

1945 July 16-22

Uncle Sam Wants You--Now!



U.S. Army recruiting poster
(*Time* magazine)

The "[Uncle Sam" recruiting poster](#) had been around since World War I. With another world war raging, Uncle Sam needed men, a lot of men. Patriotic fervor generated by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor caused a surge in enlistments in the armed forces, but that alone was not enough for the task ahead. Eleven out of every twelve American men who served in the armed forces during World War II were "drafted" under the Selective Service system.¹

Even before the United States entered World War II, the Selective Training and Service Act became law on September 16, 1940.² This was the first peacetime draft in the history of the United States. All men between the ages of 21 and 35 were to register with their local draft boards on October 16, 1940. On that appointed day, 16,316,908 men registered at 6,175 draft boards all over the country. Every man received a number. Two weeks later, a blindfolded Secretary of War Henry Stimson plucked out the first of 9,000 capsules, each containing a number, from a glass bowl that had been used for the same purpose in World War I. Each of the 9,000 numbers corresponded to the number assigned to local registrants. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt read each number, his voice was broadcast over the radio

airwaves. Local draft boards then sent out questionnaires to their registrants in the order that their numbers had been drawn. This was followed by a physical examination.³

PAGE FOUR LA CROSSE TRIBUNE AND LEADER-PRESS Monday Evening, October 28, 1940

Partial List Of Draft Serial Numbers For La Crosse County

DRAFT BOARD NO. 1 South La Crosse		DRAFT BOARD NO. 2 North La Crosse and La Crosse City	
1	...	1	...
2	...	2	...
3	...	3	...
4	...	4	...
5	...	5	...
6	...	6	...
7	...	7	...
8	...	8	...
9	...	9	...
10	...	10	...
11	...	11	...
12	...	12	...
13	...	13	...
14	...	14	...
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16	...	16	...
17	...	17	...
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89	...	89	...
90	...	90	...
91	...	91	...
92	...	92	...
93	...	93	...
94	...	94	...
95	...	95	...
96	...	96	...
97	...	97	...
98	...	98	...
99	...	99	...
100	...	100	...

Additional Names Will Be Published From Day To Day As Received

(La Crosse Tribune, 1940 October 28, page 4)

The local draft boards then classified registrants into four categories: 1) available for service, 2) deferred because of essential occupation, 3) deferred because of dependents, 4) unfit for service. Those who were available and fit were sent to induction centers in the order of their draft numbers.⁴

I	Available for service
I-A	Available; fit for general military service
I-A-O	Conscientious objectors eligible for military service in noncombatant role
I-B	Available; fit only for limited military service
I-B-O	Conscientious objectors available for limited service [not used after Aug. 18, 1942]
I-C	Members of land or naval forces of the United States
I-D	Students fit for general military service; available not later than July 1, 1941
I-E	Students fit for limited military service; available not later than July 1, 1941
I-H	Men deferred by reason of age [not in effect any more, as provision deferring men over 28 years of age had been repealed?]
II	Deferred because of occupational status
II-A	Men necessary in their civilian activity
II-B	Men necessary to national defense
II-C	Men necessary to farm labor
III	Deferred because of dependents
III-A	Men with dependents, not engaged in work essential to national defense
III-B	Men with dependents, engaged in work essential to national defense
IV	Deferred specifically by law or because unfit for military service
IV-A	Men who had completed service [not considered in time of war]
IV-B	Officials deferred by law
IV-C	Nondeclarant aliens
IV-D	Ministers of religion or divinity students
IV-E	Conscientious objectors available only for civilian work of national importance
IV-E-LS	Conscientious objectors available for limited civilian work of national importance
IV-E-H	Men formerly classified in IV-E or IV-E-LS, since deferred by reason of age
IV-F	Men physically, mentally or morally unfit

(Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

NOTICE OF CLASSIFICATION App. not Req.

WAYNE FERDINAND HUBER
(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)

Order No. 1449 has been classified in Class 2-C
 (Until DEC 1 '44 19____)
(Insert date for Class II-A and II-B only)

by Local Board.
 Board of Appeal (by vote of _____ to _____)
 President.

JUN 2 0 1944, 19____ *P. J. Schmitt*
(Date of mailing) (Member of local board)

The law requires you, subject to heavy penalty for violation, to have this notice, in addition to your Registration Certificate (Form 2), in your personal possession at all times—to exhibit it upon request to authorized officials—to surrender it, upon entering the armed forces, to your commanding officer.
 DSS Form 57. (Rev. 3-29-43)

World War II draft card
 (Author's collection)⁵

In a way, local draft boards figuratively had the power of life or possible death over the registrants in their districts. Draft boards consisted of three or more people over the age of 36 who volunteered to serve without pay. Brigadier General Lewis B. Hershey, long-time director of the Selective Service, wanted the system to be under local control and as impartial as possible. There were even special draft boards for state and federal prisons who inducted more than 100,000 convicted felons.⁶

Deferments were determined by the local board. By 1944, over two million farmers and farm workers had the II-C deferment. Fathers were exempt in the first years of the draft, but that changed as the war went on and more men were needed to fill the ranks. The age of registration was also broadened to include up to age 65, even though only those 18 to 36 years old were actually inducted.⁷

Nearly 50 million men registered in the eight different registration periods in the early 1940s. More than five million of them were rejected because of physical, educational, or mental problems. The lingering effects of the Great Depression were cited as the main reason. Draft registrants with bad teeth, bad eyes, and not able to even sign their own names were evidence of the lack of medical care, bad nutrition, and inadequate schools in the 1930s. Another three million men were rejected because of emotional instability.⁸

Conscientious objectors officially numbered 42,973 men. About 25,000 of those did enter military service as medics or in other positions not involving combat. About 12,000 others worked in alternative nonmilitary service camps, while another 6,000 were imprisoned for refusing to do any service.⁹

App. nat Reg.

Prepare in Duplicate

Local Board No. 3 11
Hartford County 003
100
42 Charles Cook Ave.
Hartford 5, Conn.
(LOCAL BOARD DATE STAMP WITH CODE)



APR 4 1944
(Date of mailing)

ORDER TO REPORT FOR INDUCTION

The President of the United States,

To Paul Richard McMahon
(First name) (Middle name) (Last name)

Order No. 1304

GREETING:

Having submitted yourself to a local board composed of your neighbors for the purpose of determining your availability for training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States, you are hereby notified that you have now been selected for training and service therein.

You will, therefore, report to the local board named above at Hartford Railroad Station
(Place of reporting)

at 7:15 A. m., on the 17th day of April, 1944
(Hour of reporting)

This local board will furnish transportation to an induction station. You will there be examined, and, if accepted for training and service, you will then be inducted into the land or naval forces.

Persons reporting to the induction station in some instances may be rejected for physical or other reasons. It is well to keep this in mind in arranging your affairs, to prevent any undue hardship if you are rejected at the induction station. If you are employed, you should advise your employer of this notice and of the possibility that you may not be accepted at the induction station. Your employer can then be prepared to replace you if you are accepted, or to continue your employment if you are rejected.

Willful failure to report promptly to this local board at the hour and on the day named in this notice is a violation of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, and subjects the violator to fine and imprisonment.

If you are so far removed from your own local board that reporting in compliance with this order will be a serious hardship and you desire to report to a local board in the area of which you are now located, go immediately to that local board and make written request for transfer of your delivery for induction, taking this order with you.

Samuel B. Yall
Member or clerk of the local board.

D. S. W. FORM 150
(Revised 3-15-43) U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16-18273-5

(National World War II Museum)

Once a man received one of these letters, he had ten days to get his affairs in order before being transported to an induction center with a group of other men from his community.¹⁰

Because of combat losses, nearly every inductee under the age of 21 in March, April, and May 1945 was destined for the Army infantry.¹¹

Lists of local men inducted appeared regularly in local newspapers throughout the war years. This week was no exception.

Board Lists Inducted Men

Selective Service board No. 1 announces the induction of the following men into the army and navy during July:

Army: Ralph Charles Dawson, 2003 Mississippi street; Lawrence Henry Sweeney, 2556 South 15th street; Helmuth Julius Dannhoff, 1518 South 10th street; Paul Wilson Noffke, 2101 Winnebago street; Benjamin Frederick Overton, 1524 Madison street; Roger Edward Anderson, 612 East avenue south; Stuart Thomas Shimenski, 404 North 24th street; John Joseph Schmitz, Jr., 926½ Farnam street; Wayne Thomas Siegel, 905 Redfield street; Eugene Edward Serres, 503 North 12th street; David Charles Barker, 1523 Denton street; Dean Ray Young, 1646 Green Bay street; Leo James Mullouney, 814 Winnebago street; Harry Joseph Kubiak, St. Paul, Minn.; and Eugene Merrill Tournade, Mukwonago, Wis.

Navy: Stanley Gordon Winther, 130 South 10th street, and Donald Charles Welch (volunteer), 939 Ferry street.

(La Crosse Tribune, 1945 July 20, page 2)

Board Lists Inducted Men

Selective service board No. 2 announces the induction of the following men into the army, navy and marines during July:

Army: Myron Vincent Haugen, 1545½ Loomis street; Albert Martin Gollnick, 612 Gould street; Alvin Christian Jensen, 1206 West avenue south; William James Yehle, 1527 Prospect street; Marvin Anrid Severson, 1932 Onalaska avenue; Raymond Joseph Berniski, R. 2, La Crosse; Ernest Frank Clements, R. 1, La Crosse; Lavern Albert Freng, Melrose, Wis.; Arnold Floyd Chase, Onalaska, Wis.; Donald James Marcou, R. 1, Onalaska, Wis.; Carl Henry Niemeier, West Salem, Wis.; Merton Eldon Halverson, R. 1, Holmen, Wis.; Glen Harlan Severson and Bert Filitous Trocinske, Jr., R. 2, Holmen, Wis.; and Leo Franklin Mashak, R. 2, Bangor, Wis.

Navy: Frederick August Nuttleman (volunteer), R. 2, La Crosse; LaVerne Frank Bentzen, 748 North 22nd street; and Emil John Manske, Jr., R. 1, Mindoro, Wis.

Marines: Vernon Glenn Houghtaling, R. 2, La Crosse; William Charles Hemker, R. 1, Onalaska, Wis.; Raymond Edwin Quall, R. 2, Holmen, Wis.; and Louis Merlin Fischer, R. 1, Holmen, Wis.

(La Crosse Tribune, 1945 July 21, page 2)

For the men heading off to military service, they were leaving civilian life behind to be of service to their country in a time of war. For many, it would be an unforgettable experience that would change them for the rest of their lives.

Jeff Rand
Adult Services Librarian
La Crosse Public Library
jrand@lacrosselibrary.org

Sources & Notes:

¹ *Summary of the Second World War and Its Consequences: An Alphabetical Reference Book* (Chicago: F. E. Compton & Company, 1946), 106.

² *Summary of the Second World War and Its Consequences*, 106.

³ Ronald H. Bailey, *The Home Front: U.S.A.* (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1977), 43.

⁴ *Summary of the Second World War and Its Consequences*, 106.

⁵ Wayne Huber of Bangor was the author's grandfather. The classification of II-C meant Huber was deferred from military service because he was a farmer.

⁶ Bailey, 44.

⁷ Bailey, 45.

⁸ Bailey, 45.

⁹ Bailey, 45-46.

¹⁰ Bailey, 46.

¹¹ "Army To Get Young Men," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 March 15, page 5.