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WWI impact felt locally

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HISTORY

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Clark County Chronicle: WWI impact felt locally

By Wendy Richter
For the Siftings

During the next year or so, much attention will be given to the centennial of World War I, which officially ended November 11, 1918, with the date becoming known as Armistice Day.

The conflict had a great impact on our nation as the first modern, global war. Approximately 65 million were mobilized, including over 70,000 soldiers from Arkansas. Many Clark Countians participated. In November of 1918, just after the war was over, Arkadelphia's Southern Standard newspaper reported these numbers: "Clark County has furnished 1064 men, divided among the several departments as follows: National Guard, 71; Regular Army, 22; Enlisted Reserve, 33; National Army, 903, Navy and Marine Corps, 35. These figures do not include the volunteers who enlisted in the Students Army Training Corps, the officers who have been commissioned from civilian camps or civil life or those who enlisted in the army or navy prior to the declaration of war."

While many served in a military capacity, people on the home front were also impacted greatly. Every person felt the war's effects as officials urged citizens to contribute something to winning the war. On December 13, 1917, local headlines read: "People Urged More for Conservation." The article read as follows: "Hamp Williams, federal food administrator for Arkansas, has issued an appeal to the people of Arkansas to observe the meatless and wheatless day, as is being done by the hotels and restaurants.

Mr. Williams does not want it understood that his request is in the term of an order, but it is an appeal to the patriotism of the people to do this as their bit in helping to win the war. 'The success of the world for democracy as against autocracy largely depends upon the food supply,' says the administrator. 'The world faces an alarming shortage of its staple food crops on account of the millions of men engaged in battle and the manufacture of munitions of war. In view of this Herbert Hoover has recommended that Tuesday be

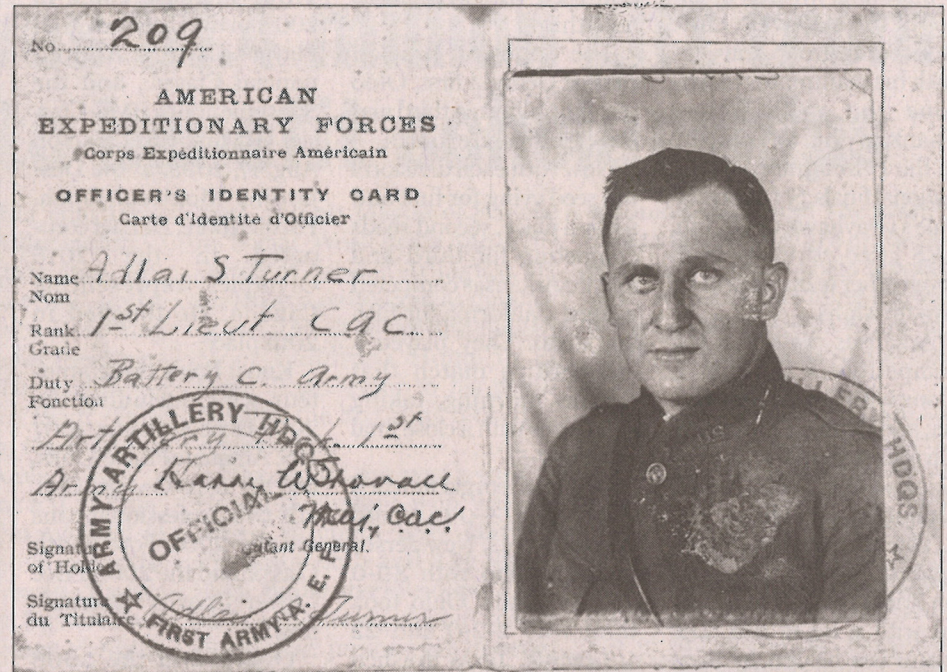
observed as meatless and Wednesday as wheatless day. The people of this great state have proven their loyalty and patriotism in all war measures by giving the army and navy our quota and by subscribing more than our portion of the Red Cross, Y.M.C.A., and Liberty Loan funds. I request all the people of this state to further prove their loyalty and patriotism by observing these days. Do not serve or eat beef, pork, or mutton on Tuesdays, or any food containing wheat or its products on Wednesdays."

While local citizens were asked to adjust their meal planning at home, women also supported the war effort in many ways, becoming involved by knitting socks, sweaters, scarves, and gloves for soldiers. And, people were even asked to send some rather interesting items to the Navy via then-Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt.

On December 6, 1917, the Southern Standard stated, "Spyglasses Wanted by Government." The story read: "The county council of defense is requested to give notice that the Navy department is in need of

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FROM THE TURNER PAPERS, OBU LIBRARY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
WWI military identification card of Adlai S. Turner. Turner served in both World War I and World War II. He was principal at Arkadelphia High School and taught at Ouachita Baptist College. Adlai Turner, his wife Dorothy McNutt Turner, and their son Tad (a veteran of the Korean War), are buried in Rose Hill Cemetery in Arkadelphia.

binoculars, spyglasses, and telescopes. The lenses of these have heretofore been made in France and Germany, and American facilities are inadequate for the present demand. If any citizen has instruments, you are requested to send same to Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary

of the Navy, Washington, D.C. The government will pay \$1.00 for each one accepted, as it is the policy of the government not to ask for donations. It makes no difference how old the article may be, the lenses may be good and may be repaired."

For additional informa-

tion about Clark County history, visit or contact the Clark County Historical Museum (www.clarkcountyhistory.org) or (870) 230-1360 or the Clark County Historical Association's Archives at the Ouachita Baptist University Library (www.obu.edu/archives) or (870) 245-5332).