

(La Crosse Tribune, 1945 October 29, page 7)

World War II cost the United States about \$317,600,000,000. That averaged out to about \$2,300 for every American. One of the ways this was paid was through borrowing from its own citizens who purchased war bonds.<sup>1</sup>

By this time in 1945, there had been seven war bond drives. More than 90 million Americans owned war bonds purchased during those previous drives. The eighth bond drive starting this week, "the Victory Loan," aimed to raise \$11 billion to pay the bills for the transition from war to peace. This money was needed for several purposes:

- veteran rehabilitation
- care for the wounded
- demobilization of the army and navy
- bringing troops back to the United States
- maintaining occupation forces
- converting to a peacetime economy<sup>2</sup>

Over \$3 million was supposed to come from La Crosse County.

<b>8th VICTORY LOAN QUOTAS</b>		
<b>Townships</b>		
<b>Township</b>		<b>Quota</b>
Bangor .....		\$23,000
Barre .....		19,500
Burns .....		28,000
Campbell .....		19,500
Farmington .....		35,000
Greenfield .....		19,000
Hamilton .....		46,000
Holland .....		18,500
Village of Holmen (Unincorporated) .....		8,000
Onalaska .....		24,000
Shelby .....		28,000
Washington .....		21,500
<b>Cities and Villages</b>		
Bangor .....		37,000
Rockland .....		4,500
West Salem .....		53,000
Onalaska .....		38,500
La Crosse .....		1,900,000
<b>County Individual Quota</b>		
(Including E's) .....		\$2,312,000
<b>Corporation Quota</b> .....		815,000
<b>Total County Quota</b> .....		\$3,127,000
James C. McCord, Regional Manager War Finance Com- mittee of Wisconsin.		

(La Crosse County Record, Onalaska, Wisconsin, 1945 November 1, page 1)

Gysbert van Steenwyk, the county war finance chairman, and James McCord, the district chairman, realized this was a big ask from people who had already been through seven war bond campaigns. The

war was over, so the urgency was gone. People were anxious to put rationing behind them and spend their money on consumer goods as those became available again.<sup>3</sup>

One of the promotions that had been successful in the past and would be used again was theater bond premieres. On November 8, 1945, the [Rivoli](#) planned to show *Her Highness and the Bellboy*, starring Hedy Lamarr, Robert Walker, and June Allyson. Additional entertainment would be from "Betty's Co-eds," an orchestra from La Crosse State Teachers College directed by Betty Lou Kuehl.<sup>4</sup> Other city theaters joined in this promotion.

**YOUR LAST CHANCE** TO BE A SOLDIER ON THE HOME FRONT!

**—LET'S FINISH THE JOB!—**

Let us deposit your money in the U. S. Treasury for you; they will pay you interest and we will give you a Bond.  
(It is your receipt.)

**FREE!**

**YOUR MONEY IN THE U. S. TREASURY HELPS TO . . .** Care for the wounded . . . to end war contracts . . . to maintain armies of occupation . . . to bring home returning fighters . . . **TO PREVENT INFLATION . . . YOUR BONDS** today are helping unknown thousands who played their own gallant parts in total defeat of our enemies.

**GET A BOND NOW at the Rivoli, Wisconsin, Riviera Theatres**

**And GET A FREE TICKET TO SEE →**

**THE VICTORY LOAN PREMIERE**

**AT THE RIVOLI** Thurs. 9 P. M. **NOV 8—FREE**

**MAKE IT THE BIGGEST—BEST and LAST**

**HEDY LAMARR**  
Romance on the roof tops!  
**ROBERT WALKER**  
**JUNE ALLYSON**  
*Her Highness and the BELLBOY*

**PLUS**  
**MUSICAL TREAT BY BETTY'S CO-EDS**  
FROM S. T. C.

(La Crosse Tribune, 1945 October 31, page 9)

Until December 8, volunteers would be going out into neighborhoods and employers would be encouraging payroll deductions to meet the county quota. The headquarters for the city of La Crosse campaign was Room 303 of the [Batavian Bank building](#). Several people coordinated bond sales in different parts of the city:

- Mrs. Charles J. Wachs-- residential block workers
- Richard Morse--downtown business district
- James Durland--northside business district
- Mrs. John Elston--town of Shelby
- Cornelius Jolivette--French Island

They were among six million volunteers working on this campaign nationwide.<sup>5</sup>

One Wisconsin city became the first in the nation to meet its Victory Loan quota, and it was not La Crosse. Ripon exceeded its quota of \$362,131 by raising \$634,300 in an astounding 31 minutes!<sup>6</sup>

La Crosse County got off to a much slower start. In the first week of the campaign, the county total was at \$88,949, or 2.8% of the county quota.<sup>7</sup>

Once a war is over, most people want to put the emotional and financial burden of the conflict behind them and look forward to moving on with their normal lives. The Victory Loan drive was a reminder that the job was not done. As a *La Crosse Tribune* editorial put it, "We will not have complete victory until we give complete care to our wounded and disabled."<sup>8</sup>

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### Sources & Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> *Summary of the Second World War and Its Consequences: An Alphabetical Reference Book* (Chicago: F.E. Compton & Company, 1946), 38-39.

<sup>2</sup> "Let's Finish The Job," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 October 29, page 6.

<sup>3</sup> "Praise Area Theater Heads," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 October 30, page 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Rivoli Bond Show Nov. 8," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 November 1, page 7.

<sup>5</sup> "Block Workers Seeking Pledges In Bond Drive," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 October 29, page 1.

<sup>6</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 29. Ripon was also the first place in the country to meet its war bond quota in the 5th, 6th, and 7th war loan drives.

<sup>7</sup> "Sell \$88,949 In U.S. Bonds," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 November 3, page 1.

<sup>8</sup> "Victory Loan," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 October 31, page 6.