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Louisiana State University During World War I: A Military Tradition

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LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY DURING WORLD WAR I:
A MILITARY TRADITION

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
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Master of Arts in the Liberal Arts

in

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by
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ABSTRACT

When the United States first joined World War I it had long been without a large standing army, it soon became apparent that there was a need for soldiers and training facilities. To solve this problem, the United States utilized colleges and universities as training camps. Because of its strong military tradition, Louisiana State University (LSU) was mobilized for this purpose. Although this mobilization was a serious turning point in the school's development, not many scholars have written histories of the changes during this time.

LSU began as the Seminary of Learning of the State of Louisiana in 1860, but soon changed its name to the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy. The Board of Supervisors pushed for the change because it felt a military system would produce a high level of education and discipline and repay the state by providing military knowledge to its young men. Its first superintendent, William Tecumseh Sherman, and faculty began the long tradition of mixing military discipline with strong academic education.

This tradition served LSU well when Congress enacted The National Defense Act of 1916. It standardized military training at colleges with strong military departments through the creation of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and later its replacement, the Student Army Training Corps (SATC). This strong tradition was essential in providing an easy transition at LSU to a military training facility and united students and faculty in the war efforts during WWI.

Mobilization at LSU changed the campus experience. Because many students left to join the fight, student organizations, athletics, commencement, and other activities were adversely impacted with the decreased enrollment. Additional changes included inclusion of war courses in the curriculum, planting campus war gardens, implementing food conservation, fundraising

for the war effort, and assisting the Red Cross. Since WWI was a technical war, the government called on faculty to lend their expertise and knowledge in various ways, such as public speaking to gain support for the war, working in military and government agencies, or answering the call to colors.

Introduction

World War I began in Europe on July 28, 1914, but President Woodrow Wilson strove to keep the United States neutral. Even after 128 Americans were killed when the British ocean liner *RMS Lusitania* was sunk by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915, the United States did not enter the war. Keeping the country out of war helped Wilson win a second term in 1916. But Wilson could not maintain neutrality for much longer.

By January 1917, Wilson realized neutrality could not be sustained because of two events: Germany's announcement of its intention to use unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmermann Telegram. The American public was outraged over a telegram sent by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the German Empire, Arthur Zimmermann, on behalf of the German Empire, to its Ambassador in Mexico, Heninrich von Eckardt. It urged Mexico to go to war with the United States and promised financial support and the return of parts of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico taken by the Americans in the 1830s and 1840s.

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson delivered his war message to Congress, and four days later Congress approved a declaration of war against Germany. The United States joined the Triple Entente - - France, Britain and Russia - - and others to fight the Central Powers which included Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria. The nation was unprepared for total war because President Wilson had maintained a small standing army to appear non-threatening to warring European countries. This was not unique to the Wilson Administration. Traditionally, the U.S. had a limited military presence due to its isolationist's stance.

The U. S. Army was small compared to other armies fighting in the war.¹ Of the world's militaries, the U.S. was ranked behind Portugal as the sixteenth in size. When the U.S. entered the war, it grossly was understaffed; the "army had only 5,000 officers and 120,000 enlisted men, plus some 80,000 ill-trained and poorly equipped national guardsmen."² Battles in Europe routinely killed more soldiers than the U. S. had in its army at the time. More men were needed to fight in a war of this scale.³ Therefore, when the U. S. declared war, an unprecedented mobilization was required.

In 1915 Wilson began to push for the Defense Act of 1916. It provided for expansion of the military, which had shrunk considerably since the Civil War. To enlarge the military, Congress approved the draft on May 18, 1917, that required all men between twenty-one and thirty to register.⁴ The draft was accepted without incident because of the civilian-dominated preparedness movement. This was not the case during the Civil War when instatement of the draft caused riots. The Selective Service Act of 1917 allowed for exceptions: men with families, indispensable duties, physical disabilities, and essential work deferments that applied to industry and farms.⁵ Between 1917 and 1918, the Selective Service registered 23.9 million men between eighteen and forty-five.⁶ The army grew to 3.5 million soldiers that included 2.8 million draftees.⁷

¹ "The U.S. Army in World War I, 1917–1918." American Military History, Accessed December 28, 2016. <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V2/PDF/Chapter01.pdf>.

² Donald M. Goldstein and Harry J. Maihafer, *America in World War I: The Story and Photographs* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2004), 19.

³ James Ciment and Thaddeus Russell, eds., *The Home Front Encyclopedia: United States, Britain, and Canada in World Wars I and II* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2007), 274.

⁴ Climent, 274.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Climent, 275.

⁷ Ibid.

Even with this increase, there was a pressing need for more, as well as for officers to train them. Training facilities also were needed because there were insufficient military facilities to house and train the influx of soldiers and officers. Additionally, professors were called into service for “their expertise by municipal, state, and federal agencies.”⁸ World War I utilized technology and the military looked to universities as a “primary source of the research facilities and personnel and the trained men needed to wage such a war.”⁹ The nation’s institutions of higher education became a “resource for the national defense.”¹⁰ With the mobilization of universities came problems; it was difficult for some to adjust and adapt to mobilization. This was not the case, however, at Louisiana State University.

LSU was chosen as a training center by the government without hesitation because of its military tradition. That was not so for all universities, even some that had a military tradition. Although Notre Dame had military training and made it compulsory for most students, it was not on the government’s list of universities to be used for training centers. Military training at Notre Dame was unpopular and considered “quite a bore.”¹¹ Even though it did not have a strong military tradition, Reverend John L. Cavanaugh, the school’s president, immediately wrote the War Department to find out if it was an oversight or for some other reason it was left off of the list. The response was that Notre Dame was not included because “her military training had not been deemed of high caliber.”¹² Notre Dame did become a training center after much lobbying, and

⁸ Carol S. Gruber, *Mars and Minerva: World War I and the Uses of Higher Learning in America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press., 1975), 95.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Arthur J. Hope, C.S.C., *Notre Dame: One Hundred Years* (South Bend: Icarus Press, Inc., 1978), 317.

¹² Ibid.

Cavanaugh came to appreciate the enforced discipline that the military system brought to the school. When a student arrived one minute late for drill and was chewed out by the commanding officer, Cavanaugh remarked to another priest, “That’s just what those fellows need, a touch of army discipline!”¹³ While a lax student body at Notre Dame had to be whipped into shape, LSU was prepared.

Along with serving as training camps, universities across the nation played other roles in the war effort. They were impacted by mobilization for the war - - some positively and others negatively. But there were profound impacts at some universities that would affect the academy as a whole. World War I, or the Great War, impacted the objectivity and scholarly integrity of some American professors torn between loyalty to their country during wartime and adherence to objective, professional scholarship. War blurred the line between scholarly thinker and actor. For many in the academy, the call to war and patriotism was stronger than their commitment to scholarly objectivity.¹⁴

Some college professors found themselves in the role of propagandists in the service of the government. They designed curriculum and courses to forward the war effort. Universities and professors became cogs in the military machine.¹⁵ Professors who participated in the propaganda machine regarded their actions as an “atypical departure from scholarship necessitated by the national crisis and obviating judgement by professional standards.”¹⁶ Objectivity, the cornerstone of being an effective scholar, was no longer valued as patriotism

¹³ Hope, 332.

¹⁴ Gruber, 4.

¹⁵ Gruber, 237.

¹⁶ George T. Blakey, *Historians on the Homefront: American Propagandists for the Great War* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 140.

swept the country, especially so on university campuses. Scholars faced the problem of welding patriotic and professional roles.

Professors were asked by the government to sway the public to support the war effort and some willingly did so at the cost of their scholarly reputations. Historians were asked to rewrite history to vilify the Central Powers, specifically Germany, to win the public's support for the war. History was skewed to satisfy "present-day needs" and "itself was a form of propaganda, just as threatening to the integrity of history as was special pleading in behalf of the cause."¹⁷

The University of Minnesota lost history professors to the U. S. Committee on Public Information, or CPI, to write propaganda pamphlets as did other universities.¹⁸ W. S. Ferguson, chairman of the history department at Harvard, reported:

There is existent here a disposition to believe that the historian should, first and foremost, hold down his own job, and a certain fear lest a teacher of History be led too frequently to teach not his own subject, but the present war. As you know some of us here do not believe that all History is but an interpretation of the present situation.¹⁹

For others it was not. In this hyper-patriotic era, professors who did not join ranks with the war effort were deemed German sympathizers and seen as unpatriotic.

In addition to pressure for "entailing general revision of purpose, method, or material" in teaching, an accusation of disloyalty could result in a faculty member of any field having his (or her) reputation or career ruined.²⁰ C. E. Hester, assistant director of the North Louisiana Experiment Station of the Louisiana State University, received a letter from Professor William Rufus Dodson stating that Governor Ruffin Pleasant had been informed that he "was

¹⁷ Gruber, 126.

¹⁸ James Gray, *The University of Minnesota: 1851-1951* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1951), 245.

¹⁹ Gruber, 126.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

traveling over North Louisiana making pro-German remarks to various people in this territory.”²¹ Hester replied to Dodson and enclosed a copy of this letter to Boyd to explain the situation. Hester emphatically denied having made such remarks and the accusation came as “a complete surprise and shock to me as nothing could be further from the truth.”²² He stated he had not been traveling in the northern part of the state and his “sympathies have always been with the allies - - and especially so since our own country has been involved.”²³ Hester called for Governor Pleasant to make a thorough investigation so this matter could be clarified. There is no additional material regarding this incident in the archives so the matter must have been dropped. But professors at other universities were not so fortunate.

Hugo Münsterberg was one of Harvard University’s “most eminent and popular” professors.²⁴ He was a pioneer in the study of applied psychology and considered the father of forensic psychology which combines knowledge of psychology and the legal system.²⁵ Münsterberg was also known for service to his community and “innumerable acts of kindness to individuals.”²⁶ But he was a German-American who was torn between loyalty to his homeland and the U. S. He defended Germany’s actions which caused him to lose friends, colleagues turned against him, and some alumni demanded he be dismissed. Rumors circulated that he was a German spy and even went so far to claim that the carrier pigeons he kept in his backyard were carrying messages to the enemy.

²¹ LSU Archives, Record Group A0001, Office of the President Records, Thomas D. Boyd. Hereafter referred to as TDB. C. E. Hester to Boyd. September 22, 1917. Box 26, Folder 383.

²² TDB. C. E. Hester to W. R. Dodson. September 22, 1917. Box 26, Folder 383.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard: 1636-1936* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), 453.

²⁵“Five Facts about Hugo Münsterberg, The Father of Forensic Psychology,” Visual News, accessed December 30, 2016, <https://www.visualnews.com/2011/08/25/5-facts-about-hugo-munsterberg-the-father-of-forensic-psychology/>.

²⁶ Morison, 453.

On December 16, 1916, Münsterberg was preparing to give a lecture at Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study when he suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage that killed him instantly in front of a packed classroom. He had suffered immense stress from accusations of being a spy, and this may have contributed to his death. Harvard President Abbott Lawrence Lowell was a staunch supporter of academic freedom and resisted pressure to fire Münsterberg. But this was not the case on every campus. Academic freedom was stifled on many campuses, and faculty lost their jobs because of lack of enthusiasm for the American cause.²⁷

Professor William Schaper, head of the department of political science, and Dean Alfred Owre of the School of Dentistry at the University of Minnesota were asked to "hold themselves in readiness for a summons to appear before the board of regents."²⁸ Both had publicly voiced opinions that they did not believe in war "as an instrument for the settlement of international disagreements."²⁹ In March of 1917, Schaper had signed a telegram to President Wilson urging him to keep the U. S. out of the European war. When called before the board, Owre admitted he was a pacifist and intended to stay one. The board asked if he would help with the war effort and he answered that he was, raising foxglove for the production of digitalis for the government. He was regarded as an eccentric and harmless, so he was allowed by the board to return to his foxglove.³⁰

Schaper's interrogation did not go as well. He told the board he felt "no enthusiasm for the war" and although he was a loyal American and wished his own country victory, he did not believe the German government should be destroyed. Moreover, he could not fully support the

²⁷ Gruber, 174.

²⁸ Gray, 246.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Gray, 247.

war “because he had close relatives in the German army as well as in the American.”³¹ He was terminated by the university because of his “unwillingness to aid the United States in the present war render[ed] him unfit....to discharge the duties of his position.”³²

The University of Wisconsin was accused by Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carl Vrooman of being insufficiently militant because he did not like the students’ response at a talk he gave there in November, 1917.³³ Princeton Professor Robert McNutt McElroy, chairman of the National Security League Committee on Patriotism Through Education, also attacked the University of Wisconsin. In the spring of 1918, he accused the University of being unpatriotic and of harboring traitors.³⁴

There have been histories written about one aspect or another of LSU, but there has not been one about the role its strong military tradition played in its mobilization for WWI. This strong tradition was rooted in its founding and played a large part in its successful mobilization. To comprehend this success, one must know the early history of LSU up to and during WWI. LSU did not experience the difficulties some universities and their faculty did during this time because it worked as a united front for the war effort. In many cases during this time, academic freedom “took an ambiguous position” as professors could no longer count on their peers for support if they did not fully support the war effort.³⁵ While LSU certainly did experience changes on campus due to the war, none were as detrimental to collegiate cohesiveness as those experienced at Harvard or the University of Wisconsin. For these universities, as well as many others, it was difficult to maintain a balance of loyalty, service and

³¹ Ibid.

³² Gray, 248.

³³ Gruber, 104.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Gruber, 210.

academic ethics.³⁶ However, LSU did not experience the same negative situations or difficulties that the other universities did because of its strong military tradition and willingness of its faculty and students to support the war effort.

³⁶ Blakey, 11.

Review of Literature

After a thorough search and consulting with Louisiana State University librarians in Troy H. Middleton and Hill Memorial Libraries, I discovered that while there were many books discussing LSU, the history of LSU during World War I had not been told. To adequately tell it, however, one must also look at its longstanding military tradition instilled from its beginning as a military seminary in Pineville and the climate of America before and during the war.

Literature used for research to write this thesis includes Louisiana State University's student newspaper, *The Reveille*, as well as *The State Times Advocate* of Baton Rouge and *The Times Picayune* of New Orleans. Correspondence of the LSU president and general catalogues housed in the archives of Hill Memorial Library were also employed. A history of the first thirty-six years of LSU by Walter L. Fleming was a useful resource.³⁷ Fleming was a distinguished professor of history at LSU from 1907-1917. A lecture series at LSU is named in his honor. One of the original professors of the Louisiana State Seminary, Anthony Vallas, provides a first-hand history of its founding.³⁸ Ron Garay's, *The Manship School: A History of Journalism Education at LSU*, focuses on the history of the Manship School of Mass Communication, but it also supplies information about the early history of the University. And a journal article published by Benjamin Price also provided information about the founding and early history of the Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Institute.³⁹

³⁷ Walter L. Fleming, *Louisiana State University: 1860-1896* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1936).

³⁸ Anthony Vallas, *History of the Louisiana State Seminary 1864* (Baton Rouge: Pike Burden, Inc., 1935).

³⁹ Benjamin L. Price, "Origins of the Ole War Skule: The Creation of the Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Institute," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Winter 2011), pp. 35-63.

A 1966 thesis written by James L. Barnidge, “General G. Mason Graham: The Father of Louisiana State University,” provided information about the founding of the seminary and the man dedicated to its establishment.⁴⁰ It also gives insight as to why and how the military tradition began at LSU and the advantage having it played in WWI.

Also utilized were histories of other universities involved in war work. These books provide a lens through which to see their response to the war and how they compared and contrasted to LSU. *Notre Dame: One Hundred Years* gives us a look at a university that was rejected as a military training center by the government because, unlike LSU, it did not have a strong military tradition. *Three Centuries of Harvard: 1636-1936* depicts the story of Hugo Münsterberg, an esteemed and well-liked German-American professor who was turned on by colleagues and friends because he defended his homeland during the war. He ultimately was branded a spy and the stress of his predicament probably contributed to his untimely death. *The University of Minnesota: 1851-1951* by James Gray discusses the unsettling atmosphere on its campus due to “zealots of patriotism and fanatics” who made an “effort to hunt down anyone whose enthusiasm seemed to be less flaming than their own.”⁴¹

Mars and Minerva, was used to show how the academy failed to maintain objectivity and professionalism during the war as professors supported the war effort by promoting propaganda and, in some cases, skewing history to garner public support for the war. George T. Blakey’s, *Historians on the Homefront: American Propagandists for the Great War*, looks at how historians were mobilized for propaganda work to support the war effort and the effect this had on their scholarly integrity as well as on the profession. Some historians who participated in

⁴⁰ James L. Barnidge, “General G. Mason Graham: The Father of Louisiana State University” (Master’s thesis, Louisiana State University, 1966).

⁴¹ Gray, 245.

propaganda activities regretted their departure from objectivity and professionalism while others defended their actions as patriotic duty for their country. In the aftermath of war the scholarly integrity was questioned of those who served as propagandists.⁴² It is a topic that is still discussed today. Was it right for professional historians to sacrifice their scholarly integrity for patriotism?

David Kennedy's, *Over Here*, is a look at how the American society was affected during War War I.⁴³ It offers an excellent account of how Americans responded to the war on the home front. *The Home Front Encyclopedia: United States, Britain, and Canada in World Wars I and II, Volume One: World War I* looks at the effects the war had on these three societies.⁴⁴

LSU: A Pictorial Record of the First Hundred Years edited by V. L. Bedsole and Oscar Richard with an introduction by T. Harry Williams gives a visual and written history of LSU. The book documents the evolution of the campus from the Seminary Building located in Pineville – home of the university from 1860-69 – to the beginnings of its current campus. Especially helpful was the information documenting LSU's buildings and facilities used to train units of the Student Army Training Corps.⁴⁵ A similar book was used, *Louisiana State University: The Campus History Series*, by Barry Cowan with a foreword by former President William L. Jenkins.⁴⁶

⁴² Blakey, 15.

⁴³ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁴⁴ Ciment, 3.

⁴⁵ V. L. Bedsole and Oscar Richard, Editors, T. Harry Williams, Introduction, *Louisiana State University: A Pictorial Record of the First Hundred Years* (Baton Rouge, LA: The Meriden Gravure Company, 1958), 44.

⁴⁶ Barry Cowan, *Louisiana State University: The Campus History Series* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2013).

Author Thomas F. Ruffin along with LSU archivists Jo Jackson and Mary J. Hebert, joined to write *Under Stately Oaks: A Pictorial History of LSU* that covers LSU from its founding in Pineville through the next one hundred and fifty years of its history. It documents LSU's military tradition and reputation "for training resilient soldiers."⁴⁷

J. Michael Desmond's book, *The Architecture of LSU*, is a historic-preservation study of the current LSU campus. This book was funded by the Getty Foundation's Campus Heritage Grants program which made it possible to entail LSU's architectural and planning history. It discusses architectural influences that shaped the core of the current LSU campus, early Baton Rouge site, and its past campus in Pineville.⁴⁸

David French Boyd: Founder of Louisiana State University by Germaine M. Reed depicts the monumental task Boyd faced as superintendent of the seminary and later LSU "despite a costly fire, Radical Reconstruction, overwhelming poverty and growing hostility to his administrative policies."⁴⁹ Boyd was forced out of office by the Board of Supervisors in 1880. He returned to lead LSU four years later, but a hostile Board of Supervisors caused him to resign again in 1888. Defeated and broke, he returned to LSU ten years later at the invitation of his brother, Thomas D. Boyd, who was then the president. He was hired as a professor of moral philosophy and died two years later, "a sad and bitter man whose last days were plagued by overwork and the sense that no one appreciated his strenuous efforts in behalf of the school."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Thomas F. Ruffin, Jo Jackson and Mary J. Hebert, *Under Stately Oaks: A Pictorial History of LSU* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2002.), xiii.

⁴⁸J. Michael Desmond, *The Architecture of LSU* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013), vii.

⁴⁹ Germaine M. Reed, *David French Boyd: Founder of Louisiana State University* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), xiv.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Thomas Duckett Boyd: The Story of a Southern Educator by Marcus M. Wilkerson is not only a biography but also a history of early LSU.⁵¹ Boyd served as president of LSU from 1896 to 1926. He was president of LSU during World War I.

Information from these many sources provide a timeline mural of LSU's military tradition that ultimately played a large part in its successful mobilization for WWI.

⁵¹ Marcus M. Wilkerson, *Thomas Duckett Boyd: The Story of a Southern Educator* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1935).

Chapter I

Louisiana State University's Early Beginnings and Military Tradition

The nation's universities were tapped for military training camps, especially those with a strong military tradition present on their campus. In the fall of 1918, universities that met these criteria became instruments of the government as they "turned their resources over to the War Department and became centers for military training."⁵² The line between the state and institutions of higher learning became hard to define as campuses were used by the military as training facilities for the armed forces and their student bodies a source of soldiers and officers.⁵³ Faculty served in the armed forces, as well, mainly as speakers on war aims. It was a turbulent and unprecedented time in the history of America and its universities. American universities were only recently established when our country entered the war. They had modeled themselves after English and German institutions but "derived its special character and claim to legitimacy from a commitment to the ideal of service."⁵⁴ American institutions of higher learning "donated their intellectual and physical resources to the war effort almost without reservation."⁵⁵ They reorganized themselves to serve the government at war.

Louisiana State University heeded that call. Its deep rooted military tradition made it easy for the transition to a training institute during World War I. The LSU military tradition began when it was first established as the Seminary of Learning of the State of Louisiana. General G. Mason Graham, referred to as the father of LSU, was instrumental in its founding and

⁵² Gruber, 213.

⁵³ Gruber, 5.

⁵⁴ Gruber, 44.

⁵⁵ Gruber, 95.

served on its first Board of Supervisors. He was a strong proponent of military instruction at the seminary.⁵⁶ Graham felt that a military system would be the most effective means to maintain discipline among students “which would repay the state in providing military information to its young men.”⁵⁷ He had scrutinized causes for the failure of Louisiana’s previous attempts at higher education and concluded that it was “partly unsuccessful due to the breakdown of authority.”⁵⁸ Graham modeled the seminary after the successful Virginia Military Institute that used the military system as a means of maintaining discipline and encouraging academic excellence. He was convinced that a military school could offer “a high level of education” in Louisiana and the newly established seminary was the tool to bring that goal to fruition.⁵⁹ Graham knew the importance of education and that all previous attempts of establishing higher education in Louisiana had failed. It was time for a change and he felt the answer was instituting the military system in the state’s newest educational endeavor. Graham was correct. LSU catalogues under the heading of “Discipline” before and during WWI noted:

Under the military system the aim is to exercise such control over the students at all times as will enable them to derive the greatest advantage from the opportunities afforded by the university for their development in all right directions.⁶⁰

At the time of the seminary’s founding the faculty was chosen with this in mind. In 1859 William Tecumseh Sherman was selected by the Board of Supervisors to become the first superintendent of the seminary. The seminary established its military tradition during the Civil

⁵⁶ Fleming, 26.

⁵⁷ Barnidge, 21.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May 1915, No. 5, 22.

War because it “probably sent a larger proportion of its students and instructors to the army than any other American institution” not to mention its equipment before the Union invasion.⁶¹

The military training of students paid off as they were in much demand as drillmasters for the Confederate army and were “scattered among the camps of Louisiana soldiers from New Orleans to Manassas.”⁶² Many of the cadets old enough to serve “became officers while still in their teens.”⁶³ Unlike the students (with the exception of one) and faculty of the seminary who joined the Confederate army, Sherman joined the Union army and became a brigadier-general. Even though Sherman fought on the opposing side of others from his seminary colleagues, he left his mark on what would become LSU. Sherman began the military tradition at LSU by upholding the military honor code the founding Board of Supervisors established and dismissing those who violated it.⁶⁴ He played a large part in laying the cornerstone for LSU’s keen military tradition.

Little history was preserved about the military record of the seminary cadets, but we do know they and the faculty mobilized for the Civil War. This also was the case when LSU mobilized for WWI. During WWI, the state of Louisiana was “one of three states that led in the percentage of young men who stepped up without being called.”⁶⁵ LSU during World War I cannot be told without relating its early history and how its military tradition was established. This tradition still was strong fifty-two years after the Civil War ended and enabled LSU to be an asset to the nation during WWI. But the road to get to this point was long and hard.

⁶¹ Fleming, 121.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ruffin, 7.

⁶⁴ Barnidge, 48.

⁶⁵ Ken Dixon, “Marching to War 50 Years Ago: Remembers BR’s Doughboys of 1917,” *Sunday Advocate*, April 23, 1967.

Education in Louisiana had a tenuous start. During the colonial period under French rule only wealthy merchants, planters and officials could afford to educate their sons. They were sent home to France for their education. Others lived in frontier conditions and cared little for education. Not until 1723 did the Catholic Church open the first boy's school in Louisiana. The Church offered girls an education four years later. There were no institutions of higher learning during this period.⁶⁶ When the Louisiana Territory fell under Spanish rule and later when it became an American territory, educational opportunities were scarce. French, Spanish, Creoles, Acadians, African Americans and Anglo Americans lived in the same territory, but they did not assimilate. These differences in culture and language were not conducive to the establishment of an educational system. Not until the period of 1803 to 1845 would the educational policy of Louisiana state that it "satisfy partially the demands of each nationality, of each leading church, of each large town, of each geographic district decentralize the school system and disperse the public educational activities."⁶⁷ From this policy, there were several unsuccessful attempts to establish state supported colleges in Louisiana. Among them were the College of Louisiana (1825-1845), College of Jefferson (1831-1845) and College of Franklin (1831-1845) in addition to unsuccessful private colleges.⁶⁸ They ceased to exist once state support was withdrawn. The early policy was a failure because most of the appropriations were for the expenses of indigent students and rental of buildings. There were no permanent buildings for all of the money put into public subsidized colleges. Another approach needed to be taken to ensure the success of institutions of higher learning in Louisiana.

⁶⁶ Fleming, 3.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Fleming, 15.

Louisiana State University was funded by the issuance of land grants specifically “for the use of a seminary of learning” the United States government made to the State of Louisiana in the years 1806, 1811, and 1827.”⁶⁹ The proceeds from the sale of these lands, as mandated by the State Constitution of 1845, were to provide the funding for the institution but the constitutional mandate was not adopted by the Legislature until 1848. The Pineville location in Rapides Parish was chosen for the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning because of its central location within the state, ease of access as it was near Red River, and the “healthfulness of the pine woods” in which it was built.⁷⁰ But the main reason for it landing in Rapides Parish was that one of the strongest promoters of the seminary, General G. Mason Graham, lived in the parish.⁷¹ A dormitory on the current LSU campus was later named for him.⁷²

The Louisiana State Seminary of Learning was built on the east bank of the Red River, approximately three miles from Alexandria. Designed by Alexander T. Wood, the seminary was described at the time as “a rather stark Italianate structure of three stories consisting of a central pavilion and four crenellated corner towers projecting from a central mass.”⁷³ Construction of the school began in February of 1856. But hastily fired bricks used in the structure proved to be defective and caused them to crack before completion so it had to be properly strengthened before it was completed in 1859.⁷⁴ The seminary opened for students the next year.

Two months after it opened, a law was enacted that changed the name from the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning to the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy.

⁶⁹ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May 1915, No. 5, 22.

⁷⁰ Fleming, 24.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Bedsole and Richard, 98.

⁷³ Desmond, 1.

⁷⁴ Barnidge, 17.

Having the seminary become a military academy gave the Board of Supervisors “more definite powers.”⁷⁵ The Supervisors directed that instruction be given in all military branches and increased the number of provisions made for four indigent students from each of the four congressional districts to fifty-eight boarded at the seminary at one time. All parishes would benefit, in turn, for the opportunity of one of their young men to receive a four-year appointment at the seminary. These students were to be treated as equals to paying cadets. The old stigma of being indigent and not a part of the “old beneficiary system” was removed. Now “all appointments were eagerly sought by the best class of young men.”⁷⁶

The instructional character and course of the seminary was designed to be similar to that of the Virginia Military Institute. When the Board of Supervisors met in May of 1859, a majority vote determined the seminary should be “a literary and scientific institution under a military system of government, on a program and plan similar to that of VMI.”⁷⁷ The military structure ensured discipline, order and training for students. In addition, it provided an education that produced “thoroughly scientific and accomplished literary gentlemen.”⁷⁸ In the first decade of the seminary, it awarded fourteen undergraduate degrees and two Master’s degrees.⁷⁹ It had a tenuous start.

The Board of Supervisors received a total of eighty-five applications for teaching positions at the seminary.⁸⁰ Faculty salaries ranged from \$2,000 to \$3,500 and homes were to be provided for married professors, while single faculty lived in rooms in the seminary. The seminary opened under the leadership of Superintendent William Tecumseh Sherman. He said

⁷⁵ Fleming, 28.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Fleming, 24.

⁷⁸ Fleming, 29.

⁷⁹ Bedsole and Richard, 111.

⁸⁰ Bedsole and Richard, 30.

the “imposing new structure was too fine for school purposes.”⁸¹ Sherman was one of five faculty, which included Anthony Vallas for mathematics and natural philosophy; Francis W. Smith for chemistry; E. Berte St. Ange for French and Spanish; and David French Boyd for ancient languages.⁸² Sherman taught engineering.⁸³

In the first report of the Board of Supervisors of the State Seminary of Learning Graham recommended professors be assigned military rank and title as was the case at VMI.⁸⁴ When the seminary opened January 2, 1860, professors held a military rank and title with the exception of Vallas who refused to be assigned to a command or any commission as well as to teach any military branch.⁸⁵ Vallas was also excused from wearing a uniform because he was an Episcopal clergyman.⁸⁶ After those faculty appointments at the seminary, Sherman was commissioned a colonel and professors were commissioned as majors, captains, or lieutenants. Of the original professors, all owned slaves with the exception of Sherman and Vallas - - a rarity in the South during this era.⁸⁷

Sherman, a graduate of West Point, had served in the army thirteen years before resigning in 1853 to begin a banking career in California. After the bank failed, he began to practice law in Kansas but found it unfulfilling. Sherman learned of the superintendent position at the seminary from Major D. C. Buell, who served as an assistant adjutant general in the army. Buell had received a letter from General Mason Graham, the so-called father of LSU, asking for a recommendation for the superintendent position. It was by coincidence that Sherman’s former

⁸¹ Bedsole and Richard, 26.

⁸² Vallas, 2.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Barnidge, 38.

⁸⁵ Vallas, 3.

⁸⁶ Barnidge, 37.

⁸⁷ Vallas, 2.

commanding officer, Colonel R. B. Mason, was Graham's half-brother.⁸⁸ Sherman was pleased to have been chosen superintendent of the seminary. Sherman joined a diverse faculty that began the long tradition of combining military discipline and academic education at LSU.

Vallas was a Hungarian educated at the University of Pesth and the University of Vienna. He had taught mathematics at the Technical School at Pesth and the University of Pesth. Vallas moved to New Orleans after he was court marshalled in 1850 and removed as a professor from the University of Pesth for his involvement in the revolution that swept through Europe in 1848. Fearing for his life, he fled to America.⁸⁹

St. Ange was from France and a graduate of Charlemagne College in Paris. He earned a reputation as a duelist while serving as an officer in the marines in the French Navy.⁹⁰

David Boyd attended the University of Virginia, but did not officially graduate because he failed to meet the requirements.⁹¹ After Boyd left the university in 1856, he opened "an English, Classical and Mathematical School" in addition to accepting a tutoring position.⁹² His school was failing by late May of 1857, so he headed southwest in search of better opportunities. He ended up in Louisiana and thus began his career teaching in this state. His first appointment was with Homer College in Claiborne Parish and his second in Rocky Mount located in Bossier Parish before being hired in 1859 by the seminary.⁹³

⁸⁸ Fleming, 31.

⁸⁹ Fleming, 32.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Reed, 5.

⁹² Reed, 7.

⁹³ Reed, 15.

Smith, a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute and at twenty-two years of age was the youngest and least experienced among his colleagues.⁹⁴ Sherman deemed Smith to be a man who would be good company having come from one of the finest families in Virginia.⁹⁵

Overall, Sherman was satisfied with his faculty.⁹⁶ He felt Vallas and St. Angle had their own peculiarities since they came from foreign countries and thought of Smith and Boyd as intelligent gentlemen.

Opening day of the first session began with nineteen students from across the state.⁹⁷ Eventually enrollment that initial session reached seventy. The seminary students were to be instructed and treated as military cadets under the command of the superintendent and professors of each branch of instruction. The Board of Supervisors developed and Sherman maintained and enforced discipline at the seminary. He sent several cadets home for disciplinary infractions, including a fight which resulted in knives being drawn, open use of tobacco, and singing a black-guard song. A black-guard song is one that contains foul language. He was a stern disciplinarian, but was liked by his students.

The Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861 and had a major impact on the seminary. In addition to the resignation of Sherman to serve in the Union Army, most of its students and faculty resigned to fight for the Confederate States of America. Henry Taliaferro was the only student that joined the Union Army. Professor Vallas assumed the position of superintendent after Sherman's departure and that of his intended successors, Colonel George W. Lay and Captain William R. Boggs, to fight for the South.⁹⁸ Lay joined the Confederate Army, as did

⁹⁴ Price, 55.

⁹⁵ Fleming, 33.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Fleming, 45.

⁹⁸ Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 8.

professors Smith, Clarke, Boggs, and Boyd.⁹⁹ This left two faculty at the seminary. Vallas and St. Ange both remained neutral. They were from other countries and had no desire to become involved.

At the end of June of 1861, the Board of Supervisors suspended operations of the seminary and shuttered its doors on April 23, 1863, when Union forces invaded the Red River Valley. The Union Army occupied Alexandria from May 6 through May 17. On May 11, a Union squad was dispatched to the seminary. Vallas provided bedding for a hospital they had established in Alexandria. As a result, he was removed from his position “on the ground of his sympathies with the Federals” and over rumors that he had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States during the occupation of Alexandria.¹⁰⁰

The seminary survived the Civil War because of Sherman’s request to General Nathaniel Banks that he spare it during his Red River Expedition in 1863.¹⁰¹ He also helped gain parole for David Boyd after he was captured by the Union Army. After the war, Sherman sent the seminary books and maps from his personal library and “used his influence to secure books and equipment from the Smithsonian.”¹⁰² Sherman remained interested in the seminary’s welfare during and after the war.

Once the war ended, the seminary reopened under Superintendent David Boyd on October 2, 1865. A total of eight degrees were conferred at the first commencement program in 1869. After a fire destroyed the seminary on October 15, 1869, Boyd moved it to the Louisiana Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind in Baton Rouge where it remained until 1886. The seminary occupied a portion of this facility which – along with the Louisiana State Capitol –

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Vallas, 7.

¹⁰¹ Cowan, 50.

¹⁰² Ibid.

was one of the two most imposing structures in the city at that time.¹⁰³ The institution was located on the southern edge of the city within sight of the Old State Capital (1852) and was completed in 1858. It “was composed of three main structures, a large central building and two planking ones to the rear that served as classrooms.”¹⁰⁴ An open space bordered by these three structures was used by the seminary cadets for drill grounds.¹⁰⁵ The military tradition continued in the new facilities.

The Legislature changed the seminary’s name to Louisiana State University, effective March 16, 1870.¹⁰⁶ Louisiana Agricultural and Mechanical College, housed in New Orleans and chartered on April 7, 1873, merged with Louisiana State University on January 2, 1877. With this merger, LSU became a land-grant college and was renamed Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College. David Boyd organized the merger in 1876. Competition from a more stable Louisiana State Agriculture & Mechanical College at New Orleans had promoted deep cuts in state funding to LSU in 1873. That same year lack of funding forced Boyd to furlough state-subsidized cadets, causing enrollment to drop to thirty-five. In 1874 enrollment dipped to single digits and the Boyd brothers were the only faculty.

Eventually things began to improve. In order to have more land available for agricultural experiments, the university moved to “the recently decommissioned Pentagon Barracks and old U. S. Arsenal site on the northern side of the city” early in 1887.¹⁰⁷ The Pentagon Barracks of the U. S. Army Post were constructed in 1825 and were built on an historical site that was once home to colonial fortifications. The five-sided Barracks is left open on the side parallel to the

¹⁰³ Desmond, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Fleming, 193

¹⁰⁷ Desmond, 2.

Mississippi River. The four Barracks consisted of two for enlisted men and two for officers.¹⁰⁸ Also located on the site was an abandoned powder magazine that was built in 1838 on what was then a federal military post. It was later used by Louisiana militia before the Civil War and later by occupying Union troops during the Battle of Baton Rouge in August of 1862. It was used by cadets at the “Ole War Skule,” as LSU was known when it resided downtown. On April 28, 1902, an Act of Congress deeded the property from the United States Government to the university.¹⁰⁹

There was a change in leadership along with facilities during this era. William Preston Johnston served as president from 1880-1883. Johnston was succeeded by former Superintendent David F. Boyd, who served for two years and, in turn, was replaced by James W. Nicholson. He served as president for ten years before being succeeded by Thomas Duckett Boyd in 1896. President Nicholson resigned after approximately “two-thirds of the cadets had mutinied because of charges that favoritism had been shown in the promotion of two cadet officers who were members of the same fraternity.”¹¹⁰ Thomas Boyd had a long history with LSU beginning when he followed his older brother, David, to Louisiana in 1868 to attend the seminary. Thomas graduated from the seminary “fourth in his class of sixteen with an average grade for the four years of 80.4” on June 26, 1872.¹¹¹ On October 5, 1873, he began as a member of the seminary’s faculty before becoming president of LSU from 1896 to 1926.

Nicholson nominated Thomas Boyd for the position of the president of LSU, but it took him approximately four weeks to accept.¹¹² He also was being sought for his success and

¹⁰⁸ Bedsole and Richard, 23.

¹⁰⁹ Fleming, 23.

¹¹⁰ Wilkerson, 130.

¹¹¹ Wilkerson, 33.

¹¹² Wilkerson, 131.

leadership as the president of the Louisiana State Normal School (Northwest State University) from 1888 to 1896.¹¹³

When Thomas Boyd began his tenure as president, he found no help from Commandant of the Cadets, Lieutenant Charles C. Gallup. Gallup was unable to enforce discipline and unwilling to work to correct the problems. He would leave the campus without informing Boyd, which sometimes resulted in both being away at the same time.¹¹⁴ Gallup was lax in his duties when he was on campus. He failed to report a cadet absent from campus which Boyd would not have known about it had the father not written to him asking that his son be excused for his delayed return.¹¹⁵

In addition to an ineffective commandant, Boyd contended with rowdy cadets. Thomas Boyd had previous experience as commandant at LSU having served in that capacity under his brother, David, when he was superintendent of LSU. He served from January 1, 1879, until his resignation from that position in fall of 1879. In April, 1879, the U. S. War Department detailed Lieutenant Mitchell F. Jamar to LSU. He was the first regular army officer to become professor of military science at the school. During Jamar's tenure, the "positions of Commandant and Professor of Military Science" were combined.¹¹⁶ But Boyd still continued to be involved with the discipline of the cadets and this experience was invaluable when he became president of LSU.

On the night before classes began in the 1896-97 session, a number of cadets were in saloons located on Third Street causing a disturbance. Boyd met the next day with the saloon owners and made them pledge they would not serve liquor to the cadets and threatened to have

¹¹³ Wilkerson, 93.

¹¹⁴ Wilkerson, 161.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Wilkerson, 67.

them prosecuted for selling to minors if they did.¹¹⁷ It did little good to give demerits to the cadets. On two occasions during the same session during the night, cadets “broke open the frame of the bulletin board and stole the demerit sheets.”¹¹⁸ He quickly realized the need to make changes in the military system in order to address disciplinary problems. Boyd reasoned a more lenient code of discipline would discourage rebellion by the cadets. Boyd no longer required cadets to wear their uniform at all times; they wore them only for drill. Boyd proved to be correct. The rigid military rules had caused dissension and rebellion. In addition, the growing number of cadets made it harder to enforce strict military discipline. Boyd “maintained discipline, though it was not as strict during the twentieth century as during the nineteenth.”¹¹⁹

As late as a few years before the U.S. entered WWI, Boyd enforced discipline as a tool used to instill desirable characteristics in students, including “high principles of truth, honor, and devotion to duty underlying the upright, manly, Christian character.”¹²⁰ Punctuality, neatness and order were habits also instilled. Students would be dismissed if they accumulated more than one hundred and fifty demerits in any one semester. Offenses that would earn demerits included, “drinking intoxicating liquors of any kind; playing cards or other games of chance; having edibles in quarters; and keeping unauthorized arms, or deadly weapons.” But hazing was one of the most serious and recurring offenses during the period before the war and was banned by the Board of Supervisors. Boyd enforced the prohibition of hazing on campus “in all of its forms, are positively prohibited by the regulations of the university.”¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Wilkerson, 158.

¹¹⁸ Wilkerson, 161.

¹¹⁹ Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 41.

¹²⁰ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May 1915, No. 5, 45.

¹²¹ Ibid.

Boyd became so frustrated with hazing at LSU that he sought the advice of Edward W. Nichols at VMI. Nichols responded that there had “been cases of hazing at this institution from time to time” but there had “never been any serious disorders resulting there from.”¹²² It was well understood by VMI cadets that hazing would not be tolerated. Boyd decided to use the same approach.

He continued to expel cadets who were found guilty of hazing and other offenses. He stood his ground even after receiving numerous letters from cadets, their family members and influential friends, businessmen and politicians pleaded with him to allow expelled cadets back in school. For example, Cadet Robert H. Littell wrote to Boyd that he “deeply regretted the matter” and if he would allow him to “resume my studies at the opening of the session” he would “most earnestly promise and assure you that I will not haze and do all that lies in my power towards preventing same.”¹²³ Others faced expulsion for reasons other than hazing. In another instance, General Orders, Number 71, dismissed Cadet Sergeant W. H. Ponder “by direction of the President” for “deserting guard duty during Graduation Parade.”¹²⁴ Boyd strictly enforced the university’s rules and maintained discipline in keeping with its of military tradition.

In addition to addressing disciplinary problems, Boyd had also focused on facilities. At the time Boyd became president, the university included the Pentagon structures and twenty-six other buildings on campus. Boyd used two rooms in the old “C” Barracks building as his office until the completion of the Alumni Hall in 1904.¹²⁵ By 1887, the university had outgrown the

¹²² TDB. Edward W. Nichols to Boyd. April 29, 1916. Box 23, Folder 349.

¹²³ TDB. Robert H. Littell to Boyd. June, 19, 1915. Box 23, Folder 345.

¹²⁴ First Lieutenant George F. Ronzelle, Jr., Commandant of Cadets, Commanding Officer, May 29, 1915. Box 23, Folder 344.

¹²⁵ Desmond, 8.

campus.¹²⁶ Boyd made an appeal for better facilities as the cost of maintenance and repairs of the buildings escalated. Over the years, “a relatively unstructured group of largely wood-frame buildings grew up around” the Barracks and Arsenal.¹²⁷ By 1895 the university grew to include:

...agricultural, chemical, and mechanical laboratories, an engineering department, dormitories and fraternity buildings a library (in the former magazine), a gymnasium, a mess hall and various other residences and auxiliary structures relating to agricultural studies.¹²⁸

William Garig, vice president of the Board of Supervisors and one of the wealthiest men in Baton Rouge, donated \$10,000 to build an assembly hall.¹²⁹ Garig Hall could seat approximately one thousand people.¹³⁰ His donation was the first of its kind to the institution.¹³¹ Another wealthy donor, John Hill, followed Garig’s lead and donated the funds to build Hill Memorial Library.¹³² Hill’s gift totaled \$25,000. The gift was in memory of his son, John Hill Jr. an “1873 graduate who was a member of the LSU Board of Supervisors who died of yellow fever in 1893.”¹³³ Twenty-two buildings were built between 1900 and 1910. By 1915, the LSU campus had forty-eight buildings.¹³⁴ The construction boom continued into World War I.¹³⁵ Among the most notable buildings was the Alumni Hall which housed the administrative offices. This building was dismantled and rebuilt on its current location on the LSU campus in 1934 and

¹²⁶ Wilkerson, 199.

¹²⁷ Desmond, 5.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Garay, 25.

¹³⁰ Bedsole and Richard, 31.

¹³¹ Cowan, 16.

¹³² Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 39.

¹³³ Cowan, 16.

¹³⁴ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May 1915, No. 5, 24.

¹³⁵ Bedsole and Richard, 24.

today is the Journalism Building.¹³⁶ It stands as a symbol of the old and new campuses of LSU.¹³⁷ Alumni Hall was built as a memorial to honor past LSU President David F. Boyd.

By 1918 Boyd decided it was time to expand the campus and its agricultural mission. More buildings were needed to accommodate an enrollment that had steadily grown under his leadership. Enrollment was two hundred and twenty; this number “doubled within seven years (1903-04 session) and tripled within twelve (1908-1909 session).”¹³⁸ Enrollment dropped for the first time in twenty years at LSU for the 1917-18 academic year.¹³⁹

TABLE 1. Total attendance at LSU from 1913-14 through 1919-20

Year	Total Attendance
1913-14	1,629
1914-15	1,741
1915-16	1,866
1916-17	1,850
1917-18	1,663
1918-19	1,860
1919-20	1,878

Note: Total attendance includes Academic Schools and Colleges, Law School, Summer School, Peabody High School (demonstration school), and Short Winter Courses in Agriculture.

Source: LSU Catalogues, 1913-14 through, 1919-20.

¹³⁶ Garay, 25.

¹³⁷ Bedsole and Richard, 79.

¹³⁸ Garay, 25.

¹³⁹ Wilkerson, 301.

The Reveille reported that the “loss is due to the fact that many of the older boys have been called to colors.”¹⁴⁰ The faculty also left the university because they were “moved by intense patriotism” and also “gave liberally of their time and money to bring the great conflict to a successful end.”¹⁴¹ After the war ended, enrollment again began to increase. Boyd was forward thinking in relocating and expanding the university.

Boyd set his sights on the “Williams Plantation tract, also known as Gartness Plantation,” located on the Mississippi River south of Baton Rouge. The Williams Plantation was composed of a “swath of land almost a mile wide that extended back from the river for a mile and a half.”¹⁴² The owner of the plantation offered to sell it for \$82,000, but the state could not afford the purchase at the time. Two LSU deans, Thomas W. Atkinson and William R. Dodson, and seven business leaders signed two promissory notes (one for \$50,000 and another for \$32,000) agreeing to purchase Gartness Plantation in May of 1918, to hold the property until August when the state could provide the funds to buy it.¹⁴³ Eventually, Governor John M. Parker pushed the purchase through the Legislature in 1920 along with land from Arlington and Nestle Down plantations, LSU’s current campus. The “combined acquisition was more than 2,000 acres.”¹⁴⁴

The land was also prized by Native Americans because they chose it as a location to build two ceremonial mounds. Two mounds were located on the old LSU campus west of the Old Arsenal. Unfortunately, one was destroyed before the Civil War. Carbon-dating of the two mounds on the current LSU campus has “determined them to be more than six thousand years

¹⁴⁰ “Decrease of 86 in Registration,” *The Reveille*, October 4, 1917.

¹⁴¹ Wilkerson, 297.

¹⁴² Desmond, 18.

¹⁴³ Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 43.

¹⁴⁴ Desmond, 18.

old, making them older than the Pyramids in Egypt and placing them among the oldest man-made structures in North America.”¹⁴⁵

In 1923, the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial Tower, also known as the Memorial Tower or “Campanile,” was built as a monument to Louisiana’s World War I fallen soldiers.¹⁴⁶ Funds to build the memorial was provided by the American Legion and the Legislature at the cost of \$211,625.16.¹⁴⁷ It was one of many “architectural monuments built across the country in the wake of the Great War.”¹⁴⁸ It is an identifying campus landmark and representative of its long military tradition.

On April 30, 1926, the new LSU campus was officially dedicated. David F. Boyd Hall and Thomas D. Boyd Hall on either side of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial Tower, are landmarks honoring the brothers who served the university for more than half a century.¹⁴⁹

While these memorials are evidence to its military history, the former campus located downtown that housed the university during WWI is a true reflection of this. LSU’s former campus was located in abandoned military facilities exactly because of its strong military tradition. This tradition would serve the university and the nation well during WWI.

¹⁴⁵ Desmond, 21.

¹⁴⁶ Desmond, 58.

¹⁴⁷ Desmond, 128.

¹⁴⁸ Desmond, 64.

¹⁴⁹ Bedsole and Richard, 60-61.

Chapter 2

Military Training During World War I at Louisiana State University

Before the United States entered World War I, opposing groups called for preparedness and strengthening of the military while others demanded continued neutrality. In a letter dated May 18, 1915, W. D. Weatherford, southern student secretary of International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) appealed to Thomas Boyd to write a letter to President Wilson supporting neutrality. Weatherford enclosed copies of letters written to Wilson demanding neutrality from students of New York and Columbia University and wanted LSU to do the same. Weatherford had written fifty other institutions in the South with the same request.

Students from New York University urged Wilson to “continue the policy of neutrality.”¹⁵⁰ Students at Columbia University cautioned Wilson to not be swayed to act upon “a foolish opinion on the part of the public or urge the pursuance of unwise policies on the part of the government – events which, such as the sinking of the Lusitania, have no legal or moral significance in the national or international situation.”¹⁵¹ The resolution adopted by Columbia was approved unanimously by five hundred students at a public meeting on December 17, 1914.¹⁵² The students expressed “disapproval of the propaganda for militarism which has been foisted upon the American public by vicious and insidious war-scares in the popular press.”¹⁵³ Weatherford asked for Boyd's support of this “sane policy” by securing the vote of LSU's

¹⁵⁰ TDB. W. D. Weatherford to Boyd. May 18, 1915. Box 23, Folder 343.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² “Columbia Favors Anti-Militarism: Students Hold Gigantic Mass Meeting and Able Speakers Discuss America's Problem,” *The Reveille*, February 20, 1915.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

student body and signature of the faculty and students in a letter from the university to President Wilson. The call for neutrality went unheeded by Boyd.

Unlike the students at Columbia University and New York University, as early as October, 1914, LSU's military organizations were "getting into first-class form and new recruits were added."¹⁵⁴ There were a total of three hundred cadets who drilled under arms every other day. New recruits were required to participate in extra drills to ensure battalion perfection. Drills were extended to include a signal corps and four companies with the field staff, band, and hospital corps. They were "under the command of two senior officers and two non-commissioned officers."¹⁵⁵ The addition of the signal corps was in preparation of the federal inspection scheduled for the following spring. The goal of the signal corps was to have approximately fifty men trained in sending and receiving messages, an important factor at the time in a military organization. The signal corps would increase the rating of LSU's military department by the United States government inspecting officer.¹⁵⁶

The military department at LSU was under the supervision of a United States military officer before and during the war. Students who lived on campus – with the exception of seniors and those excused for approved circumstances – drilled or performed other military duties. At graduation, the names of those students who exhibited special aptitude for the military service were submitted to the adjutant general of the Army and the adjutant general of the state.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, graduates of LSU who had taken the required course in Military Science and

¹⁵⁴“Three Hundred Men Compose Battalion,” *The Reveille*, October, 17, 1914.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May, 19176, No. 5.

Tactics were eligible to “apply to the Adjutant General of the Army for examination for appointment as second lieutenant in the United States Army from civil life.”¹⁵⁸

On October 23, 1915, LSU President Thomas D. Boyd received a letter from the University of Vermont President Guy Potter Benton regarding resolutions adopted at the recent meeting of the National Association of State Universities (NASU).¹⁵⁹ Benton served as the secretary of the NASU and Boyd served as the vice president. Boyd also served on its executive committee. The resolutions addressed the question of national defense and anticipated that during the next session of Congress bills would be introduced that would increase the “efficiency of the military departments of institutions supported by state and national governments.”¹⁶⁰

University of Arkansas President John C. Futrall in a conversation with U. S. Senator James P. Clarke of Arkansas, suggested the government could secure larger numbers of officers at much less expense than any other alternative by utilizing agricultural colleges and state universities that maintained military departments. The *New York Evening Post* confirmed this in a story that the secretary of the War Department was working on a plan to “utilize the land-grant college to provide a reserve of citizen officers for the army.”¹⁶¹

Boyd attended a joint meeting of the executive committee of the National Association of State Universities and the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experimental Stations on November 22 – 23, 1915, in Washington D.C., to discuss the utilization of military

¹⁵⁸ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1914-1915, Announcements, 1915-1916, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1915), Vol. V-N.S., May, 19176, No. 5.

¹⁵⁹ TDB. Guy Potter Benton to Boyd. October 23, 1914. Box 23, Folder 349.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ “May Increase War Training at L.S.U.: Secretary Garrison to Present Plan to Congress – Use of Land Grant Colleges May Be Extended,” *The Reveille, Alumni Supplement*, February 10, 1916.

colleges across the country for “better preparedness and for national defense.”¹⁶² The committee met with the secretary of war, the United States commissioner of education and a committee of officers from the War College Division of the War Department that resulted in the drafting of a bill for submission to Congress. Boyd noted that if the bill becomes a law, “it will add greatly to military instruction at the university and all other land grant colleges.”¹⁶³ It would enable graduates of the university to be eligible for appointment as second lieutenants in the United States Army. Graduates would not be required to join the military, but could be called to active service for a five-year tour. The law also called for strict military discipline in schools that participated in military training in adherence with this bill.

The outcome of these meetings, conversations and planning resulted in the National Defense Act of 1916 which President Wilson signed on June 3. The act created the Officers’ and an Enlisted Reserve Corps, the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), in universities and colleges, as well as a Junior ROTC in high schools, and allowed an expansion of the National Guard, Army, Navy, and Merchant Marine.¹⁶⁴ During the fall of 1916, approximately four thousand students were enrolled in the first ROTC programs available at forty-six universities throughout the country.¹⁶⁵ The ROTC required more college credit for military courses than had been permitted in the past and included a commission in the U.S. Army if the student completed the four-year course. But the rapidly growing U.S. Army demanded more junior officers than the university ROTC could provide, so Officers Training Camps were established across the country, sixteen for the National Guard and sixteen for the Army. There were also special camps for the aviation force and Marine Corps since all branches of the military needed officers.

¹⁶² “Colleges Have More Military Instruction,” *The Reveille*, December 1, 1915.

¹⁶³ “Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ciment, 402.

¹⁶⁵ Ciment, 403.

Putting the National Defense Act in motion took time. By August 25, 1916, Boyd had grown impatient for its implementation and wrote to General H. P. McCain with the War Department asking “without revealing Department secrets” if it “will go into effect this year in so far as concerns the establishment of Reserve Officers’ Training Corps at military colleges provided for in sections 40 to 53 of the Act.”¹⁶⁶ He had not received any information from the government but was given a copy of the act by a Louisiana congressman. Boyd was unsure if the university was required “to make formal application in order to take advantage of the provisions of the Act.”¹⁶⁷ Additionally, Boyd had received a telegram on August 24 from Louisiana state senator Joseph Ransdell that he had secured from the War Department assignment of Sanderford Jarman as commandant of cadets.¹⁶⁸ Jarman replaced Lieutenant George F. Rozelle, whose assignment as commandant of cadets at LSU expired on February 16, 1916.¹⁶⁹ Lieutenant Rozelle waited for orders from the United States War Office which were delayed until after the final parade for the spring session held the last day of college. After this, Rozelle departed to join his regiment, which was stationed at Douglas, Arizona.¹⁷⁰ Rozelle was promoted to captain in the 22nd Infantry told *The Reveille* that he “remembers with feelings of pleasure the happy days which he spent at the Old War Skule.”¹⁷¹ It was good news to finally have a replacement for Rozelle, but Boyd was disappointed that there was still no word on implementation of the ROTC on the LSU campus.

Boyd was not the only impatient individual. Fourteen LSU cadets were so exasperated they joined Company H of the Louisiana National Guard in March of 1916 before the ROTC was

¹⁶⁶ TDB. Boyd to H. P. McCain. August 25, 1916. Box 23, Folder 353.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ TDB. Joseph Ransdell to Boyd. August 24, 1916. Box 23, Folder 353.

¹⁶⁹ “Lieutenant Rozelle’s Term Expires Feb. 22,” *The Reveille*, February 10, 1916.

¹⁷⁰ “Lieutenant Rozelle Remains Until end of Term,” *The Reveille*, March 30, 1916.

¹⁷¹ “Lieut. Rozelle Now Captain in U. S. Army,” *The Reveille*, November 9, 1916.

offered on campus. Commandant of Cadets Lieutenant Hodges gave a talk during drill hour on campus, pointing out the advantages of joining the Guard which resulted in these new recruits.¹⁷² Hodges outlined the benefits the four years of training in the militia they would gain in the Guard in addition to a “liberal remuneration to be offered by the Federal government and the social features of the encampments.”¹⁷³ Requirements to join the National Guard were being at least eighteen years of age and possess the ability to pass physical requirements. Parental or guardian consent to join was required of those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. With the exception of its commander, Company H was composed entirely of LSU students. The commander, Lieutenant J. S Harrison Former, was a graduate of Virginia Military Academy.

Finally, the day had arrived for an impatient President Boyd to make the announcement to equally anxious cadets that application would be made for the ROTC to be implemented on LSU’s campus. At chapel exercises in late October of 1916, President Boyd explained to LSU students the “regulations and instructions regarding the establishment, administration and maintenance of reserve officers’ training corps at educational institutions” as directed by the Secretary of War.¹⁷⁴ An application to the War Department would be made at once to include the university as one unit of the corps. Boyd explained it was more efficient to organize the university’s military department as a unit of the reserve corps. Additionally, it would provide governmental assistance to students who participated in the ROTC.

LSU was qualified to apply as a corps unit because of its military department which provided the structure necessary for training. The cadet battalion organization at LSU at the beginning of the 1916-1917 academic year consisted of a battalion staff that included First

¹⁷² “Fourteen Cadets Join Company H,” *The Reveille*, March 2, 1916.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ “Reserve Corps to Have Station Here,” *The Reveille*, October 25, 1916.

Lieutenant George F. Rozelle, Jr., 22nd Infantry U.S.A., commandant of cadets commanding officer, cadet major, lieutenant and adjutant, lieutenant and quartermaster, lieutenant and aide, sergeant major, battalion quartermaster sergeant, and two color sergeants. There were four companies – A, B, C and D – comprised of a captain, lieutenants, first sergeants, quarter master sergeants, sergeants, and corporals. Each company had fifteen officers with one captain, but the number of other officers varied with the majority being corporals. The battalion included a hospital corps comprised of a lieutenant, corporal and sergeant; a military band which included a captain, drum major, chief musician and corporal; and a signal corps detachment which included a lieutenant and a few corporals.

For a short time during the 1915-16 academic year, there was a Company E which was comprised of the signal and engineering corps.¹⁷⁵ It was disbanded in March of 1916 because of the small size of other companies and the resignation of its captain.¹⁷⁶ The signal corps was retained, but other members were “sent to various companies of the battalion which increased each.”¹⁷⁷ In anticipation of the ROTC being established, Company E was formed again on January 6, 1917, “with S. A. Buckmaster, formerly lieutenant and quartermaster of the cadet corps, as captain.”¹⁷⁸ It became a machine gun company. It was comprised of a captain, two lieutenants, a first sergeant, one quartermaster sergeant, two line sergeants, eight corporals and thirty-eight privates, it was as large as other companies in the battalion.¹⁷⁹ To build this company, men were “taken from larger companies of the battalion, mostly from Companies B

¹⁷⁵ “New Company to Be Added to Battalion,” *The Reveille*, January 11, 1917.

¹⁷⁶ “Company “E” Men are Distributed,” *The Reveille*, March 2, 1916.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ “New Company to Be Added to Battalion,” *The Reveille*, January 11, 1917.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

and C.”¹⁸⁰ Company E won the competitive drill in the spring of 1917 against other companies at LSU with a score of seventy-eight.¹⁸¹ This score was twenty-eight and three quarters percent higher than the second place Company A. Captain Jarman hoped this performance would elevate LSU to “distinguished college” on the list at the federal inspection set that spring.¹⁸²

Seven lieutenants from the Louisiana National Guard volunteered to train commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the cadet corps in field instruction as part of special classes developed by Jarman.¹⁸³ The purpose was to train “better and more efficient officers” and to teach the cadets how to address drill and field problems that may arise.¹⁸⁴ Sophomores who were corporals were given exams in addition to their regular military science class. They were tested on the execution of the manual of arms and drill regulations in addition to the duties of squad leaders. The class was held one a week. On Thursdays, Jarman taught practice in voice culture where cadets learned “various commands given individually by officers” and how to give them with authority.¹⁸⁵ This class was held behind D Building of the Pentagon Barracks.

It was not until November 18, 1916, that LSU officially was approved by the United States War Department to organize a unit of the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps on its campus.¹⁸⁶ It was part of the larger preparedness movement which mobilized citizens for

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ “Military Dept. May Rank the University Among Distinguished Colleges,” *The Reveille*, March 15, 1917.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ “Officers Attend Special Classes,” *The Reveille*, November 9, 1916.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

military service. It would provide a “means of systematic and standard method of training” of well-trained and intelligent men in military tactics and science to become officers.¹⁸⁷

With this news, Jarman was joined at LSU by Sergeant Theodore Bundy as assistant commandant.¹⁸⁸ Sergeant Byrnes also joined Jarman as an assistant professor of military science and tactics.¹⁸⁹ Both were posted by the War Department to LSU. Moreover, the Military Department was directly under the War Department. Bundy’s previous details included border duty at El Paso, Texas, and serving two years in the Philippines as a cavalryman. He had a total of thirty years of military experience having joined the regular army after his high school graduation. Sergeant Byrnes was an activated retired army officer who was placed in charge of the Ordnance and Supply Department at LSU. Byrnes had been retired for eight years before being detailed to LSU. Regarding LSU, he said he was “rather disappointed in the buildings and equipment...for I expected to find Louisiana State University like the up-to-date universities of the Northwest.”¹⁹⁰ When he learned the university only received about \$160,000 in state appropriations each year, he said that LSU was “not getting the appropriations due an institution of this sort from the state.”¹⁹¹ He made this comparison to state universities in the North that received million-dollar annual appropriations. LSU did well with the meager appropriations it received.

Since the objective of the ROTC was to train officers for the military, students in the Military Department were automatically placed in the program for the first two years. Students who had completed the two years of academic requirements and were chosen by the president of

¹⁸⁷ “Reserve Corps to Have Station Here,” *The Reveille*, October 25, 1916.

¹⁸⁸ “New Regular Army Officer Appointed,” *The Reveille*, December 14, 1916.

¹⁸⁹ “Sergeant Byrnes Takes Up Duties,” *The Reveille*, December 21, 1916.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

the university and the professor of military science and tactics could continue in the program. Students that were chosen signed a ROTC contract for further military training, an agreement to complete a required course in “Military Art at the University and to attend two civilian training camps at the expense of the government.”¹⁹² Transportation and meals were covered. Additionally, the government provided students taking courses in the Military Department with “olive drab breeches, olive drab blouses, shoes, leggings, cap, and cap and collar ornaments.”¹⁹³ Men who signed up for the ROTC for the summer of 1918 would receive “before the end of school in addition to their other uniform, campaign hats and cords, two O. D. flannel shirts, two pair cotton khaki breeches, leggings and russet shoes.”¹⁹⁴ After the war, LSU cadets returned to the traditional West Point gray.¹⁹⁵

These students were supposed to be paid nine dollars per month, but not until fall of 1917 did “seniors and juniors in the military department of the university” receive from the War Department a “commutation of rations” amounting to thirty cents per day as per General Orders, No. 48.”¹⁹⁶ Seniors from the previous year were not paid, which was blamed on the “exigencies of the war situation.”¹⁹⁷ Students who were juniors the previous year would receive “back pay for the year beginning September, 1916” as soon as “the necessary papers” had been signed and

¹⁹² University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ “Uniforms To Be Issued To Cadets.” *The Reveille*, October 11, 1917.

¹⁹⁵ Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 41.

¹⁹⁶ “Military Students Will Receive Pay: Junior and Seniors Will Be Paid 30 Cents Per Day from the R.O.T.C.,” *The Reveille*, October 25, 1917.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

forwarded to Washington.¹⁹⁸ Unfortunately, the previous year's seniors were not eligible for this pay, only current juniors and seniors that had signed up for ROTC.

The secretary of War decreed that those registered for ROTC training camp be required to attend two sessions of camps, each lasting four weeks. There was an ROTC training camp in Little Rock, Arkansas, that began in the spring of 1917. *The Reveille* reported that "the entire (LSU) male student body would have volunteered to go to camp at Little Rock had not Captain Jarman received orders May 3 to stop recruiting for the Reserve Officers' Training Corps."¹⁹⁹ *The Reveille* also reported that "more than one hundred and forty students left the university to assist in preparedness, military and agricultural."²⁰⁰ About eighty of those left for officers' training campus at Fort Logan H. Root at Little Rock, while more than fifty enlisted in the food preparedness campaign, and a dozen student national guardsmen left for encampment in New Orleans.²⁰¹

Other ROTC training camps near LSU were held during the summer of 1917, one at Dallas, Texas, from June 16 to July 15, and another at Alexandria from July 28 to August 27.²⁰² Freshmen or sophomores who attended one or more of the training camps would be given credit. If not, they would be required to complete one training camp by the end the junior year and another before graduating. If a member of the ROTC applied for and received "a commission in the ROTC and an appointment as a temporary second lieutenant of the regular army" for a period

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ "Many Students Help U. S. Get Ready to Fight," *The Reveille*, May 10, 1917.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² "Military Dept. May Rank the University among Distinguished Colleges," *The Reveille*, March 15, 1917.

that did not exceed six months the latter camp would not be required.²⁰³ The allowance for this rank was one hundred dollars per month. Temporary second lieutenants were “attached to a unit of the regular army for duty and training,” at the end of their service their status changed to reserve officer.²⁰⁴ LSU students “made a good showing at the first training camp.”²⁰⁵ Several were awarded commissions including many second lieutenants and some first lieutenants and captains.

The Reserve Officers’ Training Corps required a minimum of a two-year compulsory course. Only law students, foreigners, and those who received an excuse by the administration of the institution they attended were exempted. Students who were over twenty-one years of age were no longer exempted from military duty except with a valid reason as decided by the administration.

LSU’s reputation preceded itself as Brigadier General John Archer LeJeune of the U. S. Marine Corps wrote to Boyd requesting he “recommend two graduates, or undergraduates in the senior class, for designation for appointment as second lieutenant in the Marine Corps.”²⁰⁶ LeJeune also requested the names of eight others for appointment as second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve. The Marine Corps was increased by presidential order which “caused a number of vacancies in the grade of second lieutenant.”²⁰⁷ LeJeune “relied on the military colleges, universities, and honor schools to supply the Corps with officers.”²⁰⁸ LeJeune was a

²⁰³ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ “Louisiana State Boys Make Good Showing at First Training Camp,” *The Reveille*, September 19, 1917.

²⁰⁶ TDB. John A. LeJeune to Boyd. April 6, 1917. Box 25, Folder 375.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

graduate of LSU and was known as “the greatest of all Leathernecks.”²⁰⁹ Camp LeJeune in North Carolina is named in his honor.

Boyd not only received requests from prominent generals, he also received several requests for verification of students’ enrollment in or graduation from LSU for admittance in the Officers’ Training Camps. Applicants for the Officers’ Training Camps were required to go before an Examining Board, proof of a college education greatly increased their chances of admittance and exempted them from the mental examination.²¹⁰ LSU’s reputation as a military school enabled several of its students to gain admittance to Officers’ Training Camps.

The qualification for admission to an Officers’ Training Camp, as specified in the War Department circular, were as follows:

- Character and sobriety;
- Personality, address and force;
- Reputation and standing in his community;
- Whether he is likely to command the respect of officers and enlisted men;
- Whether he has adequate education.²¹¹

Boyd received one such request for a recommendation for Officers’ Training Camp from John R. Perez, who was the father of Leander Perez, for certification that his son graduated from LSU. Certification from Boyd was required in order for Leander to be accepted at Camp Pike, Arkansas, for training.²¹² Leander Perez later became a prominent and controversial political figure having served as a district judge, district attorney and as president of the Plaquemines Parish Commission Council.

²⁰⁹ Marines: The Official Website of the United States Marine Corps accessed December 3, 2016. <http://www.lejeune.marines.mil/About/About-LtGen-Lejeune/>.

²¹⁰ TDB. S. J. Carruthers to Boyd. April 25, 1917. Box 25, Folder 375.

²¹¹ TDB. David J. Ewing, *The Times Picayune*. April 23, 1917. Box 25, Folder 375.

²¹² TDB. John R. Perez to Boyd. November 26, 1917. Box 26, Folder 387.

Edward Godchaux of the Leon Godchaux Company, requested a recommendation for his son, Leon Godchaux, who was training at the “Flying School at Pensacola” which was officially the U. S. Navy Aeronautic Station.²¹³ The Godchaux family was a prominent family from Reserve that owned several sugar factories and clothing stores.

Another request came from Joseph B. Powell who did not graduate from LSU but was enrolled in LSU “in 1911 or 1912 for a period of 18 months.”²¹⁴ Powell went on to write to Boyd that “LSU training would be enough qualification to enter” the 3rd Officers’ Training Camp set to start on December 1, 1917, at Camp Beauregard.²¹⁵

But there were also requests from parents asking Boyd to talk their son out of joining the war, such as, Mrs. Dan Stanfill’s letter. Her son, Dan Stanfill Jr., was a second-year sugar engineer who “had been stung by a navy bee” and wanted to leave LSU to join the navy.²¹⁶ She pleaded with Boyd to call him in to his office and encourage him to finish his education “thereby better equip[ping] himself for service to all.”²¹⁷

Another concerned parent, Enrique Roa, the father of an international student, Henry Roa, wrote Boyd concerned that his son would be required to perform compulsory service in the war.²¹⁸ Boyd wrote on Roa’s letter that since Henry was not a citizen of the U. S. he would not be called to duty.

By the summer of 1918 the government realized that the Officers’ Training Camps and ROTC were not enough to provide sufficient officer material, so the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) was organized as an emergency war measure and temporarily replaced the ROTC.

²¹³ TDB. Edward Godchaux to Boyd. September 21, 1917. Box 26, Folder 384.

²¹⁴ TDB. Joseph B. Powell to Boyd. November 25, 1917. Box 26, Folder 387.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ TDB. Mrs. Dan Stanfill to Boyd. November 15, 1917. Box 26, Folder 386.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ TDB. Dr. Enrique Roa to Boyd. August 17, 1917. Box 26, Folder 382.

The SATC program allowed legally enlisted trainees in the U. S. Army to continue with their education and at the same time become qualified for service in the military. It alleviated enrollment drain colleges and universities were experiencing when, in March of 1918, Congress lowered the draft age to eighteen making nearly all males enrolled for college eligible for the draft.

Male students had to be at least eighteen to twenty-one years old to enroll. If a student was subject to military service and did not enroll, he was placed in the Army as a private. The Student Army Training Corps inducted one hundred forty thousand male students into the U.S. Army as student-soldiers from a total of five hundred sixteen institutions. Instructors for the hundreds of SATC units were trained to give instruction as experienced Army officers were needed for more important details. Young men were encouraged to sign up for the SATC, if they met entrance requirements, enroll in a university or college and could pass the physical requirement. They were also given incentives which included paid tuition, room and board, uniforms, and thirty dollars a month. The War Department Committee on Education and Special Training contracted with universities and colleges to provide this military training.

But it was sometimes difficult for academics and the military to meld at some universities. In a speech at the National Association of State Universities, Boyd stated that, “in some of these universities, there seems to be much more difficulty in harmonizing military instruction with the academic courses than has been experienced here.”²¹⁹ He stated that he was fortunate because “it seems that LSU is getting along better under the SATC organization than are many of the other universities.”²²⁰ According to Boyd, LSU had a better time adapting due to a commanding officer and assistants that worked together with academic instructors to make

²¹⁹ “Colonel Boyd Speaks to the National Association,” *The Reveille*, November 21, 1918.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

the program successful as well as their ability to work out problems using sound judgement. LSU's deep-rooted military tradition played a part in this adaption.

Unlike at LSU, the SATC and the University of Minnesota did not meld well. Military and academic authorities were "at each other's throats over absences from the classroom because of conflicting duties on guard or at kitchen police."²²¹ Students were enrolled that would never have been able to go to college had it not been for the SATC, but some of them did not have the "aptitude and the desire for higher learning, they had applied for enrollment in the SATC simply as the least unpleasant of the alternatives which the war situation left open to them."²²² Arts College Dean, John Black Johnson readily gave his opinion that "the poor planning and mismanagement of the SATC" had made the experiment "an unequivocal failure."²²³

Fifteenth president of Notre Dame, Reverend John W. Cavanaugh, gave a list of grievances to Captain William P. Murray, head of the SATC, about the student soldiers training under him. One complaint was his lack of sleep because his quarters were on the first floor of a dormitory occupied by the student soldiers. Throughout the night on several occasions he experienced "nights made merry with howling and whistling; battles with shoes and pillows; bed and chairs changing positions with great frequency."²²⁴ There was friction between Murray and Cavanaugh because one was concerned with training soldiers and the other teaching students.

To the relief of some universities, the government ordered the demobilization of the SATC on December 21, 1918. The ROTC was reactivated after the SATC was decommissioned. Currently, ROTC programs are offered at more than one thousand universities and colleges

²²¹ Gray, 251.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Gray, 252.

²²⁴ Hope, 333.

across the country.²²⁵ In exchange for a college education, cadets commit to serve in the military with officer status following graduation. Since the ROTC was established 100 years ago, it has provided “some 70 percent of new lieutenants to the Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve,” approximately fifty-three hundred new officers each year.²²⁶ Today the Army’s ROTC provides officers for the Air Force, as well.

The LSU Department of Military Science still offers ROTC. And the rich military history of the university is evident by the two Civil War cannons located in front of the Military and Air Science Building.²²⁷ Their mark and that of the Civil War lives on in these relics from the era of the university’s beginnings and foundation of its military tradition.

²²⁵ Today’s Military, accessed October 18, 2016, <http://todaysmilitary.com/training/rotc>.

²²⁶ C. Todd Lopez, “ROTC has minted over 1,000,000 new lieutenants during its 100-year history.” <https://www.army.mil/article/169167>.

²²⁷ Ruffin, Jackson, Hebert, 10.

Chapter 3

Campus Life at Louisiana State University During World War I

During World War I, LSU was reorganized to serve the “interest of the government at war” and changed dramatically from pre-war times.²²⁸ University facilities were used for training camps. Curriculum was adjusted or developed to “fit war related needs and interests” as additional military courses were offered as well as war courses.²²⁹ These changes were focused on military training and the students participating in it, but the war affected every LSU student and faculty member. Campus life was disrupted.

The university lost students and faculty to the war – some of the former for eternity. So many students left that commencement was canceled, athletics, clubs and organizations ceased to exist, and the university’s battalion was nearly wiped out. Those students who stayed experienced food rationing in the university’s cafeteria and raised “war gardens” on vacant land across campus. Remaining student organizations worked to raise money for the war effort. Patriotism and a commitment to participate in war work swept the campus.

Faculty also were adversely affected. They were tapped by the government for service as speakers or for work in government or military positions because of specific expertise. They also redesigned their curriculum to enhance the war effort.

A growing number of students twenty-one years of age or older and who could pass the physical test left for Reserve Officers’ Training Camps. LSU applicants for ROTC reported to Fort Root in Little Rock, Arkansas. *The Reveille* reported that “Louisiana State University is all

²²⁸ Gruber, 102.

²²⁹ Ibid.

torn asunder by the “horrors” of war.”²³⁰ So many students left that it was feared the university battalion would be “practically broken up as a result.”²³¹ The cadets were “left almost entirely unofficered” and “the organization of the university slaughtered” because a large number of those who went to camp were seniors.²³² LSU granted credit for the remainder of the session to students leaving the university to enter Officers’ Training Camps. If they were rejected at the training camp, they were not required to return to LSU.²³³ Passing seniors would be given diplomas. Students accepted to training camps were given furloughs to visit families before reporting to training camp.²³⁴ In a report to Boyd from Sydney Smith, a professor of military science and tactics, it was noted that eleven cadets resigned between September 19, 1917, and December 10, 1917.²³⁵

The exodus of students to training camps led to another dilemma: There were not enough graduating seniors left to hold commencement exercises in the spring of 1917. The senior class joked that commencement should be held at Fort Root because of the number of LSU seniors there. The senior class decided to hold only the senior ball and “dispense with the usual frills and ruffles” of commencement exercises.²³⁶

Commencement returned in the spring of 1918, but it was not on the scale or tone of pre-war ceremonies. Class reunions and formal parades usually held in conjunction with

²³⁰ *The Reveille*, Officers Reserve Corps Will Take Many Students and Alumni to Camp. May 3, 1917.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ TBD. Boyd to J. C. Futrall, President of University of Arkansas. May 17, 1917. Box 25, Folder 377.

²³⁴ “Officers Reserve Corps Will Take Many Students and Alumni to Camp,” *The Reveille*, May 3, 1917.

²³⁵ TDB. Sydney Smith to Boyd. December 13, 1917. Box 26, Folder 388.

²³⁶ “Officers Reserve Corps Will Take Many Students and Alumni to Camp,” *The Reveille*, May 3, 1917.

commencement were cancelled.²³⁷ The choice of a commencement speaker and the topic of their speeches were dictated by the government. It was requested in a letter to President Boyd from T. Sambola Jones, chairman and manager of the Speakers' Bureau of the Louisiana Council of Defense, that it would no longer be a literary address but a public demonstration of patriotism. If LSU did not have an acceptable speaker, he would furnish one. Jones offered to provide commencement speakers for all public schools in Louisiana.²³⁸ Jones was able to enforce this change because he was given authority by the State Superintendent of Education to "take charge of the matter of commencement exercises at the public schools and other State educational institutions."²³⁹ Jones was appointed by Governor Pleasant to head the bureau comprised of nearly one hundred speakers.²⁴⁰ The main office of the Speaker Bureau was located in Baton Rouge.

Even the LSU Cadet Military Band was impacted. During the 1917-1918 academic year, it "ceased to exist" because of the formation of the ROTC.²⁴¹ Students who could read music were invited to participate in the marching band which was different than the Cadet Military Band. Even students who could not play a band instrument were invited to join the band due to the loss of members. In the fall of 1917, "a call was given for all men who have any desire to learn to play a band instrument" to meet for free instruction.²⁴² The band had played at the State Fair in Shreveport, at two football games in New Orleans, and led two large parades during

²³⁷ "Commencement Program will be Curtailed," *The Reveille*, April 25, 1918.

²³⁸ "Speakers' Bureau Furnish Speakers for Commencement," *Advocate-State Times*, March 13, 1918.

²³⁹ TBD. T. Sambola Jones to Boyd. March 25, 1918. Box 26, Folder 392.

²⁴⁰ "Col Jones is Named Head of Speaker Bureau: Will Stimulate War Work Activity Over Louisiana," *Advocate-State Time*, February 1, 1918.

²⁴¹ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

²⁴² "Music Department Hard Hit by War," *The Reveille*, September 27, 1917.

“Carnival” in the 1916-1917 academic year.²⁴³ Student members of the band were required to practice three hours a week for both terms.

The Cadet Military Band was reinstated during the 1918-1919 school year, students were once again invited to join the Cadet Military Band. But if they decided they did not want to participate after being a member for two or more weeks, the cadet was not allowed to withdraw without the permission of the university.

The hardest hit of all the musical organizations at LSU was the Tiger Quartet. In the fall of 1917 which lost three of its four members.²⁴⁴ The Glee Club lost a total of fourteen of its twenty-four men in the spring and three others by the fall. In the same semester, the Glee Club recruited men who could “sing and who would like to have the free trips and the valuable experience of the club.”²⁴⁵

The LSU Oratorio Society voted to suspended practices and performances in December 1917 because many of its members were lost due to work with the “Red Cross and other causes incident to the war” and the head of the Department of Music had too many other commitments.²⁴⁶ The society was organized in 1915 and had “delighted the music lovers of Baton Rouge with their performances.”²⁴⁷

LSU athletics also were affected by the war. With the exception of the LSU Tulane track meet, on May 5, 1917, the faculty voted to cancel all athletic activities.²⁴⁸ Since baseball was

²⁴³ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

²⁴⁴ “Music Department Hard Hit by War,” *The Reveille*, September 27, 1917.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ “Oratorio Society Discontinues its Work Temporarily,” *The Reveille*, December 20, 1917.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ “Faculty Cancels Athletic Schedule,” *The Reveille*, May 3, 1917.

cancelled early in the season no “L” (letter for sports participation) were given to participants.²⁴⁹ The cancellation was especially bitter for track teams scheduled to compete in the 1917 track and field championships. LSU, Mississippi A & M and Tulane were the top contenders.²⁵⁰ A notice was placed in *The Reveille* on May 17, 1917, that there were not enough members of the track team present to select the captain for next year, and absent members were asked to mail their votes.²⁵¹

By the following spring limited athletic practice resumed. The rosters of the track and basketball teams were “much riddled by the ravages of war.”²⁵² So many student athletes that competed in athletics had left for war for the first time in seven years, the LSU track team did not have a ten-second man competitive for the hundred-yard dash. The track team faced the problem of not having athletes to compete in short dashes and in distance events. The hammer throw was eliminated, but they did have athletes to compete in shot and discus. The basketball team had only three returning athletes but was anticipating two more players to join. Basketball, football, track and baseball competitions were cancelled for the 1918 season. It was announced in *The Reveille* in December of 1918 that athletics would return to pre-war conditions. All athletic competition resumed for the 1919 season.

Coaches also enlisted. LSU football coach Phil Cooper resigned and left for aviation camp in Seattle.²⁵³ The popular basketball coach, Charles C. Stroud, traveled overseas with the

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ “Twenty Athletes Go To Officers’ Camp,” *The Reveille*, May 17, 1917.

²⁵¹ “Track Team Mails Votes,” *The Reveille*, May 17, 1917.

²⁵² “Tiger Track Team is Hit Hard by the War,” *The Reveille*, February 14, 1918.

²⁵³ “Tiger Coach off to Aviation Camp,” *The Reveille*, October 24, 1918.

YMCA.²⁵⁴ Even in the face of these adversities, the call went out at LSU for students left on campus to compete to show the university's "war-time spirit."²⁵⁵

Athletics was managed by the SATC military authorities until it was terminated with the armistice. By February, 1918, LSU faculty managers resumed control of athletics and began planning for the next year's football schedule and launched searches for new football and basketball coaches.²⁵⁶

Even the minutiae of daily life did not escape the impacts of war. For the first time in the school's history, cadet uniforms were changed. LSU cadet uniforms were made of woolen cloth before the war, but this changed because of the military's demand for wool and enforced conservation of this commodity by the Commercial Economy Board of the National Council of Defense.²⁵⁷ It was announced that cadet uniforms would now be created with a woolen fabric that contained twenty-five percent cotton. This is because the price of wool fabric that was available to the public was expensive and out of price range for LSU. Secretary of the Commercial Economy Board, Melvin T. Copeland, stressed in a letter to Boyd that "all-wool fabrics should be left for the troops who are going into the trenches."²⁵⁸ This recommendation was approved by the Secretary of War.

Food conservation was also practiced on campus. Poor harvests in 1916 and 1917 and the "huge demand for exports to Britain and France created shortages" and price inflation.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴ "Athletics to be Returned to their Pre-War Condition," *The Reveille*, December 13, 1918.

²⁵⁵ "Tiger Track Team is Hit Hard by the War," *The Reveille*, February 14, 1918.

²⁵⁶ "Athletics to be returned to their Pre-War Condition," *The Reveille*, December 13, 1918.

²⁵⁷ TDB. S. N. Bickerstaff, The Henderson –Ames Company to Boyd. October 2, 1917. Box 26, Folder 385.

²⁵⁸ TDB. Melvin T. Copeland to Boyd. September 24, 1917. Box 26, Folder 384.

²⁵⁹ Ciment, 321.

Food prices rose eighty-two percent between 1914 and 1917.²⁶⁰ The supply of wheat, sugar and pork were greatly affected. To address this problem, Wilson proposed legislation to Congress to “implement regulation through a new agency rather than increase the powers of the Agriculture Department.”²⁶¹ This bill was delayed and in May, 1917, Wilson utilized his authority under the Army Appropriations Act to name Hebert Hoover as food administrator. The Food Administration ensured adequate control and production of the supply and price of food and feeds during the war.²⁶²

In the fall of 1917 the price of food had significantly increased but the LSU cafeteria system strove to offer “a pleasing variety of wholesome food at less cost” by eliminating of “all waste in surplus food prepared and reducing the number of dining room help.”²⁶³ A typical meal served at noon consisted of “two or three kinds of meat, several vegetables, rice, gravy, bread, desserts, milk, and coffee.”²⁶⁴ The typical breakfast menu included veal steak, scrambled eggs, fried potatoes, grits, oatmeal and cream, corn flakes and cream, hot biscuits, cane syrup, peaches, bananas, sweet milk and coffee. Meals averaged 14.5 cents in 1917.²⁶⁵

By January of 1918, the Department of Agriculture conducted a “War Emergency Food Survey to gather data concerning food consumption through the country.”²⁶⁶ President Boyd assisted in this survey by recording food consumed during one week at LSU. This was undertaken so the Department of Agriculture could “make suggestions on the dietary

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ “Cafeteria Saving Money to Cadets,” *The Reveille*, October 18, 1917.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ TDB. United States Department of Agriculture to Boyd. January 26, 1918. Box 26, Folder 389.

submitted.²⁶⁷ By March of 1918, the LSU cafeteria was beginning to see the effects of observing “meatless and wheatless days as a means to conserve meat and flour.”²⁶⁸ By this time LSU’s cafeteria served from 225 to 250 people at each meal at an average price of 16.6 cents.²⁶⁹ It boasted the meals were “well balanced, substantial meals of pleasing variety” even with meatless and wheatless days. Nationally, the consumption of wheat and sugar fell and food exports rose by more than fifty percent.²⁷⁰

Food conservation was carried a step further in the spring of 1918 when vacant spaces of ground on the LSU campus were “plowed up and turned into emergency war gardens.”²⁷¹ Corn, potatoes and a variety of vegetables were planted along the side of classrooms, the old athletic field and vacant space along the Mississippi River. There was a total of four to five acres on campus that were emergency war gardens.²⁷² Major J. G. Lee, professor of horticulture, was in charge of these gardens. Lee also oversaw the Baton Rouge branch of the War Garden Club. A pledge card for membership in the club was printed in the *State Times Advocate* for people to complete and return to him at the LSU Colony Building.²⁷³ This building was one of five dormitories at the Army post site.²⁷⁴ Individuals were asked to “mark a cross (X)” next to the kind of vegetables they would grow with the number of feet or rows or the number of plants of same.²⁷⁵ Lee took his responsibility overseeing the War Garden Club very seriously. In an

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ “University Observes Food Regulations,” *The Reveille*, March 14, 1918.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ciment, 322.

²⁷¹ “War Garden in the Center of Old Track,” *The Reveille*, February 14, 1918.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ “Pledge Card for Membership in the War Garden Club,” *State Times Advocate*, March 13, 1918.

²⁷⁴ Bedsole and Richard, 43.

²⁷⁵ “Pledge Card for Membership in the War Garden Club,” *State Times Advocate*, March 13, 1918.

article in the *State Times Advocate* in early April he warned of a frost that was expected that night and to protect the plants because their “loss would impact the food supply later.”²⁷⁶ Excess vegetables produced in the war gardens were sold and shipped abroad with the proceeds going to war causes.

The idea of a war garden was not unique to LSU. In a proclamation from Wilson on April 17, 1917, the University of Indiana was commended for planting fifteen acres of unused land on its campus and another forty acres off campus.²⁷⁷ Wilson for other colleges and schools to follow this example of “solving the food problem.” Indiana students did most of the labor in the gardens as did students at LSU and other universities. But more food was needed than could be produced in war gardens. The demand for workers on farms to produce food was answered by university students. At the end of the 1917 spring semester, approximately fifty students left before classes were over “having enlisted in the food preparedness campaign for the production of more food crops.”²⁷⁸ “Agricultural students,” said Captain Jarman, “can be of more service to the United States during the present crisis, by helping to increase the food production, than they could be in the trenches of Europe.”²⁷⁹ As with students who left the university for military service, agricultural students were given full credit in subjects in which they had a satisfactory performance for three months. They also receive an additional two hours credit toward graduation if they continued in the agricultural work for at least twelve weeks after the close of the semester.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ “Look Out For Jack Frost In All War Gardens Tonight: Tender Plants Should Be Protected, If Possible, Says Major Lee,” *State Times Advocate*, April 10, 1918.

²⁷⁷ “How Colleges Can Help Food Situation,” *The Reveille*, May 10, 1917.

²⁷⁸ “Many Students Help U. S. Get Ready To Fight: About 50 Go To Help Increase Food Supply,” *The Reveille*, May 10, 1917.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

In addition to a food shortage, there was also a fuel shortage. With approval from President Wilson, the Fuel Administration declared, effective January 16, 1918, Mondays to be a holiday during the next ten weeks to conserve fuel.²⁸¹ All stores, theatres and office buildings were ordered closed that day to conserve heating fuel. Only stores that sold drugs and food were allowed to remain open. Newspapers were limited to one edition.²⁸² The government ordered manufacturing in states east of the Mississippi River - - including Louisiana and Minnesota - - to suspend operations, effective Friday, January 18, 1918.

As a service for the fuel conservation effort, LSU faculty evaluated fuel efficiency of plantations and factories across the state and offered suggestions to decrease consumption. Professor Antonio Guell of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, for example, visited the plantation of H. C. Minor in Houma to inspect the boiler department. After Guell's recommendations were instituted, the management of the plantation was "very much astonished to find that we were wasting considerable fuel, which could easily be prevented."²⁸³ In addition, Guell gave "some very excellent advice concerning the operation of some of the machinery" used on the plantation.²⁸⁴ Guell also assisted a sugar factory in Belle Rose by reducing its "oil consumption to a marked degree, and has done very good work for us by remaining on his job part of a day and the entire night."²⁸⁵ He did the same for a sugar factory in Paincourtville and

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ "Monday to be Holiday During Next Ten Weeks," *The Reveille*, January 17, 1918.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ TDB. Estate of H. C. Minor to Boyd. December 8, 1917. Box 26, Folder 388.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ TDB. Kessler & Winkler to Boyd. November 24, 1917. Box 26, Folder 386.

the owners implored Boyd to “see the professor extends his service to all sugar manufacturers of Louisiana.”²⁸⁶

Shortage of materials impacted the number of *Gumbo* yearbooks that were printed in the spring of 1916.²⁸⁷ The price of a 1916 reserved *Gumbo* was “\$3.00 each to those who subscribe by paying a dollar down and the other two dollars being payable when the copy is delivered.”²⁸⁸ This price offer was valid until April 1, after which the price was \$3.50. The 1917 *Gumbo* focused on war preparedness and the 1918 edition stressed patriotism. The 1919 edition of the *Gumbo* were not printed. The 1920 *Gumbo* contains a list of those who gave their lives during the war and echoed the university’s pride in its military tradition.

Although some LSU students and faculty had to make a pointed effort to adapt and adjust to many changes and disruptions that war had created, the military program and its students did not. The strong military instruction tradition of LSU made the transition to a training camp seamless. All college students across the country which were members of the Students’ Army Training Corps were required to enroll in regular courses as well as additional hours of military instruction every week.²⁸⁹ These courses were entitled “War Issues Courses” and encompassed a variety of disciplines, including political science, economics, history, philosophy, and literature. Courses taught varied from university to university, but the objective was to use them as an effective tool to prepare students for combat. Universities had become “a vast network of pre-induction centers.”²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ TDB. Robert E. LeBlanc, Dugas & LeBlanc, Ltd., to Boyd. November 23, 1917. Box 26, Folder 386.

²⁸⁷ “Number Gumbos Will Be Limited Account of War,” *The Reveille*, February 28, 2016.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Kennedy, 55.

²⁹⁰ Kennedy, 57.

Unless excused by proper authority, LSU male freshmen and sophomores had long been required to take three hours of military drill and military science courses.²⁹¹ This changed at the beginning in the 1917-1918 academic year, when they were required to take an additional two hours of military science and three hours of military drill their junior and senior years. The military courses now included military science and tactics, the former having become a four-year program that included tactics and operations.²⁹² These courses were designed to increase the efficiency of platoon drill and marksmanship of the students. Monthly competition among the companies encouraged excellence.

First-year students in these courses were taught the basics of infantry drill based on the U.S. Infantry Drill Regulations. They also learned how to care for and shoot rifles and first-aid instruction. The course was repeated the second year with the exception of “work with sand tables by constructing to scale entrenchments, field works, obstacles, bridges, etc.”²⁹³ The third year focused on “duties consistent with rank as cadet officers or non-commissioned officers.”²⁹⁴ The final year was a continuation of the junior year course.

The first-year theoretical military science class covered the “theory of target practice; military organization; map reading; service of security; and personal hygiene.”²⁹⁵ The second year consisted of a study of the “United States Drill Regulations to include School of the

²⁹¹ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

²⁹² “Military Efficiency Increases By Courses,” *The Reveille*, May 29, 1917.

²⁹³ University Bulletin: Louisiana State University Catalogue, 1916-1917, Announcements, 1917-1918, (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1917), Vol. V-N.S., April, 1917, No. 4.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Battalion and Combat.”²⁹⁶ Additionally, small arms firing, camp sanitation and camping expedients were taught. During the second term, recent military history and information from the Field Service Regulations and Infantry Drill Regulations were covered. In the third year, international law and military history was taught, along with map maneuvers and administration that included procurement of equipment and supplies. In the final year, students learned about America’s international relations by focusing on its diplomacy, treaties and legislation.

Other LSU departments joined in the university’s war effort by teaching courses that would be useful to America and its military. In the spring of 1918, the LSU Home Economics Department taught a new course entitled “Food and Nutrition in Relation to the War.” It was designed to teach students “to assist in the food conservation campaign.”²⁹⁷ The Food Administration sent weekly information to the Home Economic Department to be used as instructional material. Discussing the course, U.S. Food Administrator Herbert Hoover hoped “all colleges can find a place for it, and that it may be offered in such a manner that every woman student will be enrolled in it.” He noted that there was “no reason why men students should not be admitted.”²⁹⁸

In addition, a course entitled “Food and the War” was offered the second term in 1918.²⁹⁹ The course consisted of a general survey of food problems impacting the world, especially that of America and Europe, because of the war. Boyd telegraphed Hoover that the “cookery classes had been radically changed to meet demands of conservation.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ “Courses Being Given to Help in Conservation,” *The Reveille*, February 14, 1918.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ “New Courses on Food and War at L.S.U. This Term,” *The Reveille*, February 7, 1918.

³⁰⁰ TDB. Boyd to Herbert Hoover, January 17, 1918. Box 26, Folder 389.

Beginning February 4, 1918, LSU offered night classes for local draft-age men who were not LSU students to train to become eligible for higher vocational positions within the military.³⁰¹ The goal was to train men before they were drafted, an advantage for the military as well the individuals who participated. The classes were held in the Alumni Hall three nights a week from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. Dean Thomas W. Atkinson of the College of Engineering directed the classes which included automobile and gas engines, wireless telegraph, stenography, typewriting and accounting. Thirty-three men enrolled in these courses. Seventeen focused on gas engines and eight each in the wireless telegraphy and commercial departments.³⁰² Atkinson encouraged more men to enroll “to figuratively swat at the Kaiser” and “take advantage of this opportunity to render their country a great service and at the same time raise themselves above the rank of an ordinary soldier.”³⁰³ LSU Emergency War Courses began in the summer session of 1918 - - the summer before Red Cross and military courses were offered.³⁰⁴ Red Cross courses were announced in *The Reveille*, not in the LSU catalogue. Red Cross courses also were offered to high school teachers who wanted to teach their students or to prepare themselves to “take up Red Cross work during the present war.”³⁰⁵

LSU students who were not on the military track were being looked at by the government, too. If the government called upon students within two or three months of graduating, they would be awarded their diploma if they had been performing satisfactorily. The War Department requested Boyd to send information regarding students pursuing an engineering degree in order to evaluate applications for enlistment in the Engineering Branch of

³⁰¹ “Night Classes for Draft Men at University,” *The Reveille*, January 24, 1918.

³⁰² “Night Courses Well Attended,” *The Reveille*, February 7, 1918.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ “Red Cross, Military in Summer School,” *The Reveille*, May 17, 1917.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

the Enlisted Reserve Corps.³⁰⁶ Specifically, the War Department was interested in the number of students enrolled in each class to determine the availability of engineers eligible for service. In addition, the War Department asked for a list of the top third of graduating engineers from the past ten years. Bachelor of Science degrees in “Chemical, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Mining, Ceramic and Fire Protection Engineering also in Chemistry and Architecture, are deemed to be equivalent engineering degrees.”³⁰⁷

The United States Civil Service Commission requested from Boyd:

...a list of senior students now pursuing technical or scientific courses, such as aeronautical, chemical, marine, mining, electrical, mechanical, and civil engineering; architecture, ship building, metallurgy, medicine, and other similar courses in the universities and colleges of the United States, who would be available should the country need their services.³⁰⁸

The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Education also requested a list of graduates in domestic science, domestic arts and home economics, specifically for the “dissemination of knowledge in regard to the conservation of foods and other similar subjects.”³⁰⁹

A few months later these requests were rescinded by the Department of Education Commissioner P. P. Claxton because the Secretary of War ruled there was no legal basis for such exemption for the completion of school.³¹⁰ The U. S. had never before faced a situation like this and not all decisions were sound. In this case, the error was recognized and corrected.

Although there was not any aspect of a student’s collegiate experience that the war did not affect, college professors also felt the mobilization. Several LSU faculty were asked by the

³⁰⁶ TBD. Frederic V. Abbot, Brigadier General, Engineers, War Department to Boyd. January 4, 1918. Box 26, Folder 389.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ TDB. John A. McIlhenry to Boyd. March 31, 1917. Box 25, Folder 373.

³⁰⁹ TDB. P. P. Claxton, Department of the Interior to Boyd, February 14, 1917. Box 25, Folder 372.

³¹⁰ TDB. P. P. Claxton, to Boyd. August 2, 1917. Box 25, Folder 381.

War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities to give a series of lectures for the “education and interest of the men at Camp Beauregard” in Alexandria.³¹¹ Professors Antonio Guell and A. M. Herget lectured on engineering, William Oscar Scroggs, M. L. Bonham and Charles C. Stroud on current war history, William H. Dalrymple and A. G. Read on hygiene and sanitation, and J. Q. Adams on fiction.

Unfortunately, the war also meant a loss of faculty as they resigned or were recruited by the government. The CPI, headed by George Creel, is an example of one of the federal government offices that recruited faculty. CPI produced propaganda to promote the war effort at home and abroad. The CPI also censored and repressed any news or material deemed detrimental to the war effort. The CPI’s propaganda was created to instill fear of the enemy while cultivating patriotism in the American public. It became a powerful organ of the government during the war but was abolished on the signing of the Armistice with Germany. The CPI developed techniques to get messages to the public that are now used in public relations. One of the tactics was to “put in the hands of every member of the college faculties throughout the country” a series of booklets covering the “war and America’s part in it.”³¹² CPI also asked each college or university for a list of faculty members, as well as a catalogue or register containing their enrollment. As far reaching as the CPI was, LSU professors worked for a variety of war departments and organizations.

Three LSU professors were “commandeered by the government for war work in the spring of 1918.”³¹³ Professor R. L. Himes took a leave of absence in the spring of 1918 to work

³¹¹ TDB. Charles S. Jacobsen to Boyd. December 5, 1917. Box 26, Folder 388.

³¹² TBD. George Creel to Boyd. December 8, 1917. Box 26, Folder 388.

³¹³ “Three Profs Join Service: Dr. Scroggs, Prof. Himes and Dr. W. R. Dodson Enlist in War Activities,” February 21, 1918.

for the Speakers' Bureau of the State Council of Defense.³¹⁴ He was assigned to go on a speaking tour. Himes was the head of the Commercial Department at LSU and had held that post for the previous twenty years. After serving with the Speakers' Bureau, he worked with the YMCA and Red Cross. He was the president of the Baton Rouge Red Cross chapter and was chairman of the Faculty War Committee. Professor William Rufus Dodson served as dean of the Agricultural Department at LSU and was tapped to oversee the food production and conservation campaign of the southern states.³¹⁵ This was a huge undertaking. William Oscar Scroggs was head of the Department of Economics and was recruited by the U. S. government to make a speaking tour and give aid in the production of food. The government also tapped Scroggs to investigate labor conditions in the Gulf States for potential shipyards under the direction of the United States shipping board.³¹⁶ Colonel A. T. Prescott, professor of political science, dismissed classes for a week in February of 1918 to go on a speaking tour of the state with Governor Ruffin Pleasant and Thomas Sambola Jones to gain support for the war effort.³¹⁷ The tour began in Alexandria before a crowd of 7,000. Samuel H. Vignes, instructor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, resigned December 22, 1917, to attend the Third Officers Training Camp.³¹⁸ Vignes circumvented war work and went straight to war.

In addition to LSU being used as a military training facility and its faculty being tapped for service, Boyd offered the federal government the use of laboratories and machine shops in July 1917. He suggested LSU was an ideal location "in case an aviation camp is located

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ "Professor Scroggs Returns from Work for U. S. Govt: Has Sent in Full Report of Labor Conditions in Shipyards," *Advocate State Times*, March 4, 1918.

³¹⁷ "Prescott is on War Campaign," *The Reveille*, February 21, 1918.

³¹⁸ TBD. Samuel H. Vignes to Boyd. December 18, 1917. Box 26, Folder 388.

here.”³¹⁹ Boyd also mentioned that a Standard Oil Plant (now ExxonMobil) was “conveniently located for furnishing gasoline and other supplies.”³²⁰ In February 1918 Boyd offered the entire university to the government for the “purpose of making special war preparations” from May 1 to October 1.³²¹ This offer would be accepted if Congress passed a bill for an appropriation of \$25 million to fund the construction of buildings and other accommodations that would be needed to make universities across the country suitable for special war service.³²² But the university was used for smaller events, such as patriotic mass meetings advertised in the *State Times Advocate* that were held in Garig Hall.³²³

The students and faculty also supported the war effort monetarily by purchasing War Savings Stamps. Ads for these stamps ran in *The Reveille*. One read: “Go to the Front with Your Funds” and encouraged people to “ask any bank or retail store for full particulars.”³²⁴ Another stated: “Uncle Sam Will Swap You a Five Dollar Bill (On Jan. 1st, 1923) for \$4.12.”³²⁵ The purchase of “sixteen of these 25 cent stamps, together with a few pennies” bought a five dollar War Savings Certificate Stamp which paid four percent interest compounded quarterly.³²⁶ The war thrift stamps were aimed at encouraging the general public to buy them because they were affordable. These ads were paid for by the Patriotic Louisiana-Mississippi Business Men.

³¹⁹ TBD. Boyd to Hon. Jared Y. Sanders Sr., House of Representatives, Washington DC. July 25, 1917. Box 25, Folder 380.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ “University may Close Early to Prepare for War,” *The Reveille*, February 21, 1918.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ “Big Patriotic Mass Meeting: Garig Hall Tonight,” *State Times Advocate*, March 26, 1918.

³²⁴ “War Savings Stamp Advertisement: Go to the Front with Your Funds,” *The Reveille*, February 24, 1918.

³²⁵ “War Saving Stamp Advertisement: Uncle Sam Will Swap You A Five Dollar Bill,” *The Reveille*, February 14, 1918.

³²⁶ “War Savings Stamp Advertisement: Walk down to Work,” *The Reveille*, March 7, 1918.

War bonds were also sold to raise badly needed funds to support the U. S. in the war. Ultimately \$21.5 billion was raised nationally for the war effort from the sale of war bonds.³²⁷ Treasury Secretary William G. McAdoo used propaganda to reach as much of the public as possible. The propaganda urged the public to purchase War Savings Stamps and War Bonds as a means for them to do their part in the war effort. McAdoo appealed to the public's patriotism in ads and propaganda and urged them to exhibit "the same qualities of discipline, self-sacrifice, and devotion that characterized those who served in the trenches."³²⁸ This is evident in the ads that were published in *The Reveille*. Hoover used the same tactics to encourage food conversation.

There were drives on campus to prompt students and faculty to sign pledge cards to buy War Saving Stamps. Those that did not buy stamps or bonds were sometimes shamed or bullied and labeled "slackers."³²⁹ Pressure was further exerted in ads selling War Saving Stamps. An ad in the *State Times Advocate* for War Savings Stamps entitled, "YOU Don't Want to be a Community Slacker," stated that if one did not buy stamps he or she was not doing his or her part in war efforts.³³⁰ One drive during January, 1918, resulted in "almost all 300 students present at chapel" pledging to lay aside not less than twenty-five cents a week during 1918 to purchase thrift stamps.³³¹ Boyd "gave a stirring speech" at this gathering and said the "faculty had each pledged to give not less than twenty-five cents a week and that he expected the same of the students."³³²

³²⁷ Ciment, 491.

³²⁸ Ciment, 491.

³²⁹ Ciment, 492.

³³⁰ "YOU Don't Want to be a Community Slacker," War Savings Stamp ad, *State Times Advocate*, June 24, 1918.

³³¹ "Thrift Stamps Will Be Bought," *The Reveille*, January 10, 1918.

³³² Ibid.

A call to buy War Savings Stamps in *The Reveille* stated, “If we are to win the war, we must win as a united people.”³³³ Like the rest of the nation, LSU students and faculty united to support the war effort.

In addition to War Savings Stamps drives, LSU students conducted another campaign to raise money for the Young Men’s Christian Association War Work Fund. Secretary H. L. Heinzman of the student division of the National Council of Defense spoke at the fund raising event at chapel. This drive raised a total of \$900 that would go toward improving conditions of prisoners of war.³³⁴ Heinzman told the audience about prisoners living in camps that were cramped and without heat, poor sanitation, or means of recreation, and existed on a diet consisting mostly of thin soup. With funds raised by the YMCA huts were built, religious services were conducted and “everything within reason was done to improve the physical condition and thereby the morale of the men who are fighting for their country.”³³⁵ The campaign was organized by members of the LSU YMCA and YWCA. Members from both clubs canvassed the entire campus for contributions. Students that did not give during the campaign were asked to sign a pledge card and given a certain length of time to come up with a donation. Pledge cards ranged from one dollar to ten dollars.

Before the Oratorio Society temporarily suspended its activities, it also worked to raise money for war work. Beginning in October 1917, the Society donated proceeds of their bi-monthly concerts to the local Red Cross.³³⁶

The local Red Cross shipped boxes of articles overseas that would be useful to soldiers and refugees. LSU students participated in preparing articles to ship that included knitted

³³³ “War Savings Stamps,” *The Reveille*, January 10, 1918.

³³⁴ “Students Give \$900 to Y.M.C.A. War Work Fund,” *The Reveille*, November 1, 1917.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ “Oratorio Society Planning to Help Local Red Cross,” *The Reveille*, October 4, 1917.

sweaters, socks, and surgical dressings. In April of 1918 the largest shipment sent from the Red Cross headquarters contained two thousand surgical dressings, one hundred and nineteen knitted sweaters, and forty-five pairs of knitted socks.³³⁷ Red Cross headquarters urged knitters to fasten the pairs of socks together and take extra care in the knitting of toes.³³⁸ All of the clothes collected were sent to the Belgians and others in need in the war zone.³³⁹

The mobilization of LSU students and faculty to support the war effort is a reflection of its deep rooted military tradition. As LSU students had answered the call to colors during the Civil War and paid the ultimate price, so did they during World War I – on and off the battle field.

The 1918 Spanish flu pandemic affected one fifth of the world’s population, killing an estimated 50 million people. It claimed more lives in a few months “than any other illness in recorded history.”³⁴⁰ The number of deaths from Spanish flu is a staggering number, even when compared to the estimated 16 million lives lost in World War I. Influenza “caused more deaths than occurred among the American Expeditionary Forces from all causes.”³⁴¹ More Americans died from influenza than from the war. But soldiers suffered high death rates because the disease spread quickly in the confined spaces they shared – training camps, barracks, troop ships and trenches. Young healthy adults disproportionately died from influenza as opposed to children and elderly. Of all the wars America fought, WWI recorded the third most fatalities in part due to the influenza pandemic.

³³⁷ “Largest Shipment Made Here By Red Cross,” *The Reveille*, April 25, 1918.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ “Must Send in Relief Clothing by April 15: Bedding is Among Items Most Needed,” *State Times Advocate*, April 8, 1918.

³⁴⁰ “The Deadly Virus: The Influenza Epidemic of 1918,” The National Archives, accessed December 4, 2016, <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/influenza-epidemic/>.

³⁴¹ “Influenza Kills More Americans Than Does War,” *The Reveille*, November 21, 1918.

The pandemic also affected American citizens. A total of 82,306 deaths were reported from forty-six large cities in the U. S. that had a combined population of 23,000,000.³⁴² The pandemic came in three outbreaks – Spring 1918, Fall 1918 and Winter 1919 – the second outbreak was the deadliest which was near the end of the war.³⁴³

LSU closed for a month due to the influenza epidemic and reopened on November 16, 1918, for town students and coeds.³⁴⁴ It opened only after there had not been a reported case of influenza on campus for several weeks and with approval from the State Board of Health. In mid-October 1918, four deaths were reported “among regular university students and members of the vocational training section.”³⁴⁵ More LSU students that left for war died of influenza or pneumonia – a side effect of influenza – than in battle.³⁴⁶ *The Reveille Memorial Edition* published on June 6, 1919, reported that of the deaths of twenty-five LSU students who died, eight were victims of influenza: Leslie Philip Backes died November 19, 1918, at the Marine Base located in Quantico, Virginia; Leslie Cart Hunt died October 20, 1918, at LSU; Lewis Hypolite Martin died October 19, 1918, in Crowley, Louisiana; Walter Asbury Phillips died November 10, 1918, at the base hospital No. 6 at Talance, France; David Thomas Land Jr. died September 28, 1918, in Angouleme, France; Murice Joseph Picheloup died October 8, 1918, in New Orleans, Louisiana; Henry Ras Thames died October 15, 1918, at Mare Island Navy

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ “The ‘Spanish’ Influenza pandemic and its relation to World War I,” Oxford University. Accessed December 4, 2016. <http://www1centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/body-and-mind/the-spanish-influenza-pandemic-and-its-relation-to-the-first-world-war/>.

³⁴⁴ “University to Reopen After Flu Saturday,” *The Reveille*, November 14, 1918.

³⁴⁵ “Four Deaths is Toll Taken by Influenza Here,” *The Reveille*, October 24, 1918.

³⁴⁶ “Memorial Edition,” *The Reveille*, June 6, 1919.

Shipyard, San Francisco, California; Wilburn Edward Scott died February 9, 1919, at the U. S. Naval Hospital in Algiers, Louisiana.³⁴⁷

Four died of pneumonia: Ike Hahn Gottlieb died October 13, 1918, St. Vincent's Hospital in New York, New York; James Oliphant Hall died October 2, 1918, at Camp Meade, Fort Meade, Maryland; Stuart Doremus Simonton died April 12, 1918, at Boston, Massachusetts; and Lawrence Edward Brogan died November 14, 1918, at Toul France.

Alan Louis Labbe died of Typhoid Fever on September 30, 1918, at the Naval Hospital in Algiers, Louisiana.

No causes were listed for: John Seymour Joseph died October 16, 1918, at Camp Zachary Taylor; Henry Nicholas Huck died December 7, 1917, at Camp Beauregard, Pineville, Louisiana; Cecil Anthony Neuhauser died January 21, 1917, Camp Beauregard, Pineville, Louisiana; Julian Bowles Sanford died October 11, 1918, at Cleveland, Ohio, Student Army Training Corps Camp; Allen Loughery Melton died December 20, 1918, at St. Nazaire base Section N1 France.

Dauane Horton Rutledge died February 7, 1919, in Pensacola, Florida, in a flight training accident.

Only five died in action: William Digby Morgan, killed by a sniper on November 10, 1918; Jasper Joseph Neyland died of shrapnel on November 10, 1918; Thomas James Powell, Jr. died by machine gun fire on September 12, 1918; Charles Nicholas Singletary died on October 4, 1918; David Jenkins Ewing, Jr. died in battle at the Aisne-Marne Battle and Philip John McMahon, died in a plane crash in Issoudnn, France.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

On January 2, 1920, LSU held a commemorative service to honor “those students and alumni who served and a memorial to those who died in the war for liberty and for justice.”

³⁴⁸ There were a total of thirty men listed in the “Roll of Honour.”³⁴⁹ These LSU students and alumni also were remembered by having a live oak planted in the Memorial Grove located on Highland Road just south of the Parade Ground.³⁵⁰ The five other students and alumni who died after *The Reveille Memorial Edition* was published were Milton W. Adams, John F. Goodrich, John S. Joseph, Wear F. Milling, and Charles P. Willis. In all, fifteen hundred Louisianans died in World War I. All of these men are honored on bronze tablets placed inside LSU Memorial Tower.³⁵¹

As all things do though, LSU’s long military tradition was destined to end. After being lobbied by students and faculty members, the LSU Board of Supervisors voted to terminate compulsory military training in 1968, “ending a tradition that had lasted for over a century.”³⁵²

Campus life for Louisiana State University students and faculty was greatly affected by World War I, but the school’s mobilization fully supported the war effort in every aspect, including paying the ultimate price. Its long military history served the country well by providing training facilities, soldiers, faculty, and other services to help the war effort.

³⁴⁸ “Commemorative Service by the Louisiana State University,” January 2, 1920.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 105.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² Ruffin, Jackson and Hebert, 111.

Conclusion

The establishment of Louisiana State University's military tradition at its inception in 1860 laid the foundation for it to seamlessly mobilize for the Great War. It enabled the university's faculty and students to transition to an effective military training facility whereas other colleges fall short. LSU fulfilled a military need just as it had been founded to do. However, this need was not just for the South as initially created but for the nation. Although no longer a military institution, LSU continues to serve its community, state, and nation well with its commitment to academic excellence. The long military history of the "Ole War Skule" and the cadets who passed through it will be forever remembered and honored on the LSU campus.

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