), 415–438.

213. Keene, *Doughboys*, 182.

214. Henry D. Morgan, "Financing of State Veterans' Bonuses," *National Tax Journal* 1 (1938), 233–240: 1.

215. H. Rupert Theobald, editor, *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1962* (Madison: State of Wisconsin, 1962), 231–238.

216. These funds were deposited in the Service Recognition Fund. "A thumbnail history of Wisconsin veterans' legislation" (Madison: Legislative Reference Bureau, 1998), 4.

217. This law made no mention of veterans, except to credit them for financing the facility. Later legislation allied the hospital more closely to veterans' causes, including Chapter 63, Laws of 1929, "giving war veterans a preference in admission to the Wisconsin general hospital," and Chapter 146, Laws of 1929, providing veterans care "at the clinic cost rate" at the general hospital. Later laws revised rates related to these provisions (Chapter 330, Laws of 1939; Chapter 507, Laws of 1957), and 1985 Act 29 repealed these provisions.

218. Some of the surplus tax revenues would be used to construct Camp Minnewawa, Chapter 356, Laws of 1925, "a restoration camp for sick and disabled veterans of the world war."

219. Their efforts resulted in Chapter 442, Laws of 1933, asserting the state's "obligation to provide hospitalization for all indigent, disabled and honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, marines or nurses." H. Rupert Theobald, editor. *The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1962* (Madison: State of Wisconsin, 1962), 231–238.

220. "Education as Wars Reward: A Wisconsin Contribution," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (January 1920), 16–17.

221. Later reports noted that the Board of Education had not originally intended to place participants at out-of-state institutions, but did so from October 1919 onward in cases where students could not access the specific kind of education or training they sought within the state. In some instance, high-volume of out-of-state placement alerted the University of Wisconsin to program areas it might expand, like architecture and veterinary science. "Education as Wars Reward: A Wisconsin Contribution," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (January 1920), 17–19;

"The First Year of Wisconsin's Educational Bonus Law, 1919–1920," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 3 (November 1920), 10/19–23.

222. "The First Year of Wisconsin's Educational Bonus Law, 1919–1920," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 3 (November 1920), 45.

223. "Special Classes and Short Courses for Ex-Service Men and Women," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 3 (September 1920), 2–4.

224. "The First Year of Wisconsin's Educational Bonus Law, 1919–1920," 25–6.

225. UW-Madison Archives, Series 5/2/7 S41M9: World War I Bonus Records, 1919–1939.

226. "The First Year of Wisconsin's Educational Bonus Law, 1919–1920," 26–7.

227. Iowa law (Chapter 160, Laws of 1919); Minnesota law (Chapter 338, Laws of 1919); Hazel Rasmussen, "Digest of Legislation of Various States Relating to State Aid to Soldiers and Sailors to Enable Such Persons to Secure or Complete an Education, With Complete Text of Laws of Minnesota, North Dakota and Oregon Appended" (Madison, WI: Legislative Reference Library, August 22, 1919), WHS Archives, Mss 403, Charles Crownhart Papers, Box 7, folder 1.

228. Oregon's policy provided up to $25/month and no more than $200/year for up to four years ($800 total versus $1080 in Wisconsin). "Educational Opportunities for Soldiers and Sailors," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (September 1919), 30. See also "Soldiers' Bonus in Foreign Countries: Extracts from Magazine Articles," Legislative Reference Library (Madison, WI: 1921).

229. "Education as Wars Reward: A Wisconsin Contribution," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (January 1920), 17.

230. William E. Hannan, "What States Have Done for Soldiers: While Federal Program Is Still in Doubt Bonuses and Educational Opportunities Have Been Provided in Sixteen States," *New York Times*, 5 September 1920 (New York, NY), XX2. See also "College Education Bonus: Wisconsin Offers It to Ex-Service Men Who Are Eligible," *New York Times*, 5 September 1920 (New York, NY), W22.

231. Bruce R. McCoy, "Making the Soldier Bonus a State Investment: Wisconsin Paying Its Debt of Gratitude by Educational Plan," *Dearborn Independent*, February 11, 1922.

232. Altschuler, *The GI Bill*, 36.

233. "Free Correspondence Study Courses for Ex-Service Men and Women," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 3 (September 1920), 4–6.

234. "Educational Opportunities for Soldiers and Sailors," *Wisconsin's Educational Horizon* 2 (September 1919), 1–3.

235. Keene, *Doughboys*, 205.

236. Letter from Ira L. Peterson to Katherine Frederickson, May 14, 1919, WHS Archives, Mss JC, Emanuel Philipp Papers, Box 6, folder 2.

237. The hospital is now known as the Mendota Mental Health Institute but was formerly called the Wisconsin Hospital for the Insane. "Peterson Thanked for Entertaining War Vets," *Capital Times*, January 2, 1924.

238. Peterson had worked at the YMCA in Madison before the war began. *Wisconsin State World: Young Men's Christian Associations* 29 (1915), 17. He frequently organized Memorial Day events in Brainerd, MN, and returned to Whitewater as a guest speaker at the Whitewater Legion in 1962. "First Duty of American Legion," *Brainerd Daily Dispatch*, May 29, 1929; "Graves Decorated Beautifully for Rites Tomorrow," *Brainerd Daily Dispatch*, May 29, 1930; "Teacher Is New Head of Whitewater Legion," *Janesville Daily Gazette*, June 8, 1962.

239. "Obituaries: Lt. Col. I. L. Peterson," *Janesville Daily Gazette*, August 31, 1965. See also Ancestry.com. *U.S., Find A Grave Index, 1600s–Curren*t [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012).

240. "Legality of School Aid Explained," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 10, 1920, TBL, Clippings Collection, 359.6 Z.