1945 July 16-22

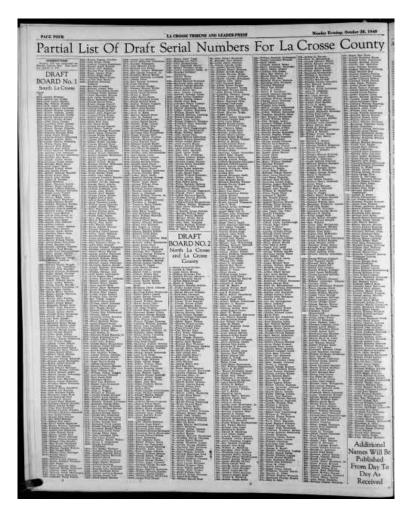
Uncle Sam Wants You--Now!



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

The <u>"Uncle Sam" recruiting poster</u> 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

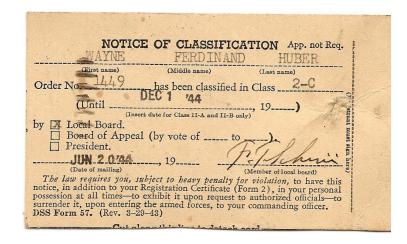


(La Crosse Tribune, 1940 October 28, page 4)

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

Ι	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)



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 Roy.
	Prepare in Duplicate	
	a replace in propriete	
Local Board No. 3 003 Hartford County		ADD 2 1044
Minister of State State		(Date of mailing)
42 Churter Oob Ave. Herringd 5, Cons. (Local Board Date Brase With Oceas)	- City	
ORDER	TO REPORT FOR INI	UCTION
URDEN	TO ALFORT FOR IM	JOCHON
The President of the United States,		
To Paul	Richard	Mcliahon
(First name)	(Middle name)	(Lasi tume)
	0.1.11 1201	
	Order No. 1304	*
GREETING:		
	and service in the land or na	our neighbors for the purpose of deter- val forces of the United States, you are rvice therein.
You will, therefore, report to the	e local board named above at	Hartford Railroad Station (Place of reporting)
at 7:15 A. m., on the 17th	day of	April, 19.44
This local heard will furnish transmorta	tion to an induction station. You	a will there be examined, and, if accepted for
training and service, you will then be inducts	ed into the land or naval forces.	icted for physical or other reasons. It is well p if you are rejected at the induction station, is possibility that you may not be accepted at you if you are accepted, or to continue your
Willful failure to report promptly to th Selective Training and Service Act of 1940		he day named in this notice is a violation of the colator to fine and imprisonment. compliance with this order will be a serious are now located, go immediately to that local taking this order with you.
		Samuel B. yoff
D. S. S. Form 150	a seminantier essense ordet 38-5003-6	Member or clerk of the local board.
(Revised 1-16-43)		

(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

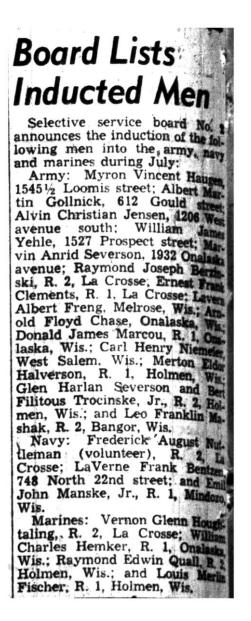
Lists of local men inducted appeared regularly in local newspapers throughout the war years. This week was no exception.

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, street: Paul 10th 1518 South Winnebago Wilson Noffke, 2101 street; Benjamin Frederick Overton, 1524 Madison street; Roger Edward Anderson, 612 East avenue south; Stuart Thomas Shi-24th street; manski, 404 North John Joseph Schmitz, Jr., 926½ Wavne Thomas Wayne Farnam street; 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 Tour-nade, Mukwonago, Wis. Navy: Stanley Gordon Winther, 130 South 10th street, and Don-(volunteer), ald Charles Welch 939 Ferry street.

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



(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.

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Sources & Notes:

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

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.

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.