



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

FALL 2017 • ISSUE 137

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society

Farewell...

September 15th, 1917



Healdsburg, Sonoma County, California
U. S. A.

In This Issue

2017 is the anniversary of the entry of the United States into World War I. Our Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society has commemorated this history with a yearlong display by Assistant Curator Whitney Hopkins in our first-floor Matheson-Luce Gallery. The exhibition will be on display through the end of the year.

This issue of the *Russian River Recorder* is dedicated to the theme of the First World War, viewed from a local perspective. Museum staff members have written original articles for this issue and have selected WWI articles and descriptive letters from local residents that appeared in the *Healdsburg Tribune*. We also feature some wartime and armistice ephemera from the Museum collection.

Whitney Hopkins leads this *RRR* with an interesting overview of the issues that propelled our nation into war. Jane Bonham delves into the Museum's collection to illustrate the war campaign through our numerous WWI promotional posters. Curator Holly Hoods examines the WWI-era anti-war movement, highlighting the leadership of peace activist Julius Myron Alexander, head of the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce. Whitney also researched the patriotic roots of the American Legion, established in 1919.

Healdsburg newspaper editors regularly featured vivid letters from the warfront on the front page. The hometown "war correspondents" whose letters we feature include an aviator (Peter Passarino), a frontline Army truck driver (Herbert Hope), a Red Cross nurse (Constance Cooke), a canteen worker (Olive Jones) and a sergeant in an Army Base Surgeon's Office (Elmer Sandborn). They represent a wide range of service and perspective.

Our Museum collection has relatively few photographs and limited artifacts from local residents who served in WWI; and we would certainly appreciate more donations of these historic materials. We would not have been able to publish this issue of the *RRR* without access to the war coverage in our local press. This further validates the importance of the Healdsburg Museum's ongoing campaign to scan and digitize the historic newspapers of this region through the California Digital Newspaper Collection (<https://cdnc.ucr.edu>).

We hope you appreciate our efforts and enjoy reading this new issue of the *Russian River Recorder*.

Holly Hoods, Executive Director/Curator
Pamela Vana-Paxhia, Editor

RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

The Official Publication of the
HEALDSBURG MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Great War (1914-1918)

by Whitney Hopkins

In late June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, along with his wife, was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo, Bosnia. An escalation of threats and mobilization orders followed the incident, leading by mid-August to the outbreak of World War I, which pitted Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire (the so-called Central Powers) against Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy and Japan (the Allied Powers).

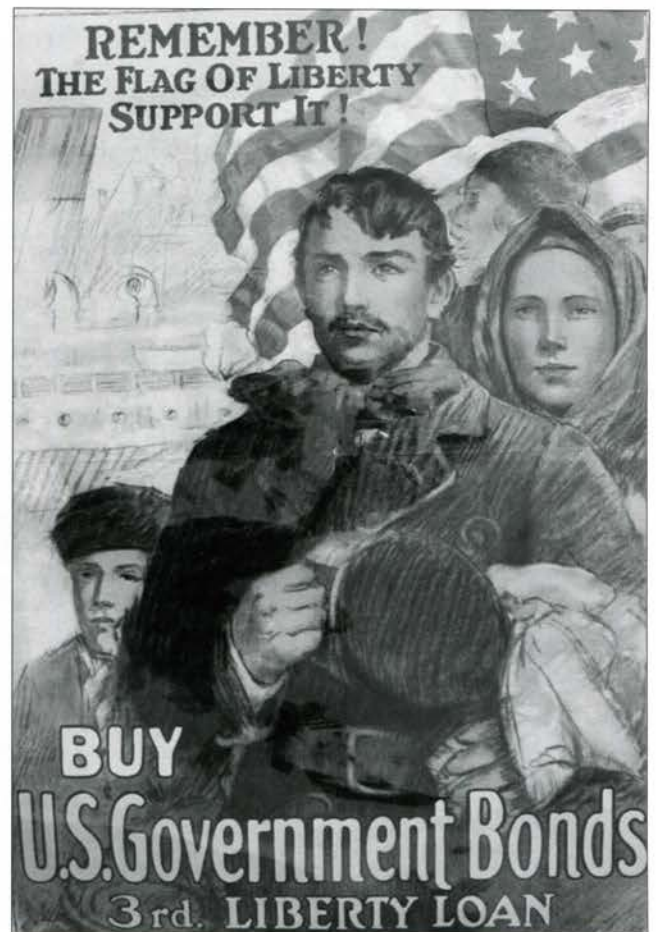
The Allies were joined after 1917 by the United States. The four years of the Great War—as it was then known—saw unprecedented levels of carnage and destruction, resulting from the grueling trench warfare and the introduction of modern weaponry such as machine guns, tanks and chemical weapons. By the time World War I ended in the defeat of the Central Powers in November, 1918, more than 9 million soldiers had been killed and 21 million more were wounded.

The American Home Front

To ensure American support for the war effort, the Committee on Public Information (sometimes known as the Creel Committee after its head administrator, journalist George Creel) organized a propaganda campaign that portrayed Germans as barbarous Huns while stressing that Americans were fighting for democracy or freedom.

The freedom to express dissent was also a casualty of the war. The Espionage Act of 1917 mandated imprisonment and fines for persons who aided the enemy or caused insubordination or disloyalty in the military. Newspapers, magazines, and other printed matter deemed as advocating treason were not allowed to be mailed. Under the Sedition Act (1918), it became a crime to make disparaging or profane comments against the government, flag, or the uniforms of the United States. Several thousand people were arrested under these laws.

In addition to the Council of National Defense, a number of federal agencies were created to manage the economy. The Fuel Administration allocated supplies of petroleum and coal between industrial and domestic consumption and controlled the prices of these goods while the Railroad Administration coordinated rail traffic. The War Industries Board converted America's factories to wartime production, directed the allocation of raw materials, and, when necessary, fixed prices. By promoting Victory Gardens and "Meatless Tuesdays," the Food Administration tried to increase agricultural production and limit civilian consumption.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Poster made by U.S. Department of the Treasury,
Publicity Bureau, 1918

The government sold low-interest bonds, known as Liberty Bonds, to help finance the war. Organizations, such as the American Red Cross, swelled in membership and funds raised to support the military. By the end of 1917, the Red Cross had

twenty-two million members and eight million volunteers. The Red Cross also enrolled over 23,000 nurses for service with the military.

Healdsburg in World War I

Similar to other communities, Healdsburg residents responded to the call for action from President Woodrow Wilson. Many young men from Healdsburg served in the military, and overseas. In January 1918, 123 men were enlisted in the military in Infantry, Engineering, Medical, Aviation, Navy, Marines, Artillery and Musical. Several Healdsburg women also went overseas as nurses and canteen workers.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Bill and Russell York of Healdsburg, c. 1917-1918

The *Healdsburg Tribune* regularly published letters families had received from their enlisted loved ones describing wartime life overseas. The

first war victim from Healdsburg was Mervyn Hoadley, who died of pneumonia in April, 1918, while still at training camp in New Jersey. His body was transported home, where “probably the largest funeral ever held in Healdsburg” took place.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Fourth Liberty Loan Drive parade in Healdsburg, Dorothy Rowland standing at flag, October, 1918

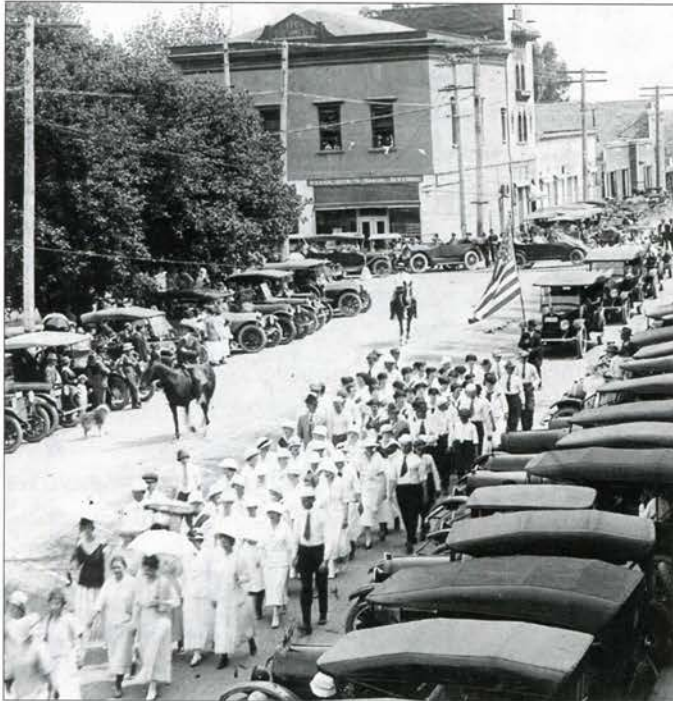
On the home front, Healdsburg generously contributed financially to the war effort, both by buying war bonds sold by Healdsburg banks, and by contributing to the Red Cross. The *Healdsburg Tribune* printed the names of citizens who purchased bonds and donated to the Red Cross in an effort to encourage people to donate. Tea parties, picnics, lectures, dances and card parties all became Healdsburg fundraisers. Many stores had jars to collect Red Cross donations. The Healdsburg community was invited to bring their old silverware and jewelry to jeweler L.C. Koberg’s shop where he would melt it down and sell the silver as a fundraiser for the Red Cross. Volunteers with the Healdsburg Chapter of Red Cross also knitted clothing and bandages for soldiers which were sent overseas and sent Christmas care packages of prunes to soldiers.

Toward an Armistice

With Germany able to build up its strength on the Western Front after the armistice with Russia, Allied troops struggled to hold off another German offensive until promised reinforcements from the United States were able to arrive. On the battlefields of France in spring 1918, the war-weary Allied armies enthusiastically welcomed the fresh American troops. They arrived at the rate of 10,000 a day at a time when the Germans were unable to replace their losses.

The Second Battle of the Marne turned the tide of war decisively towards the Allies, who were able to regain much of France and Belgium in the months that followed. By the fall of 1918, the Central Powers were unraveling on all fronts.

Despite the Turkish victory at Gallipoli, later defeats by invading forces and an Arab revolt had combined to destroy the Ottoman economy and devastate its land, and the Turks signed a treaty with the Allies in late October 1918. Austria-Hungary, dissolving from within due to growing nationalist movements among its diverse population, reached an armistice on November 4. Facing dwindling resources on the battlefield, discontent on the home front and the surrender of its allies, Germany was finally forced to seek an armistice on November 11, 1918, ending World War I.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Liberty Loan parade on Healdsburg Avenue, Spring, 1918



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

High School float in Healdsburg Armistice Day parade, November 11, 1919

The Legacy of World War I

World War I took the lives of more than 9 million soldiers; 21 million were wounded. Civilian casualties caused indirectly by the war numbered close to 10 million. The two nations most affected were Germany and France, each of which sent approximately 80 percent of their male populations between the ages of 15 and 49 into battle. The U.S. mobilized over 4 million military personnel and suffered 110,000 deaths, including 43,000 due to the influenza epidemic.

The war also marked the fall of four imperial dynasties—Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and Turkey.

At the peace conference in Paris in 1919, Allied leaders would state their desire to build a post-war world that would safeguard itself against future conflicts of such devastating scale. The Versailles Treaty, signed on June 28, 1919, would not achieve this objective. Saddled with war guilt and heavy reparations and denied entrance into the League of Nations, Germany felt tricked into signing the treaty, having believed any peace would be a “peace without victory” as put forward by Wilson in his famous Fourteen Points speech of January 1918. As the years passed, hatred of the Versailles treaty and its authors settled into a smoldering resentment in Germany that would, two decades later, be counted among the causes of World War II.

Sources:

history.com/topics/world-war-i/world-war-i-history



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*This 1918 poster by Harrison Fisher was released during the holidays with the accompanying message:
“Have you answered the Red Cross Christmas Roll Call?”*

Posters Worth 1,000 Words

by Jane Bonham

Can you imagine sharing information across distances without today’s technology—no radio, no television, no internet, no cell phones? Communication in the early 1900s was managed through traveling speakers, movie theaters and various types of print media (up until the late 1920s with the popularity of radios).

When the U.S. entered the War in April 1917, a Committee on Public Information (CPI) was created by President Wilson and the word got out: “Be Patriotic!”

Under CPI Chairman George Creel, an experienced journalist, over 20 bureaus and divisions were created, urging patriotic duties such as enlistment in the armed forces, conservation of food and other resources, industrial mobilization and subscriptions to Liberty Loans.

A Division of Pictorial Publicity was created to reach those Americans who did not read newspapers, attend meetings or go to movies. This division produced 1,438 designs for posters, cards, buttons and cartoons. Noted artists volunteered their time and talents.

Perhaps the most striking, emotionally gripping print format used during World War I was the poster below.



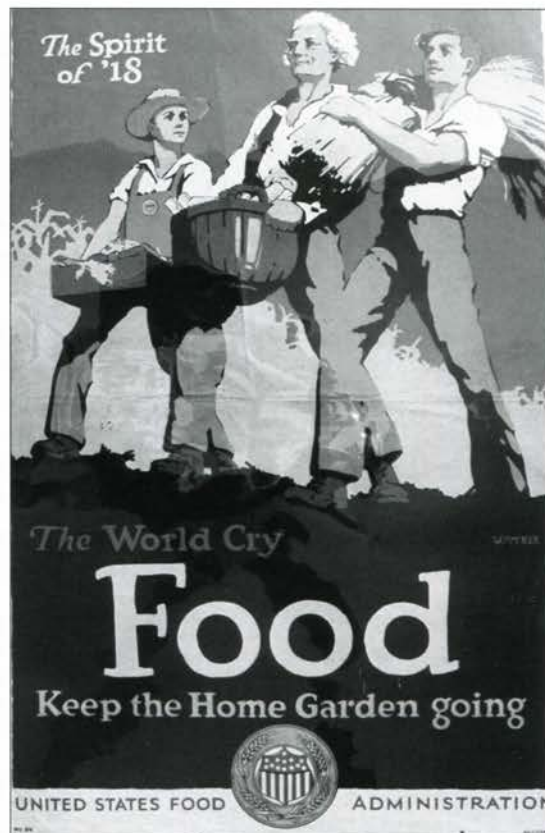
Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

“Be Patriotic” created circa 1917-1918 by Paul Stahr, one of the more well-known illustrators involved at that time. The young woman, called interchangeably “America,” “Columbia” or “Miss Liberty” reaches out with open arms, engaging and entreating. A series was created, using different exhortations under the title seen above.

Conservation

An integral part of the war effort involved food conservation through local home gardening. The U.S. Bureau of Education created the “School Garden Army” for boys and girls ages 9 through 15, with funding from the War Department and the approval of President Wilson. Young participants pledged to “consecrate my head, heart, hand and health through food production and food conservation to help the world War and world peace.”

Manuals for the groups designated the number of members in a company, requirements for enlisting, numbers of officers and their insignias, just like a wartime military unit.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

The theme of citizen soldiers is reflected in this poster released by the U.S. Food Administration created by William McKee. “The Spirit of ’18” echoes “The Spirit of ’76,” and exhorts the young and the old to keep soldiering.

Business Mobilization

Foodstuff patriotism was not restricted only to the young and old, as shown in the message below to Healdsburg’s farmers.

PATRIOTIC DUTY

Our, army, civilians and allies require food. The supply of foodstuffs should be increased to the utmost capacity.

A patriotic duty of every farmer is intensive cultivation and larger production.

For a Safe Depository and excellent service, bank with us.

Consult us about your requirements.

The First National Bank

HEALDSBURG, CAL.

Start an account with the Farmers and Mechanics Savings bank. Four Per Cent Interest Paid.

Source: Healdsburg Enterprise, June 9, 1917
“Patriotic duty of farmers...”

Loan Subscriptions

The Liberty Loan was a bond sold to American citizens to support the allied effort in World War I.

Sales were slow for the first release of these Loans. To better promote the campaign, plans were made to reach small investors and the “common man”—and woman.

Another division of the CPI, named The Four Minute Men, was put in place to help promote sales. Movie stars made appearances proclaiming it was “the patriotic thing to do.” Boys Scouts and Girls Scouts sold the bonds using the slogan, “Every scout to save a soldier.”

In May 1917, the Secretary of the Treasury created the National Woman’s Liberty Loan Committee to appeal to housewives, who often had control of the purse-strings while the men were at war. The new organization was provided with offices, clerical staff, and the publicity arm activated.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Created by an illustrator known only by the three initials J.M.H., “Victory” stands on the solidarity of the Woman’s Liberty Loan Committee, battle-ready, and oversees the collection of bags of large coins. Names of memorable battlegrounds are a reminder: **REMEMBER** and **INVEST**.

Members of the Committee proclaimed, “*For the first time in our remembrance, women are asked to come into BIG BUSINESS as partners. Let us do something more than talk and knit and patch up mistakes. Are those men out there in the cold and hardships to know that we are side by side at the very front, the army of support, standing shoulder to shoulder? We know the answer. Right there is the place where we should be, and where we will be.*”

This invigorating opportunity for women was not to be recognized throughout the land; certainly not in our hometown, where on April 12, 1919, the *Healdsburg Enterprise* cited the following:

J. H. Miller, chairman of the local Liberty Bond committee and Harold B. Rosenberg were present last week at a conference of Northern California Victory Liberty Loan State Central Committee in joint session with the National Women’s Liberty Loan Committee of California at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

At the conference ways and means of securing subscriptions to the Victory Liberty Loan were discussed and much enthusiasm was shown. Americans don’t quit until a job is well finished and the slogan “Finish the Job” is very apt. The local men who have the Healdsburg and vicinity drive in hand have no fear but that our quota will be contributed and chairmen and committees are being selected for the work and will soon be announced.

Sources:

“Committee on Public Information”
Healdsburg Enterprise, October 6, 1917; June 9, 1917; April 12, 1919.

“The School Garden Army in the First World War,”
Library of Congress, January 25, 2017.

“Victory Bonds”

“World War I Posters—Making a Point from a Distance,”
Library of Congress, June 23, 2011.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Peter Arthur Passarino, circa 1918

An Aviator in France

*Peter Passarino Training in the French Schools as Airman
reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, December 20, 1917*

Peter A. Passarino, son of Mrs. Louise Passarino, is in training in schools of aviation in France for service in the war zone. The young man left Healdsburg last May and was one of the first to enlist from this city. For a time, he was stationed at San Antonio, Texas, training as an aviator, being a member of the thirty-second aviation squadron.

In August he was sent to England and he is now completing his training in France which includes not only the navigation of the ships of the air, but also

their mechanical construction. He has made several practice flights in France and writes that the work is wonderfully interesting. He has visited a number of historic places in France and England, as well as many of the great cathedrals of France, and marvels at the beauty of these churches.

Mrs. Passarino receives letters regularly from her son, but he is permitted to give no information as to war matters. He is enthusiastic over the work he is doing in the cause of his country

Local Man Gets Italian War Medal

reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, March 14, 1929

For several years the Italian government has tried to locate an American who fought with the Italian troops during the Great War and they finally got hold of him about a week ago.

As a consequence, Peter A. Passarino of Healdsburg, then a sergeant, has been awarded a medal for distinction in the war for the unity of Italy, 1915-18. The bronze medal is coined from enemy

[artillery] metal and on it, in Italian, are the words, "Fregiarsi Del Distintivo. Contata Nel Bronzo Nemico Guerra Per T. Unita Ditalia—1915-18."

[It was granted to non-Italian soldiers who had distinguished themselves in battle.] Passarino was one of the officers responsible for the capture of a detachment of enemy troops.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Red Cross Nurse Constance Cooke, 1918

Constance Cooke, Red Cross Nurse

*excerpted from Healdsburg Enterprise and Healdsburg Tribune, 1918 to 1919
with Introduction by Lauren Carriere*

Healdsburg's Constance "Connie" Cooke served in World War I, as a Red Cross nurse. Prior to the war, Constance was a surgical nurse and worked in pediatrics. Constance was attending the University of California when the war broke out, but decided to put her education on hold in order to support the war effort. During her ten months in Europe, Constance kept in correspondence with her friends and family in Healdsburg. Those letters were often published in the local newspapers.

Healdsburg Enterprise, June 8, 1918

Miss Constance Cooke, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Cooke of this city, was a heroine of a hospital within the war zone of France last week, according to the telegraphic reports that have been received here. She was the one California girl of five nurses at the hospital when the Huns wrecked the hospital with aero bombs. She and the other nurses were cool and collected and went among the wounded soldiers and the inhabitants of the vicinity cheering them up. The nurses and Red Cross attendants carried the wounded to cellars and caves. The news of Miss Cooke being in the war zone came as a surprise to her parents, as when she left for

Europe it was thought that she was going to be a nurse in a children's hospital there.

Healdsburg Tribune, June 13, 1918

Please forgive me for waiting so long. It is because I've been "going it" as hard as ever I could for the past three weeks. All I've done since coming to [redacted] [location censored] is work, sleep and eat. I make it a point to go to bed early (10 pm until 6:45 am), so you see I have a lot of rest.

Our food is served in plenty, but is not such a well-balanced diet as we are accustomed to (i.e., meat is served in abundance, also cheese, jam, wine, lentils and "war bread" without butter.) We've scarcely seen butter, green vegetables, milk or desserts since

leaving New York, except for the four days at the hotel in Paris where we had butter once a day and also a green vegetable and occasionally lettuce.

We were quite busy for a few days after arriving in Paris, getting our papers filed and accredited, and securing certain other necessary papers.

One evening, five of us ventured out to a moving picture show. After sundown, there isn't much light on the streets to guide one. Very few of the street lamps are lighted and those few are made dim by means of being painted with dark paint.

We paid the extravagant price of 3 francs 60 centimes (72 cents) apiece for our seats. Were surprised to see a picture produced in Los Angeles—quite American. During the evening, a picture of President Wilson was flashed on the screen. We clapped loudly and, as a result, became the center of attraction for a few minutes.

When the main picture was about finished, the curtain descended and the ushers quietly informed the various people that an air raid was "on." Everyone calmly left the theatre. When we got outside, we heard the awful whirring of aeroplanes and the bang! bang! bang! of the bombs, and looking down the wide drive of the Champs-Élysées we could see the glare of an immense fire caused by the bombing. At first, we thought we could walk home in time, but as the bombing continued, we fled with others into a nearby "arbri" (shelter in a deep basement). We were too interested to stay long so stood in the doorway of the building watching the flashes of the bombs.

When an alien plane gets into French territory, wireless messages are signaled and a siren ("alert") warns the people of the danger, whereupon they seek shelter in the "abris." When the enemy has been driven away, another siren sounds and bells are rung to give the signal for safety.

We have as headquarters when in Paris a splendid hotel with all the accommodations and excellent food. After four days, I was sent by Miss Ashe to the Grenelle Dispensary Paris to do the same type of work as that at the Potrero for about a week. Then came an emergency call for a relief nurse to replace one who was ill, so I was hurried off on the evening train, April 20th, to [redacted] [location censored], two hours north of Paris, and 30 miles from the front.

I was accompanied by Dr. Pearson of Mass... When we were nearing this historic town, the Doctor informed me that we might be bombarded, so not to be afraid. I told him I would be quite frank to admit that I would be afraid, but that I would endeavor to conduct myself in a quiet and orderly manner, nevertheless.

As we passed through the various villages, I got my first real glimpse of the meaning of the war. Saw many trainloads of soldiers, French, English, American and Algerian, many wounded returning from the front and many fresh companies going towards the scene of action.

Healdsburg Tribune, June 27, 1918

I am in a hospital where "gassed" cases are cared for, both French and American. I have been on duty for several weeks and just love to care for the boys. Most of them haven't seen American girls for anywhere from two to ten months, and they appreciate just looking at one of their own kind again.

Mr. Censor probably wouldn't like me to go into much detail. I wish I could tell you many things of interest.

For the past few nights I have been on night duty. I just try to do everything under the sun to "coddle" the men, because it means so much to them after their experiences at the front. We are near enough to the front to bear the cannons roar daily and nightly and are always reminded of the proximity of the aeroplanes by their whirr overhead...

Since I have been on night duty I do all sorts of things to keep our patients comfortable and cheerful and we have just real nice times, even when some are in throes over their various pains. Some of the men have trouble from sleeplessness and, at such times, I make chocolate or orangeade (material given by the Red Cross of Smith College unit) for them.

The other night, after distributing chocolate, various pills, rubbing the aching members of a number of patients in the ward, stuffing in a pillow here, tightening one there, etc., I found a sleepless family on my hands, so I played poker (horror of horrors!) with one of them by the light of the smoky lantern until 1:30 am, with the others vastly interested in the outcome of the game. We used cough lozenges for chips.

Then I informed them that they just had to go to sleep, but if here was anything else they wanted

before I left to say so, one sang out, "Well, if you'll just stay here and let us look at you that's all we ask." You see it's just the idea of someone of their own kind fussing around which "hits the spot" as it were, after trench life.

Healdsburg Tribune, July 18, 1918

Please do forgive me for not writing. We have had strenuous days—just working and "existing," as it were, for weeks now. Have lost all track of time, as it has seemed to go on a most without a break. No time for newspapers, letters or diary.

The air raids became so regular each night that the Red Cross officials found it best to send the day nurses, aids, canteen workers, etc. out into the country each evening a distance of about five miles to an old chateau where we sleep on army cots.

The weather is growing warmer, that is, the days are pleasant, but we nearly freeze at night—just think, in June! During the busy days, it has been a relief to be assured of an uninterrupted night's rest. You see, we would come off duty at eight or nine o'clock quite ready for bed and would tumble into our cots (hard as rocks) and just get nicely settled, when—bang! bang! bang! the three cannon reports would sound the warning for refuge.

Night after night this has happened—often three times in one night. So, of course, it has meant an extra tax on our energy reserve. The hospitals have been bombed, and it became necessary to evacuate several of them, the one I was in included. So, for the past two weeks and over I have been in an evacuation hospital for the allied soldiers, under the American Red Cross.

Many nurses, doctors and aids were sent from Paris and day by day the place has become more and more systematized. As the institution is only a little over two weeks old, we felt content to be able to accomplish what we did and to make so many men fairly comfortable for they were pitiable wrecks of warfare when taken from the ambulances.

Nearly all of the ambulance drivers are women—girls, mostly—English and French. They wear mannish costumes, hair clipped and puttees [leggings]. Many of them are scarcely higher than the steering wheel and I, at first, mistook several for boys of twelve or fourteen years.

Another reason that I can't seem to find time for letter writing is that as soon as daylight fades we

are in darkness, for we have no lights. I am at present out in front of the chateau on a hay pile, writing by dusk and approaching moonlight.

The personnel of the hospital consist of a medical staff of perhaps fourteen, nurses and aids about forty, orderlies, French maids, kitchen help, etc. about forty. A large house has been rented for a nurses' home so we are quite comfortable.

I will explain the hospital system to you. At the front are the ambulance or first-aid stations, then the field hospitals, the evacuation hospitals and lastly, base hospitals from which our heroes are sent back to their regiments or to "blighty" [England]. The only consolation to me in seeing the amputation cases and the otherwise wrecks is that I know they will never have to return to the front.

While at the front, most of the men go right after the Huns, but once away from it, they have very little nerve left, although I have heard many of them beg to be sent back to their regiments so as to get another shot at the "Dutchmen," as they call them.

Before coming here, I was, for a time, in the French military service. The American troops are under the French military organization, and the sick are all sent to French hospitals. A very few American field hospitals exist, but no American nurses are allowed there at present, at least in the war zone sectors, where constant shelling is going on.

I was helping to care for seventy-five American boys and twenty-five French, all "gassed" cases. It is certainly damnable in its effects. The eyes, larynx, bronchial tubes and lungs are all highly irritated, and very serious burns on the body are caused, according to the amount of gas inhaled or the amount incorporated in the moist clothing of the men, which causes the burns.

Many of the men have not seen any American women for from two to ten months and have been used to rough handling by the men orderlies. So, you can understand how much they appreciate the least bit of attention from us. We just work like "beavers" to do everything possible to make them comfortable and happy, and they are like a lot of children in their thankfulness to us. We grow so attached to each one that every time a group is evacuated to an interior hospital (ours was a base hospital nearer the front), I just want to weep.

I was on night duty there for a week and liked it very much, because there were so many little things

before I left to say so, one sang out, "Well, if you'll just stay here and let us look at you that's all we ask." You see it's just the idea of someone of their own kind fussing around which "hits the spot" as it were, after trench life.

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Night after night this has happened—often three times in one night. So, of course, it has meant an extra tax on our energy reserve. The hospitals have been bombed, and it became necessary to evacuate several of them, the one I was in included. So, for the past two weeks and over I have been in an evacuation hospital for the allied soldiers, under the American Red Cross.

Many nurses, doctors and aids were sent from Paris and day by day the place has become more and more systematized. As the institution is only a little over two weeks old, we felt content to be able to accomplish what we did and to make so many men fairly comfortable for they were pitiable wrecks of warfare when taken from the ambulances.

Nearly all of the ambulance drivers are women—girls, mostly—English and French. They wear mannish costumes, hair clipped and puttees [leggings]. Many of them are scarcely higher than the steering wheel and I, at first, mistook several for boys of twelve or fourteen years.

Another reason that I can't seem to find time for letter writing is that as soon as daylight fades we

are in darkness, for we have no lights. I am at present out in front of the chateau on a hay pile, writing by dusk and approaching moonlight.

The personnel of the hospital consist of a medical staff of perhaps fourteen, nurses and aids about forty, orderlies, French maids, kitchen help, etc. about forty. A large house has been rented for a nurses' home so we are quite comfortable.

I will explain the hospital system to you. At the front are the ambulance or first-aid stations, then the field hospitals, the evacuation hospitals and lastly, base hospitals from which our heroes are sent back to their regiments or to "blighty" [England]. The only consolation to me in seeing the amputation cases and the otherwise wrecks is that I know they will never have to return to the front.

While at the front, most of the men go right after the Huns, but once away from it, they have very little nerve left, although I have heard many of them beg to be sent back to their regiments so as to get another shot at the "Dutchmen," as they call them.

Before coming here, I was, for a time, in the French military service. The American troops are under the French military organization, and the sick are all sent to French hospitals. A very few American field hospitals exist, but no American nurses are allowed there at present, at least in the war zone sectors, where constant shelling is going on.

I was helping to care for seventy-five American boys and twenty-five French, all "gassed" cases. It is certainly damnable in its effects. The eyes, larynx, bronchial tubes and lungs are all highly irritated, and very serious burns on the body are caused, according to the amount of gas inhaled or the amount incorporated in the moist clothing of the men, which causes the burns.

Many of the men have not seen any American women for from two to ten months and have been used to rough handling by the men orderlies. So, you can understand how much they appreciate the least bit of attention from us. We just work like "beavers" to do everything possible to make them comfortable and happy, and they are like a lot of children in their thankfulness to us. We grow so attached to each one that every time a group is evacuated to an interior hospital (ours was a base hospital nearer the front), I just want to weep.

I was on night duty there for a week and liked it very much, because there were so many little things

Dodging Shells as Truck Driver at the Front

reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, November 8, 1917

Rev. Francis Hope of Healdsburg has received the following letter from his son Bert Hope, in which he tells of his adventures as a driver of a motor truck at the front. The letter gives a vivid picture of the perils these young men are bravely facing.

Received your letter on convoy. We are going up with fifteen cars to the Chauteau Hopir, our most dangerous run, and while waiting for darkness to screen us for the open run, our chef, Paul Cadman, brought our mail. At the risk of getting a severe calling down from some passing French officer, I lit the taillight of my car, and we all sat in the road reading our letters.

It is cold and wet now. It rains here in sudden gusts, like the Hun artillery, and we are usually aware of it at night when, due to the leaky roof, we find ourselves floating in bed like a dill pickle in its native haunt. The cold is severe, especially when we roll out of our blankets at 4 am for early convoy. On such trying occasions, the unlucky drivers make the chilly morning air hideous with choice selections in their mother tongue added to what they can do in French.

We are working very hard for the great offensive on our section. Part of our boys left today for where they will be stationed. Some seemed as cheerful as a funeral and all hated to break up our California unit. We have had some fun teaching new French drivers who seemed more adapted for the hay wagon. At first when they killed their engines in line and ran into each other they raved and beat their heads in frenzied distress, but later accepted the situation and began to see the humor of it all, giving the usual shrug of the shoulder, by which the French signify "it can't be done."

We have been under bad fire a good many times lately, but the excitement of our young lives was on our last trip. All the cars of all sections were sent out, 350 in all. California and Princeton were sent to the first lines on the Chemin-des-Dames. The night was a terror—black, cold and raining hard. Ben Benton and I were to meet the big convoy with our car at their destination. After great difficulties, we made the parc [grounds] safely. The French batteries were planted all around us and kept the country lit up with rapid flashes as they fired round after round.

In our parc several "arrives" dropped, but no one was hit. With Princeton it was different. Things

began to happen among them. Just to our left. A big shell landed beside the staff car, and the "éclat" [bomb fragment] tore a hole in the driver's back, another through the thigh, and also blew off the left and part of the right hand of another of the boys, who had thrown himself flat on the ground. Both will live. Scully, the Princeton chef, acted very bravely.

A French sergeant was mortally wounded by the same shell and lay there, and the chef tried to get a Frenchman to go with him to the "poste de secours" [first aid station] to get a stretcher. All refused to leave the dugouts on account of the heavy fall of shells. Scully set out alone, got the stretcher bearers and got back safely with the wounded man. He is recommended for the "croix de guerre" [military decoration] and well deserves it.

To return to our section—we all left to get home. The road was a sea of mud and very slippery. About a mile from the parc our car slipped into a deep ditch, and it was good night! After vain efforts to pull us out, the convoy left us and we remained all night. At daylight next morning a wrecking auto came to pull us out. They had hardly started working when the fun commenced. Evidently the "Bosche" [German army] balloons had seen us and had telephoned the range to their batteries. Suddenly we heard a rushing whistling, and all ducked—bang! A 105-shell landed twenty feet away, instantly killing a poor French artilleryman who had volunteered to help us.

The concussion knocked his team of mules flat on their backs with their legs in the air. It was ludicrous. They all did it together, as if by command, then scrambled up and started for Missouri.

We all crouched and bang! A second landed. This caught another French helper who was making for a dugout, killing him also instantly and smearing him all across the road. Then the "bosches" began dropping shells all around us with the precision of an Italian eating his native dish. Ben was about fifty feet away, lying down in a shallow ditch by the road. I bunched up in my camion and said; "Father was

right.” The next few seconds the air was full of 105s, mud flew all over us and the “éclat” beat a tattoo on the sides of the camion [truck]. We lay there thinking every second was our last and scared half to death. After a final burst of about fifteen shells they laid off a second and we started the wrecking auto and all the French and Americans ran for it, but in going up the hill we kept the machine between us and the Germans. Arriving at the top, we waited two hours for orders.

Finally, a French officer came in a staff car and we all returned and worked at getting the car out again. Gosh! I hated to go back to that car! While we worked (and, believe me, you would never have recognized your lazy son) shell after shell exploded at our left, the éclat whizzing in our direction, and it

was a thankful pair of Californians that reached again the crest of the hill, this time with our car, such as it was.

The boys are leaving for U.S. service—several have received commissions in the artillery. Quite a few have signed up to drive trucks. My application is in for the aviation corps; I am choosing it because it is the most interesting branch of the service. It is the kingpin of the lot, the cleanest, most exciting and most valuable. The danger is overrated. You don't get an arm or a leg off. You either get out alive or you don't; besides the U.S. needs lots of aviators to hold up her end at the front. Get a deeper view into the war and what it means. Who am I that I should lay off or stick in an “ambush” job.



Source: Healdsburg Museum

France World War I Medal - Croix de Guerre

Awarded Cross of Honor

Herbert Hope Wins High Distinction on Battlefield in France reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, December 6, 1917

Herbert Hope, son of Rev. Francis Hope of Healdsburg, has been awarded the iron war cross of France, the highest testimonial of valor on the field, according to a press dispatch from Paris.

The dispatch says: Paris, December 2—War crosses have been awarded to Benjamin H. Burton Jr., of Colusa, California, and Herbert H. Hope

of Healdsburg, California, of the American Field Service. Burton and Hope drove a motor truck under heavy bombardment, October 8, two men with them being killed.

The citations were awarded for services performed before the sections to which the men were attached were incorporated in the American army.

Letters from Olive Jones, WWI Canteen Worker

*excerpted from Healdsburg Tribune, 1918
with Introduction by Pamela Vana-Paxhia*

Olive Jones was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Jones, proprietors of the Jones Grocery Store on Matheson Street. Previously employed with the Santa Rosa National Bank and later as Chief Deputy County Auditor, Jones resigned to serve with the Red Cross in France during World War I. The Healdsburg Tribune periodically ran excerpts of the letters written to her parents during her two-year service. They present an interesting glimpse of her life and her service.

Healdsburg Tribune, September 26, 1918

There were ten of us leaving from the same house in New York, so Saturday, the 17th of August at 7 o'clock, there were five taxis lined up in front of the place, and when we were ready to start, each contained two steamer trunks, from two to four suitcases, two big overcoats, some packages, baskets of fruit, etc., besides a driver and two highly excited girls.

Here we stood in line for an hour or so, to show our steamer tickets, passports, vaccination certification, etc., and to deliver our war zone passports. [Miss Jones sailed on an Italian steamer destined for Italy.] You realize that we are in the war zone as soon as we step on to a steamship.

Sunday morning about 7 o'clock we slipped away from the pier. Two tug boats pulled us out a ways then we turned around and sailed down the harbor for a short distance. While we were at lunch we saw a big ship sailing out past us. It was loaded almost to bursting, clear to the top deck with a sort of a khaki colored cargo, and in a few minutes another one passed us. Troop ships!!! Oh, how excited we all were and the question that had been going around for the last few days in New York was settled. We passed so close to one of the ships that we could talk to the boys. The nurses all went up on deck and turned their red lined caps inside out so all the troops could see who we were. My, how they cheered. It made us feel pretty good.

In a few minutes we had fallen into position and were sailing away. Oh, it was grand and glorious. Really on our way to France, at last. One hundred and forty wishes had come true...

There are about 140 Red Cross workers, about 100 of them being women. Some are nurses, nurse's aides, stenographers, clerks, social workers, hospital hut workers and a few canteen workers. I

seem to have been lucky to get into that branch, although I did not know it at the time, simply went in because I thought I would like it better. The men are chaplains, doctors and social workers...

We also have on board much mail and about 400 horses which have been sold to the Italian Government and hay enough to feed them for the trip.

But I think the most interesting part of our precious load are 350 soldiers, Italians, who lived in the part of Italy which has been dominated so long by Austria. These fellows have a sad story to tell. They were drafted into the Austrian army in 1914, but refused to fight for that country, and surrendered to the Russians and ever since have been knocking about in different parts of Russia and Siberia. About two months ago they escaped into China and there the American Red Cross fitted them out with uniforms, as they were in rags. From there they came to San Francisco and across to New York, where they received some clothing...are a happy bunch, too. There are sixteen very fine young fellows who had been officers and the Red Cross people were tactful enough to furnish them with officers' uniforms. This made them very happy.

Soon we were able to distinguish a huge black form looming up in front of us, and the old rock of Gibraltar as it was silhouetted against the sky. This is a wonderful harbor and when we were well in we stopped.

The ship officers were all on the bridge and when the anchor went into the water the Captain dropped onto his knees and thanked God for being able to bring us safely this far...This is the first time any Red Cross people have gone on an Italian ship, and the captain seemed to feel very keenly the responsibility. All the ship officers have been grand to us...

The people that we saw on the street were mostly British sailors, many British officers, some French sailors and quite a number of American sailors and officers. These last named would rush madly across the street and simply beg us girls to talk to them a little while. Some of them have been here since the United States entered the war and have not even seen an American woman as none pass that way. This is a closed port and no travelers can pass this way now.

Some of these boys are very homesick and would simply do anything to get us girls to just talk to them for a few minutes and tell them how everything is at home.

Healdsburg Tribune, October 17, 1918

Well, I am in gay Paris at last and it is a most beautiful city, indeed. I am madly in love with it, but am so anxious to get out and to work at once. The need is very great but we have to wait for a certain amount of red tape about the same as New York only harder, because it is harder to get around here, on account of the language. However, I am nearly finished and can go to work around here doing something until certain of my papers are ready.

Did I tell you, we landed at Genoa, where we stayed three days? I saw many interesting places there. Genoa is a beautiful old city, with hundreds of little narrow streets, running in every direction. When we arrived there the R.C. [Red Cross] had all arrangements made for our hotels, etc. I never had enough to eat once while there, but here it is different. I believe the R.C. pays from 12 to 15 francs per day for its people, which is \$2.40 to \$3.00. This includes room and 3 meals at a real good hotel.

Our first glimpse of dear old France was up in the Alps. Say, talk about beautiful places. Why I just ran from one side of the train to the other all day, for fear of missing something. We stopped on the border town for several hours, from 11:45 am to 9 pm. That was the best half day I have had since I left home. We had our first French dinner at a little hotel then three of us girls climbed clear to the top of a mountain, to a fortification...

I know my letters are very unsatisfactory, but you would understand, if you were over here, just why. So many things happen in a short time

and there are so many little things one could tell if they only knew where to start. They keep us so rushed all the time that our heads are in a perfect whirl. I will be so glad to get settled to work. This running around is getting so tiresome. Little did I think when I packed that suitcase and bag in Santa Rosa that I would be living in them for a month and a half, yet my subconscious mind must have told me, for I put in everything I needed.

Paris is full of uniforms, both men and women. I wish Buster could see them, especially the Italian officers. I think theirs are simply stunning.

Last night I had my first opportunity for service and I can imagine how much help poor awkward me proved to be. I went to a French Canteen, where the wounded soldiers stop for a few minutes after getting off the train before the ambulances bring them into the city. Can't you see me holding a poor Frenchman's head and trying to tell him what a hero he is, when the only way I can talk French at all is with my hands. I worked till 11 pm, and came home nearly dead...

I have moved since I wrote last. I am now living in a hotel about five minutes walk from headquarters. The meals here are not quite as good, but we have running water, hot and cold, in our rooms, which makes up for the lack of eats.

An American soldier came up to me with a funny little grin and said, "Now please don't send me away before I ask this—Have you a match?" Imagine asking a perfectly dignified "Americain femelle soldat" as they call us in France, for a match. Horrors. Well it took me about ten minutes to go through all my pockets and when I had finished and told him I guessed they must all be gone, he said "Well, must I go now?" He was the cutest boy. I told him he could stay, so we went over in the park and sat down and visited for an hour or so. He told me all about his sweetheart, whom he hadn't heard from for two or three months.

I wish I knew how many different kinds of thrills this war can produce. Had a new one last night. Sometime in the night I very gradually awoke to the realization that there were little short claps of thunder rolling all over the sky. After a while I collected energy enough to get up and go to the window. There was a very clear sky and I could see search lights playing all over it. I stood in the

window quite a while watching the lights and finally decided that Fritz must be paying us a social call. I was hoping I might see him, until the thunder claps began rolling closer and louder, and then I began, to feel lonesome and to wonder where the other people were. So, I put on my kimono and slippers and went downstairs to find most of the French people in the cellar, most of the Americans huddled in the lobby and a few out on the sidewalk. I had slept through all the danger signals and half the raid.

We heard one loud explosion, which we all decided must be a bomb, the other noise being from our guns...We stood out on the sidewalk quite a while, watching little things that looked like shooting stars, only glistening much more as they darted through the air. The old-timers told us these were pieces of shrapnel. I really enjoyed the excitement for half an hour or so, but after it had continued for almost an hour, I began to get nervous and was glad when the automobiles went through the streets with the bugler sounding the "all clear" signal.

Healdsburg Tribune, October 31, 1918

Our canteen is one of the largest in France. *[At this point, Miss Jones was transferred out of Paris, but her letters do not specify the town.]* It stands just a short distance from the railroad station. There are twelve or fourteen workers and about six or seven French servants.

We girls work in eight-hour shifts day and night. The canteen closes, however, from 12 to 3am for a good cleaning.

The dining room extends clear across the front of the building and faces the track. This room is very large with plenty of windows, which makes it light and airy. The walls are painted a light blue and we have yellow curtains and yellow shades on all the lights and all this week we have had bunches of goldenrod and Shasta daisies on the tables. For furniture, besides the chairs and tables, there is a piano, some writing tables, two heating stoves and a phonograph, too.

Across the end of the dining room is a counter, shining clean, with nothing on it except a pile of trays, a tray of knives and forks and a row of girls' elbows. Back of the counter is a huge range, and on it are always big pots of coffee and chocolate. I hope in Heaven the army will never be

called upon to account for the chocolate they have consumed. The ovens turn out the most beautiful roasts you ever saw. There are five gas plates where we fry eggs and potatoes for breakfast. We serve eggs, potatoes, bread and jam and coffee, chocolate or milk in the morning, for one franc (20 cents).

There is a serving table right back of the counter where one girl stands and dishes dessert, which is usually either a pudding or fruit and the French cook serves the meat and the vegetables on the plates. There are two girls at the counter, one gives the hungry boy his meat and vegetables, salad, bread and dessert, takes time to jolly him a little, and then slides him on to the girl at the end of the counter, who gives him something to drink, takes his little one franc fifty and sends him on to a table. The drinks are served in good-sized bowls instead of cups. In this way we can serve at least 200 in an hour. Probably more than that, but as they have never kept an accurate count, I could not say the exact number. The dinner and supper hour, or rather 2-1/2 hours, are extremely busy and between that time we sell only sandwiches and drinks.

The reason I have time to write tonight is because we have so many nice men to help. One nice M.P. cut the bacon, a lieutenant ground the coffee, one cut bread, etc. The boys are grand here.

Back of the court is another large room, the size of the dining room and a small one. This small room is our storeroom, and such shelves full of canned milk and meat, and great cans of sugar, coffee and chocolate, you never did see. The bread comes in a loaf about three feet long and we keep several shelves in the store room reserved all the time for the fresh supply of bread coming in. The bread is made of American flour by a French baker.

The large room is a sort of barrack, fitted with beds enough for about fifty men, two heating stoves and a locker. Here soldiers are allowed to sleep and lock their things up free of charge. I have never been in there once yet when the beds were not occupied.

The last tier of rooms in the rear consists of an infirmary, diet kitchen, linen closet, a dressing room for the women workers and shower baths for the soldiers. This whole section of the canteen is presided over by a nurse, who attends to anyone who happens to be ill, hands out clean towels to the soldiers and makes herself generally useful. The

infirmary is a very cheerful place, with pretty pink curtains, pink lamp shades and the beds, about twelve of them, are covered with some pink flowered stuff...

The shower baths are very popular. Yesterday a poor soldier came in, who said he hadn't had anything to eat for two days—had been on a long-duty trip. I believe he had, too, from his looks. He wanted something to eat, but as it was just ten minutes till time for dinner, and we had nothing by sandwiches to offer him, I took a long chance on hurting his feelings and suggested that we had shower baths in the rear. I think it did hurt him a little, too, to have a girl tell him he needed a bath, but he went back, and in fifteen minutes he came in again, so shining clean and happy looking. I am sure his mother would have been proud of him. After he had had his dinner he came up and talked to me quite a while and thanked me. Then he went to the piano and played half an hour until the train left...

I wish you could see the trains that pass our canteen windows. The longest, heaviest trains I ever saw, all "U.S.A." All day and every day they go, until your head swims and you wonder where it is all coming from.

Healdsburg Tribune, January 23, 1919

We are not worried about ourselves, but up at the front where there is cold weather and rain and mud-mud-mud, all the time, and the boys sleep anywhere or nowhere at all, the boys are in terrible danger.

When it rains the roof leaks around places where the trees are growing through. You see, the French will not allow a tree cut down, so in the court we have two, growing right up and out of the roof.

I always wear my uniform on the street but I do wear my furs and my blue scarf usually. At the canteen we wear the blue apron with white cuffs and collar and coif always.

I went to a dance at one of the big hospitals a few nights ago. They were opening their new Red Cross hospital hut. These hospital huts are big recreation places for convalescent soldiers and are a fine thing for them...

I have been trying for days to find time to write to you about our wonderful Thanksgiving in

the canteen. I never will forget it. There were four of us on the morning shift and with the help of the French servants, a French cook and two dear old southern darky boys, we had things shining clean and the whole place beautifully decorated by eleven o'clock.

I had a day off Wednesday and went out into the country for ferns which with many chrysanthemums made the canteen look most lovely. We had a bunch of flowers on each table... At eleven o'clock all the other girls came in to sit around and talk with the boys and an orchestra ordered there by the C.O. came in...

At eleven thirty we started serving the dinner which consisted of turkey, cranberry sauce, bread, sweet potatoes, boiled onions, beets and celery, pumpkin pie (cut in quarters), nuts and coffee or chocolate. On each tray in addition to this was a package of cigarettes and an American flag. All this for the usual 1.5 francs, or 30 cents American money.

The orchestra started at exactly the same time the serving did. We served between two and three hundred dinners. We girls all ate right out in the dining room with the boys. It was so good to watch the boys enjoy the dinner and the music. Some of them were just in from a long, cold ride in box cars without much to eat. Most of them visited the shower baths before dinner too...

It was a tired bunch that come toddling home that night but there was loads of satisfaction in the thought that we had given between seven and eight hundred mothers' boys some kind of a Thanksgiving. I talked to many of the boys about the things we all had to be thankful for this year and we all agreed it was the greatest Thanksgiving America ever had. One young boy said "We are all thankful because we have God's own country to live in and we never knew it before."

Healdsburg Tribune, July 24, 1919

Miss Olive Jones, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Jones of Healdsburg, was expected home last night from France. Miss Jones left Brest for New York on such hurried notice that she was unable to send a cablegram to her parents. When a day or two out from New York, she sent a wireless message to her parents in Healdsburg notifying them of her homecoming.

Elmer Sandborn Writes Fine Letter from France

reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, June 2, 1919

Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Sandborn of this city have just received a French helmet from their son, Hospital Sargent Elmer J. Sandborn, who is in charge of the typewriting department of the base surgeon's office, Base Section No. 5, Brest, France.

Elmer was given a four days' leave of absence and took advantage of it to visit Paris and some of the battle grounds. In a letter to his parents he describes some of the things he saw, in a way that will interest many of his friends in this section. He writes:



Source: Patricia Maddox

WWI Army Hospital Sergeant Elmer Sandborn, 1918

Brest, France,
May 20, 1919,
My Dear Parents:

Back in Brest again and am quite glad to get here, as I hate to ride on the French trains. Take it from me that trip is beyond the value of money and of inestimable interest. But I can't, absolutely cannot, describe the things I saw and, if I could, I never would finish. I collected about one hundred postals, four books of views and six actual photographs; a choice collection and of so much value to me that I am afraid to risk them through the mails, so will keep them until I come home.

I had the good fortune to spend last Sunday at Rheims, Chateau (sic) Thierry and vicinity. In Rheims, they say there were three thousand buildings and all but fourteen are absolute ruins. The beautiful cathedral is gone. I sure can imagine anything now said to have been done by the Germans. I went out to the Hindenburg line of trenches; and, gee! some

ruins. I ran across a great number of unexploded shells, grenades and aerial bombs, two battle tanks, three dead, unburied, almost decomposed Germans lying on the ground. I got some shells that had served their purpose, one about nine inches long and six inches around, a piece of barwire (sic) from "no man's land," a piece of shrapnel and a piece of stone from the ruined cathedral. In going to Paris and the battlefields, the land is honey-combed with trenches and shell pits. Here and there are standing limbless, lifeless trees, just the splintered trunks standing, testifying to the awful storm of gas and shell.



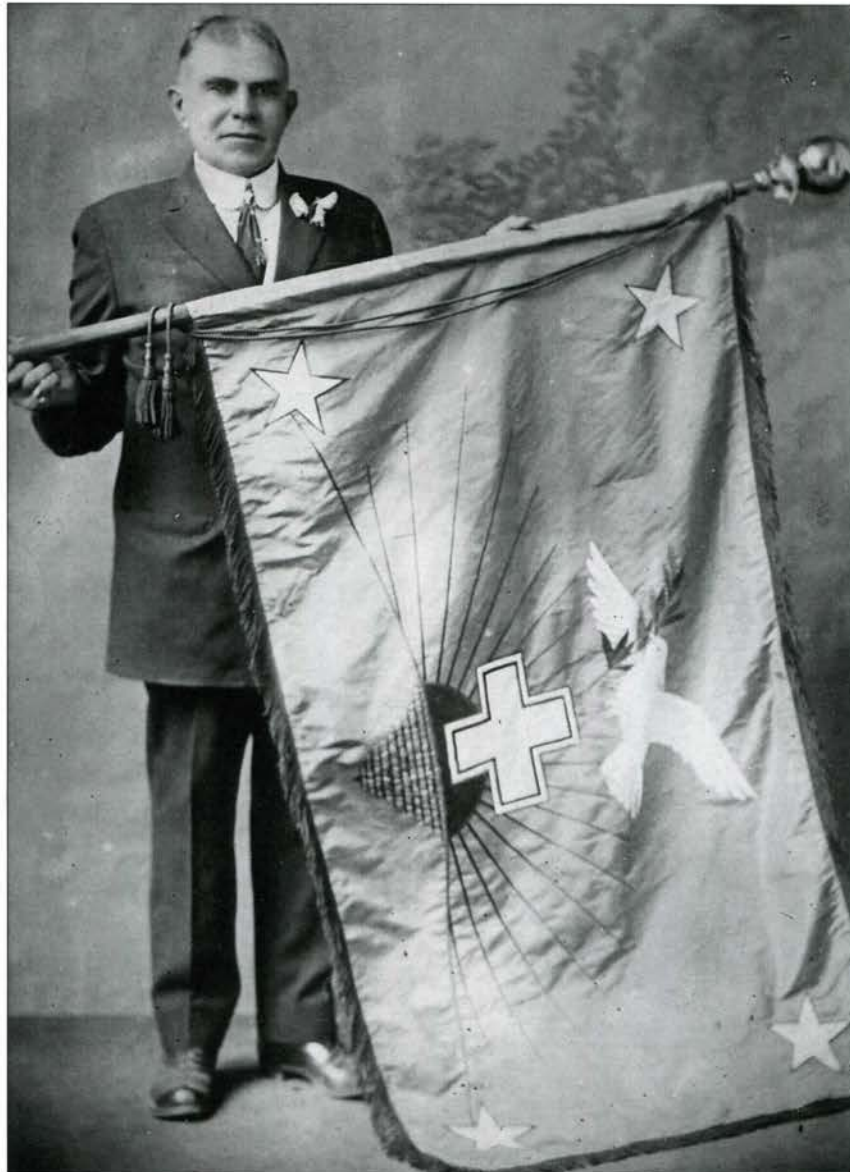
Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Elmer Sandborn helmet from France

Occasionally, we would pass a lonely grave. Perhaps the "mother at home" thinks her boy is in the finest of graves. But all are not. On this trip I picked up some Lily of the Valley roots. I have wrapped them up and am sending them to you. Try to revive them.

Am sorry I cannot write all, but it would be too long. Am awful tired. Sat up all night. There are no sleepers on the trains here. It is reported that the army in Germany is coming through our port on their way home. If this is true, I may not be home until September or October. But I am doing my "bit" and the time will soon pass by. Don't worry, I am well, and have nothing to complain of.

Goodbye,
Elmer



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Julius Myron Alexander with his Universal Peace Flag, 1914

A Native Son, the Great War and the Universal Flag of Peace

by Holly Hoods

Peace Activism Prior to WWI

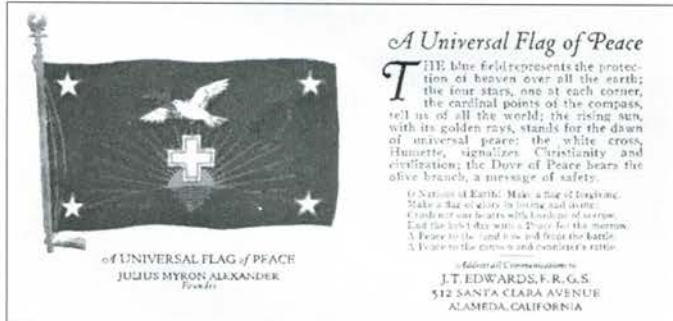
The debate about whether the United States should have fought in World War I is all but forgotten today. Although the war began in August 1914, a broad coalition of antiwar forces tried to stop our country from entering the war—and had succeeded until April 1917 when President Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. Even

fewer remember that a Healdsburg pioneer became a leading peace activist in the west during the first World War.

For almost three years, opponents of the war and of militarization (“military preparedness”), helped stop Congress from massively increasing the size of the U.S. Army, a measure favored by munitions manufacturers and proponents of

intervention, including former President Theodore Roosevelt. The antiwar voices included labor unions, civil rights groups, socialists and newly-formed organizations such as the Women's Peace Party and the American Union Against Militarism. Woodrow Wilson found it beneficial to run as the "peace candidate" until 1914, because antimilitarists dominated public opinion. Several months later, however, Germany's decision to resume unrestricted submarine warfare against neutral merchant ships persuaded President Wilson that war was the only option. The Zimmerman Telegram, in which Germany urged Mexico to invade the United States, also tipped the scales toward war.

In the month that America entered the war, August 1914, Julius Myron Alexander, Secretary (now called the "CFO") of the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce, was inspired to become a peace warrior. Alexander believed that 1914 was still an opportune time to assert the idea of civic patriotism, as opposed to the patriotism of war. He declared that there are other heroes "than those at the cannon's mouth." Alexander designed a handsome banner to serve as a rallying symbol for a global peace campaign, enlisting Theresa (Mrs. Ben) Ware to embroider the prototype. Soon Healdsburg's Chamber of Commerce leader was not only promoting Healdsburg, but also leading the campaign to promote global unity under the banner of his Universal Flag of Peace.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Peace Flag promotional postcard souvenir, 1915

Peace Flag Taken Up by Peace Movement

The first mention of the Peace Flag outside of Healdsburg appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner* September 1914:

Peace Flag Presented to Cause by Julius Myron Alexander of Healdsburg

The armies of peace will follow a new banner, the first of the great international movement, into which has been wrought the symbolism of the humanitarian movement. Julius Myron Alexander, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Healdsburg, is the designer of the peace emblem, and he delivered yesterday to the San Francisco leaders of the peace campaign a magnificent emblem, made under his supervision. The flag, which cost about \$249, is Alexander's contribution to the cause. It is a gold fringed banner showing a dove, a cross and a rising sun, against a field of deep blue. Alexander gives "the protection of Heaven over all the earth" as the symbolism of the blue background. At each of the four corners is a star, typifying the range of the peace armies to the four corners of the world. The rising sun, with golden rays, stands for the dawn of peace, the white cross Humette with a border of gold, signalizes Christianity and civilization. The dove of peace, with wings spread, bears a green olive branch, a message of safety; all the design baring exquisitely wrought in silk embroidery.



Source: San Francisco Examiner

"Miss Liberty" with Peace Flag, releasing doves at Golden Gate Park Peace Rally, 1914

The new Peace Flag was embraced quickly by the antiwar movement in the Bay Area. Huge peace rallies were held in Berkeley and San Francisco. The *San Francisco Examiner* on September 24, 1914 estimated a crowd of 100,000 people in attendance:

At the monster peace gathering at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco Sunday a very pretty and impressive ceremony was connected with the unfurling of the Peace Flag, designed by Julius Myron Alexander of Healdsburg. In the portion of the program entitled "A Message from San Francisco," sixteen young ladies, in costume of the different nations, each with a snow-white dove, formed in line, headed by Miss Liberty bearing the Peace Flag, and marched to the front of the music stand, where the doves were released and the Peace Flag was waved over the multitude, while the "Star-Spangled Banner" was sung by thousands of voices...

At the December 1914 meeting of the National Peace Committee, held at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, the Peace Flag designed by Julius Myron Alexander was adopted as the official symbol of the committee. Julius offered the banner for their use.

This is designed for a Universal Peace Flag and my thought regarding it was that it might be used in forwarding the peace movement now being inaugurated in the West...There has never been a Universal Peace Flag adopted and this one is for all nations and creeds. I have thought small flags might be made from the design and sold for the benefit of the Red Cross and other charitable work for which I would gladly donate it.

Peace Flag Presented to U.S. President

In September 1915, Alexander formally presented a Peace Flag to President Woodrow Wilson. The blue silk flag was beautifully embroidered by Theresa (Mrs. Ben) Ware. With the gift he enclosed an impassioned letter, guilded in poetry.

Dear Mr. President,

To you, a little silken Flag of Peace, an emblem from a village in the West. Here, from the land of the orange bloom; from a land of flowers and birds of song. It is harvest time and the fruits are all gold and purple and red. They are happy,

these Arcadia people of the West. It is a bounteous land and there is the voice of song and laughter, for Love and Peace rule here and each may go about his labor and return to a home of contentment; to a home protected under the Stars and Stripes of a great Nation.

Over there we hear the echo of the Dead March of Saul. There are the trenches, the child and the man; there the sister and the mother and over all rules the God of War. The home is broken and the cities and fields lie destroyed and blistered under the blue of heaven. There are footprints of blood and there are tears and sorrows and heartbreak. A Christian land forgotten of God in its rebellion. A mark shall be upon the brow for all the years to come, the scar of war and wasting.

This little Flag of Peace, only an emblem from those who pity and love; only a prayer for those who go to their homes of desolation and sorrow, in the land across the sea.

*With love and respect, Sincerely Yours,
Julius Myron Alexander*

From Pioneer to Peace Activist

Julius Myron Alexander is usually described as Healdsburg's first Poet Laureate. He was born in Alexander Valley in 1857, the year Healdsburg was founded.

He cherished his home and its history all his life. The valley he called home was named for his uncle, Cyrus, who had located there in 1844. His parents, Charles and Achsah Alexander, were farmers who settled in the valley in 1849. In the *Healdsburg Tribune* in 1929, Julius recalled his local roots:

From country school days, with all of their boyhood sports, I merged into a regular pioneer farm boy, plowing, chopping wood, mowing hay, cradling and binding grain, and riding the range for stock. A farmer boy's life was a lot of pleasures if it is not made too much of farm drudgery. We did not have many close neighbors and Healdsburg 72 years ago was but a few shacks, plank sidewalks, oak tracts, madrone groves, sloughs, oxen, Indians, dust, vaqueros and democrats. It was a kaleidoscope picture of a store or two, saloons, blacksmith shops, a China wash house, ox yokes, chewing tobacco and revolvers. Crowning it all was

the unsurpassed virgin beauty of its mountains, its forests, streams and flower-covered lands.

At age 17, Julius was sent to the Napa Collegiate Institute from which he attained a B.S. degree. The bookish, contemplative country boy sought to please his parents by working in commerce. Instead of the literary life he craved, he then “became a cog in a wheel in the big city in San Francisco where I was with an express company for 15 years with the exception of a portion of time spent in Nevada as its messenger.”

After the death of his parents, Julius felt that he had fulfilled his filial duty, and felt free to become the prolific poet and literary leader he yearned to be. From 1888-1890, he co-owned and published the *Healdsburg Enterprise* newspaper. Alexander became the head booster of the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce for many years. He was chairman of the Oak Mound Cemetery Beautification Committee. Few residents have loved Healdsburg more passionately than he did.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Julius M Alexander reading poetry, 1916

His political views evolved as the Great War raged. Julius may have originally started as a conscientious objector, but by 1916, he also espoused “preparedness” when he introduced his

most ambitious book of poetry, “Flag of Peace and Other Poems:”

Dikes are builded to keep back the ravages of storm, counter fires are started to check the flames of the forest; jails are builded for protection against crime; your home has a burglar alarm or an insurance against the elements. All these and many more for Preparedness. The laws of the land require safety and protection. The working out of these principles is the gateway to peace. As with a home and a people, so with a Nation. Keep the door locked and be vigilant lest the wings of the dove be dyed with red. Teach and talk Peace at all times, but be prepared for conflict. Preparedness and Peace are brother and sister, and both are the children of Patriotism.

Peace Flag for Armistice

In the 19 months before the Armistice ended World War I, approximately 53,000 Americans perished in battle. The country mourned the many dead, but Americans were jubilant to have peace at last. Julius Myron Alexander was one of the happiest participants in the 1918 Armistice parade. He joyfully welcomed peace home to the streets of Healdsburg, proudly waving the Peace Flag.

Sources:

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Taylor, Marian, “The Poet of Sonoma County: Something of the Life and Work of Julius Myron Alexander,” *The Grizzly Bear*, vol. xx, November 1916.

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Healdsburg Celebrated Peace News

reprinted from Healdsburg Tribune, November 14, 1918

The war is over.

And Healdsburg had the news about as soon as any other community in California, and put about as much enthusiasm and happiness and hilarity into the occasion as the event would hold.

Lee Lesa was the first man in Healdsburg to receive the glad tidings, a telephone message from his brother in San Francisco at 1 o'clock in the morning telling him that the representatives of Germany had signed the armistice.

Mr. Lesa promptly phoned to the *Tribune* editor, and a few minutes later confirmation of the news and the text of the Washington dispatch was received by the *Tribune* from the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*.

An effort was made to start the fire bell and whistles of the packing houses and canneries immediately, to proclaim the great event, but at the suggestion of Mayor Brigham and City Marshal Mason, the starting of the whistles and bells was delayed and set for 4 o'clock. This was done out of thoughtfulness for the sick ones in the community.

At 4 o'clock the *Tribune* had an extra on the streets, giving the news of the signing of the armistice and the din of whistles and bells began.

A crowd soon began to gather at the Plaza, and the uproar increased as tooting autos appeared on the streets.

A bonfire was started at the edge of the Plaza and a fast-growing crowd gathered about the flames. Cowbells, tin cans, shotguns—anything to make a noise—all had a part in the demonstration of joy while yet the stars shone brightly in the heavens.

At about 5 o'clock a parade was formed, led by three women beating tin cans and followed by J.M. Alexander bearing his Flag of Peace and D.A. Wilkison carrying the Stars and Stripes and the happy throng marched about the streets of the business section.

Dozens of autos had gathered by the time daylight came and wild dashes were made about the Plaza streets with tin cans and cow bells attached to the cars. One intrepid driver climbed over the Plaza curb with his car and others violated every rule of

speed and traffic in their effort to show the riotous joy that was in their hearts.

L.C. Koberg was one of the first of the businessmen to appear on the scene and while rushing along the streets bearing a *Tribune* extra, he permitted his mask to drop a little while he held a cigar between his teeth.

The genial jeweler was promptly "pinched" by an officer for violating the mask ordinance and given a card notifying him to appear before the City Recorder at 9 o'clock for sentence.

At the hour named he was there, prepared to take his medicine, but the sentence of the Recorder was "Gitthehelloutofhere," and "Louis" beat it.

By order of Mayor Brigham, all of the saloons were closed for the day and a general business holiday was declared, beginning at 12 o'clock.

People flocked in from the country districts to learn the news and to take part in swelling the noise in honor of the downfall of the Kaiser and his principles.

At 2 o'clock a monster parade was formed under the direction of James A. Petray. The parade was led by the Municipal Band, under the leadership of Fred Pryor. Next came an auto bearing Mayor Brigham holding the Stars and Stripes and Julius M. Alexander with his beautiful Flag of Peace floating in the breeze.

Behind this auto came the Boy Scouts, drawing a car on which was mounted a large Liberty Bell, the ding-dong from which told the glorious news of the day.

Then came an almost endless line of autos, decorated with the national colors and the flags of the allies and many of them dragging cowbells or tin cans to add to the noisy joyousness of the occasion.

Following the parade, the Municipal Band gave patriotic airs from the Plaza bandstand, and an inspiring address was delivered by E. M. Norton.

Long into the evening young people paraded the streets blowing horns and ringing bells to attest the joy that was theirs that peace had come.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

American Legion hall on Center St.

Origin of the American Legion in Healdsburg

by Whitney Hopkins

In July, 1919, the *Healdsburg Tribune* first described the American Legion, and noted that Healdsburg would soon establish a local organization. According to the *Tribune*, "The purposes of the corporation are declared to be to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States; to safeguard and (transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy for which the members of the military and naval forces of the United States contended in 1917-1918; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 percentum Americanism; to inculcate the duty and obligation of the citizen to the community, state and nation; to preserve and develop equality of right and opportunity in the United States; to promote the social and industrial welfare of the citizens of the United States, to make right the master of might: to preserve the memories and incidents of the Great War, and to consecrate the comradeship of its members to service to the nation."

On October 23, 1919, the *Tribune* noted on the front page that the "Sotoyome Post of Legion is Formed." In the City Hall's Chamber of Commerce rooms, twenty-five or more ex-servicemen of the Great War met.

Membership grew quickly. By November, Sotoyome Post No. 111 had 85 members. In order to raise funds for the newly established organization, the Sotoyome Post held its first dance at the end of December in the pavilion on the river. The dance attracted a large crowd, including Legion members from Santa Rosa and Petaluma. It featured dance

music played by a jazz orchestra from Berkeley. It was deemed a huge success by the newspaper.

In February, 1920, Healdsburg's Sotoyome Post was able to lease the Women's Improvement Club house on Center Street as their first home. Dennes and Haigh Grocery store donated a billiard table. The Post purchased a Victrola from Brown-Wolfe Drug store, who generously donated a number of records. The City furnished lights and water free of charge.

In April, 1920, the *Tribune* reported that a women's auxiliary was being established in Healdsburg for the wives, mothers and sisters of soldiers. At the end of 1922, the Legion was able to construct their own, new club house on Center Street. This would become the site of many community events, meetings and dances over the years, until it was torn down in 1956 to make way for the shopping center currently in its place.

Focusing on service to veterans, service members and communities, the Legion has evolved from a group of World War I vets into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States. Membership swiftly grew to over 1 million, and local posts sprang up across the country. Today, membership stands at over 2.4 million in 14,000 posts worldwide. Sotoyome Post 111 is still an active service organization today providing support for local veterans, and organizing community events.

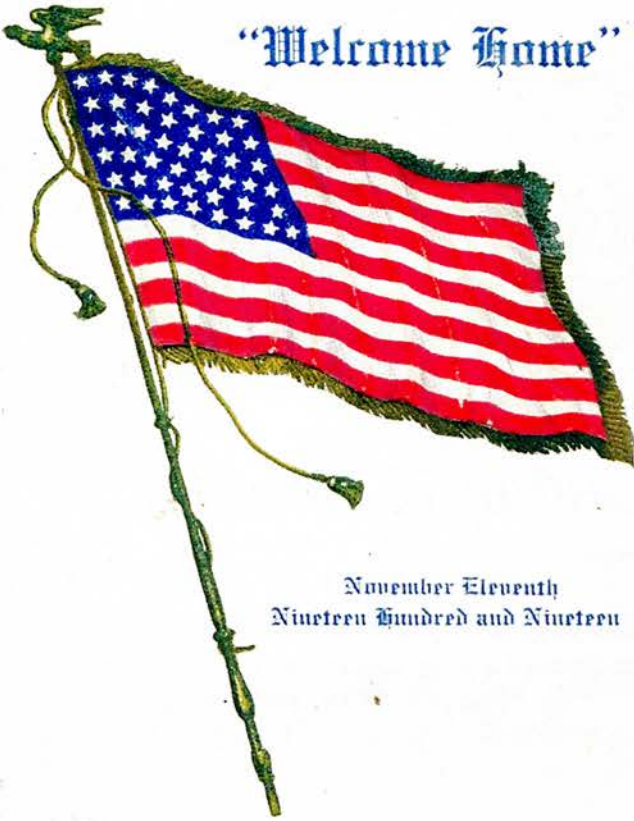
Sources:

Healdsburg Tribune, 1919-1922

Healdsburgamericanlegion.org

Legion.org

"Welcome Home"



November Eleventh
Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen

Healdsburg, California



IN accordance with the proclamation issued by the Governor of California designating "Armistice Day" (November 11, 1919) as a day of Statewide welcome and rejoicing with our Service Boys on their safe arrival in their home-land;

We, therefore, the citizens of Healdsburg and residents of the entire community take pleasure in extending you an invitation to be a Guest of Honor at our "Welcome Home" Celebration to be given in Healdsburg, California, on the aforesaid date of November 11, 1919.

Sincerely yours,

THE COMMITTEE

Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Invitation to Welcome Home Celebration, November 11, 1919

Third Class



Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society
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