

## **The Complexity of German-American History during World War I**

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Before World War I most German-Americans in Indiana lived comfortably and were respected by their communities. Germans comprised one of the largest immigrant groups coming to America before 1914.<sup>1</sup> Leading up to the war, German-Americans sent their children to parish schools that taught in German, read German newspapers, attended services at German churches, and belonged to German community organizations. Despite these ethnic attachments, Indiana Germans considered themselves Americans. “Most Germans thought themselves as Americans totally loyal to American democratic ideals.”<sup>2</sup> This essay will investigate the experiences of German-Americans in Michigan City, Indiana and the effects of the First World War on their community.

In 1910, The U. S. Census reported Indiana as having the twelfth largest German population among the states, with Germans making up the largest group of immigrant group statewide.<sup>3</sup> Indiana historically was made up of Old Stock English-Americans with smaller immigrant populations than neighboring states. Over time, however, there was an intermingling of Germans with non-Germans, and as a result Indiana tended to have a more blended culture. “German societies played a strong role in the development of music, the arts, and a vigorous social life in Indiana’s cities, organizing parades, picnics, dances, and feasts. Through such events German traditions and styles gradually were incorporated into America’s way of life.”<sup>4</sup> It was common for non-German residents to attend distinctly German activities such as Oktoberfest since they viewed it as a town function rather than an ethnic event.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 50.

<sup>3</sup> [www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/volum-1/volum-1-p11.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/volum-1/volum-1-p11.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Robert M. Taylor and Connie A. McBirney, *Peopling Indiana: The Ethnic Experience* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 2009), 170.

According to historian Clifford Scott, Indiana Germans living in Fort Wayne before 1914 lived like many in the United States, staying largely in their community and its institutions. They were slow to take up the English language due to the opportunities to speak German, yet they also joined among their non-German peers in politics and other civic duties.<sup>5</sup> They campaigned for and held political offices, voted, and served in the military. They held important business positions, ran several of Fort Wayne's banks, and worked in the city's factories. These German-enjoyed a rich social life both within their ethnic enclave and with the larger community around them, proving their loyalty to America through civic participation. This same level of improvement and pride can be seen in Michigan City.

#### Germans Came to Indiana

LaPorte County was one of six counties in 1910 that had a foreign-born German population that was somewhere between twenty-five and thirty-five percent of the total population. Within LaPorte County there was also about 5,200 second generation German-American.<sup>6</sup> As Michigan City was the largest municipality in this county leading up to and including the war, this town will be the focus of this paper.

Michigan City began in 1830 when Major Isaac C. Elston was sent to the mouth of Trail Creek by President Andrew Jackson to purchase land; this purchase would result in several hundred lots, a park, and a marketplace. Two years later, the town had its first mayor and by 1833, the town had its first permanent resident when Samuel Miller built a house. In 1855 the Senior John Barker moved his family here and bought into Sherman, Haskell, Aldridge and

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<sup>5</sup> Scott H. Clifford "Assimilation in a German-American Community: The Impact of World War I," *The Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 52, Issue 1, 1980. 155

<sup>6</sup> [www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/volum-1/volum-1-p11.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/volum-1/volum-1-p11.pdf)

Company. The years between 1859 and 1890 would see an increase in German activity in the town, with Zorn Brewery, St. Mary's, and The German Methodist Church all established, showing an increase in the German population of the town. In the 1890's Martin T. Krueger, well-known in Michigan City as well as throughout the state<sup>7</sup> got his start in politics, as mayor he went about trying to improve the town including Washington Park and the harbor. John H. Barker, another important figure in town, gave money to improve the town by helping to build a library, a peristyle at Washington Park, and with his wife, donated money to help build a hospital.<sup>8</sup> Fred Miller was an interesting figure in local history. Miller was born in Germany around 1865 later immigrating to the United States with his father. Though never seeking to complete his naturalization until 1919. He would serve multiple terms as mayor before the war, during the war Miller would run into trouble with his citizen status.

#### Germany's Indifference to Life Leads the United States to War

In 1914 war broke out in Europe over treaty problems and the assassination of the Archduke of Austria-Hungary offering a catalyst that got the war started. Early on it was thought that it would be a short war, but it soon turned bloody with no end in sight. The Germans were split between two fronts making it tough to manage troops and supplies in Russia and in France. Early in the war Germany took over Belgium. In the United States the war was a European problem that they wanted to stay out of.

Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare. Germany blamed Britain and their blockade on the food shortages that were experiencing. This decision, however, risked bringing

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<sup>7</sup> "Hot Mayoralty Race on Again at Michigan City"

<sup>8</sup> Michigan City Public Library, "Timeline of Michigan City," *Local History*, <https://www.mclib.org/explore-topics/local-history/timeline-of-michigan-city/>

the United States into the war. However, in 1915 “Americans did not, generally, have any desire at all to intervene.”<sup>9</sup> Germany used this unrestricted warfare in hopes cutting Great Britain from the rest of the world and forcing an early surrender at best or making the British Isles easier to invade. Germany did suffer some problems with this, there was not enough submarines to achieve the mission and sinking civilian vessels unannounced was against international law.

On May 7, 1915, a German torpedo sunk the *Lusitania*, taking the lives of “785 passengers and 413 crew, among them 128 Americans.”<sup>10</sup> The ship sank in a mere eighteen minutes. The sinking helped create a sweeping movement of change in the German-American communities. Even before the United States directly got involved in the war against Germany, there is the beginnings of cultural suppression and mistrust from the outside. There was an “increasing violence against German-Americans that resulted in destroying their self-proclaimed identity as a culturally distinct minority.”<sup>11</sup> This resulted in German-Americans being viewed as unamerican. Theodore Roosevelt did not help American attitudes by calling into question what it meant to be an American.<sup>12</sup> German language is also under attack and places where it was spoken before start to only speak English this was especially true in schools and church.

Following the attack on the *Lusitania* there was a fear in the German-American communities about what would happen to them. Many rushed to remove money from bank accounts, there was also a rush to get first papers which was the first part of being an American citizen. Having first papers would give them more protection under the law. Having made that step there would be a stronger show of where their loyalties were. Within the community there

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<sup>9</sup> Norman Stone, *World War One: A Short History* (New York: Basic Books, 2009) 118.

<sup>10</sup> Frank Trommler, “The Lusitania Effect: America’s Mobilizations against Germany in World War I,” *German Studies Review* 2, no. 2 (2009): 241.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid* 242

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* 247

was a push for peace from the National German-American Alliance who was often involved in politics tried to argue for peace. This urge for peace was so strong that “German Language papers printed fervent editorials pleading for peace and supplied form letters and telegrams in English for readers to copy and sent to their congressmen.”<sup>13</sup>

As war began in Europe there are some changes starting to take place in the German-American communities but for the most part 1914 and 1915 does not cause much change in how they are living or viewed by those outside their community. In fact, it might be said that there was resurgence of German culture and language. With the increase of memberships in German clubs and activities being held, that showed that there was still acceptance and positive feelings toward German-Americans. German newspaper printing was also on the increase.

The National German-American Alliance was formed in 1901 becoming an officially recognized organization by Congress in 1907.<sup>14</sup> The aim of the Alliance was to offer fellowship and common goals that mattered to German-Americans. There was also a desire to support keeping the German culture alive as well as the language. Even though there was focus on German culture the National German-American Alliance was heavily involved with its members being citizens and having loyalty to the United States.

While Northern Indiana did have a chapter, unfortunately not much at this time is known about them. There was German Festival in Hammond that German societies from Michigan City came to celebrate including the German Alliance of Indiana which was the local chapter of the National German-American Alliance as a connected celebration with it also acting as a

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<sup>13</sup> Luebke, 205.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid 68.

conference for the Alliance.<sup>15</sup> It was also known that had Michigan City and possibility the rest of LaPorte County had a growing membership, in 1915 the ladies of the German Alliance of Indiana moved their headquarters to a larger location over First National Bank. The German Alliance of Indiana's Michigan City chapter started out with less than twenty members and by May 1915 had around 140 members. This caused them to move to a larger hall allowing them to have a place for regular meetings for all members.<sup>16</sup>

Michigan City residents were also involved in charity work that brought them in contact with the war, though not directly and at times in favor the Central Powers. The German Red Cross did much of the same things that their American counterparts did. In September of 1914 Michigan City held a fair to raise money to send over to Germany to aid their Red Cross efforts. The German Red Cross effort was probably chosen because many residents had relatives who still lived in Germany and wanted to help the wounded soldiers. The fair was a great success raising over two thousand dollars. The fair had a mix of prominent society figures in attendance including; John H. Barker's daughter Catherine, Judge James Gallaher, and a Krueger who was possibility related to Martin T. Krueger. As well as many local businesses and churches gave to the cause, such as: Zorn Brewery, First National Bank, St. Johns United Church of Christ, and St. Paul Lutheran Church.<sup>17</sup>

In April of 1917 the United States entered World War I even though many still were opposed to getting involved, causing non-German Americans to be afraid of the German-Americans living in their cities and towns. As a result, German-Americans had to suppress their culture even more. Many German organizations quietly stopped existing. Those that did manage

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<sup>15</sup> "Germans had Picnic Sunday," *The Evening News*, August 31, 1914

<sup>16</sup> "Removes its Headquarters," *Evening Dispatch*, May 17, 1915, 1.

<sup>17</sup> "Final Report of German Fair," *Michigan City Evening News*, October 4, 1914, 1.

to survive the war did so by changing their name and opening membership to non-German-Americans. “In Indiana, only one of the three [German] dailies survived, and all six weekly papers were discontinued.”<sup>18</sup> Anti-German feelings even effected church growth for those churches that identified as being a German parish.

Catherine Barker who was intendance of the fair was a well-known philanthropist and aided both sides of the war. She opened the old Barker Mansion to be used as a Red Cross hospital.<sup>19</sup> It is also known that Barker gave money to the French Red Cross which they would use to by ambulances.

#### American Protective League and the Fear of Spies

People became suspicious that they were spies and that Germans were planning to cause upheaval to government. There became a new awareness about who their neighbors were, and friends become suspect. Around this time the United States Americans were exposed to a lot of propaganda that was anti-German. “Gradually suspicion escalated to threats of violence, to forced Liberty Bond sales, to yellow paint applied to monuments, churches, parochial schools, and homes, ...to tar and feathers ceremonies, ... and finally to murder of Robert Prager in April 1918.”<sup>20</sup> Even names of German things were being changed. One town in Indiana was originally named East Germantown and was renamed Pershing, in honor of General John J. Pershing, the Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces on the Western Front in Europe. Businesses and streets were also victims of name change. This fear of German spies led to it being as simple as having a German last name and being considered suspicious and it was even possible that

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid 272-273 passim.

<sup>19</sup> “Ms. Spaulding had Busy Time,” August 28, 1918

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 247



employers would be contacted to check to see if they still were employed there. Harassment was also common of those that were assumed to have ties to Germany. This led to a new organization being formed the American Protective League.

The American Protective League (APL) was started when Albert Briggs offered his services to the US Justice Department Bureau of Investigation, Briggs offered both the time and resources and even manpower to Superintendent Hinton D. Clabaugh. Once Washington D.C. approved it to be “a volunteer organization to aid the Bureau of Investigation.”<sup>21</sup> The APL was formed to gather information on the activities of “enemy aliens,” primarily German and Austrian immigrants. This would become a popular thing for Americans to join, for those who could not fight in the war it gave them something of a civic nature to do that aided in the war effort. In the first year the APL would have “over 250,000 members from every social and economic class.”<sup>22</sup> Early on it was mainly in more metropolitan areas that had large German populations as time such as Chicago. Later it would go on it to also include smaller cities including LaPorte, Indiana. The APL broke up responsibilities based on the abilities of its members. The unskilled could be used to keep watch of suspects. They also focused on slackers who were draft dodgers and socialist including members of the Industrial Workers of the World. The APL was disbanded by the government at the end of the war.

The LaPorte branch of the APL was started sometime in early 1918, which the APL argued was needed because of the large German-American population including German aliens. Another concern for the APL was the factories in LaPorte County that had war contracts. The Haskell & Barker CO. in Michigan City, for example, made railcars for the military. The war

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<sup>21</sup> Bill Mills, *The League: The True Story of Average Americans on the Hunt for WWI Spies* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2013), 13.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid 15.

contracts under the Espionage Act created laws about where these citizens were able to be. The Espionage Act was in place to keep sensitive information away from the enemy. Amendments would be added with the Sedition Act and the Alien Enemy Act. The Sedition Act of 1918 an expansion of the Espionage Act, was a suppression on First Amendment rights in hopes to keep negative or pro-German things out of the news. The Socialist Party during this time faced difficulties since they were considered unamerican. The Alien Enemy Act was anyone who was not a naturalized citizen of a country we were at war with, this made it harder to complete naturalization and had to register with the local marshal if they were to leave the area where they live and work. With what little information available through telegram records it is known that a Mr. William Meinke was to take charge as chief of the local branch of the APL. The national level of the organization was pleased that Meinke was able to “enlist the services of so many citizens of the community.”<sup>23</sup> The APL made suspects of anyone who had hints of Germaneness about them. It was believed anyone of them could be a spy even though the APL never caught anyone. A subject that would have surely caught the attention of the APL would have been Michigan City Mayor Frederick C. Miller.

Fred Miller was born in Germany around 1867. He came to America with his father as a boy in 1873. Like much of early Michigan City history there is a lot of gaps in the timeline, because of these gaps little is known about Miller before the 1910 Census. On the 1910 Census he is listed as mayor. Miller his wife Matilda and their children lived on Pine Street which put them in the exclusion zone created by the Haskell & Barker CO. which was about a block away,

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<sup>23</sup> Unknown (American Protective League) to E.J. Lonn, March 4, 1918, LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, LaPorte, Indiana.

once newly elected Woodrow Wilson's presidential acts when into effect. Miller was never a fully naturalized citizen like many in Michigan City and had only taken out his first papers which showed his intent to become a full naturalized citizen. Prior to the war, he had served several terms as mayor, but his citizenship had not come into question. That would all change with the 1917 election. During the campaign leading up to the election it was front page news that Miller was running and that it was not well received by many in the town that he was seeking another term. Miller's citizenship status was problem for those in support of Samuel Taylor. With such phrases as "Would our boys who are on their way to the front want you to elect as mayor of our city a man who is not citizen of the United States? It would be very embarrassing to them among their associates comrades."<sup>24</sup> And "It is about times that the citizens of Michigan City investigated the character of a man who illegally held office as councilman for three terms; who illegally held office as mayor and who now, for the fourth consecutive time, is seeking that office."<sup>25</sup> The next day the newspaper ran more news that seem to both question Miller and promote Samuel Taylor as the better choice for mayor. "The election of Mr. Taylor for mayor will put a stop to all this alien enemy talk in connection with our city government... If you elect Mr. Miller, who is not a citizen of the United States, you will have this talk coming up and embarrassing everyone for four years to come."<sup>26</sup> Despite his opponent trying to taking his status as a citizen into question and making it seem as if it would be a great embarrassment to the town if Miller was mayor, he was able to win the mayoral election. His winning of the election did not come without its share of struggles. Miller would face many legal hurdles during that four-year term.

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<sup>24</sup> "For Mr. Miller to Explain," *Evening News*, November 1, 1917, 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>26</sup> "What Kind of a Mayor does Michigan City Want?" *Evening News*, November 2, 1917 8.

In November not long after the election it is officially called into question as to if he was able to be mayor do to his immigration status. At this time the Department of Justice simply issued a statement stating that any alien with only first papers would not be “granted final papers, nor will any new applications for first papers by enemy aliens be received by federal courts for the period of the war.”<sup>27</sup> It would be up to what Indiana law had to say about the matter. In 1917 four states allowed for first paper immigrants to vote. Along with Indiana was Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas. With Miller’s new position as mayor he had to file for a petition to be able to go near the barred zones of the city. Which were any zone that contained factories producing goods for the war. The docks and wharves were also barred zones. Miller as an alien with the permit would be allowed within a half mile of the Haskell and Barker Co. because of their government contract. He would not still even with that permit be allowed near the docks. Miller was among around 600 other residents in Michigan City who would have to file for an alien permit.<sup>28</sup> Even though Miller won the election, Samuel Taylor was not happy with the result given Miller’s alien status. There was also some uncertainty about the validity of votes that contributed to the win. It was believed to be that Miller had the upper hand with “the vote of 850 other alien enemies.”<sup>29</sup> Finishing out 1917 Miller saw the controversy of his election go to court. At that time Martin T. Krueger and Taylor were filing an injunction to stop Miller from taking office. There was a desire to have a judge rule in their favor based on the status of Miller and many other residents of Michigan City that voted in the election without full citizenship, based on this believe Krueger and Taylor did not think Miller should be allowed to remain in office.

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<sup>27</sup> “May Not Qualify to Act as Mayor,” *South Bend News-Times*, November 23, 1917, 1.

<sup>28</sup> “F.C. Miller Petitions Under Law,” *The Lake County Times*, December 3, 1917, 1.

<sup>29</sup> “Federal Court Hearing Miller’s Case Today,” *South Bend News-Times*, December 31, 1917, 10.

In 1918 others in Michigan City felt the same way and wrote letters to the Indiana senators to see what could be done and to lodge their complaints. Letters to the Senators also came in from other parts of the state. Indiana senators Harry S. New and James Eli Watson agreed to send a note to President Wilson on the matter. One way of dealing with the problem that Miller presented was to have Mark Storen who was the US Marshall for LaPorte County revoke his permit, which would force him to move out of Michigan City. If he did not live in the municipality, he would be unable to be mayor.<sup>30</sup> President Wilson, meanwhile declined to get involved in the matter and after being in conversation with Attorney General Thomas Wattb Gregory who advised him that this is a state matter. As a result, from this President Wilson declares that it is a state matter to figure out how best to handle problems with elected officials.<sup>31</sup> With the problem kicked back to the state level, Governor James Goodrich asked to be appointed a judge to hear the case. This court case was still being based off Krueger's petition of Fred Miller not being a citizen and of getting a large quantity of enemy alien votes. On January 7, Fred Miller was sworn into office with little commotion. The Saturday before being sworn in the petition to keep him out of office failed but did not mean the fight to stay in office was over.

When the case finally did go to court it caused changes in voting law. The election commissioners made it so that in future elections immigrants who have first papers who can be classified as enemy aliens will not be allowed to vote.<sup>32</sup> Not allowing immigrants to vote became a statewide law in 1921. As for Miller the election from the past November would be allowed to stay being that, "an application for full naturalization by taking out second papers, the government requires only that it be given an opportunity to investigate the loyalty of such

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<sup>30</sup> "Ask that President Shut out Alien Mayor," *The Indianapolis News*, January 4, 1918, 3.

<sup>31</sup> "Wilson Declines to Interfere in Alien Mayor Case," *South Bend News-Times*, January 6, 1918, 1.

<sup>32</sup> "First Paper Man Not State Enemy," *South Bend News-Times*, October 28, 1918, 8.

applicant, and the policy is that if upon such investigation he proves loyal in fact, the federal government will not object to his full naturalization.”<sup>33</sup> As for the votes that were of concern from enemy aliens at the time of the hearing there was no Indiana law on the matter, the federal government only would get involved in cases of fraudulent voting. The case involving Fred Miller and his status as a citizen shared with a similar case in Nebraska.

The governor election of 1890 in Nebraska brought Boyd’s citizenship into question, though unlike Miller it would be decided he was a citizen, it is more the events leading up to this decision that have reflection on what is happening with Miller. Powers who was running opposed to Boyd made claims that he only won because of first paper citizens that voted for Boyd. Like Indiana at the time there was no law on the books stating that they were not able to vote. When trying to figure out the problem the District Court went in favor of Thayer, who was the previous governor, when he refused to vacate the office. From the district court it was appealed to the Supreme Court where the court ruled in favor of Boyd. This was in part because at the time immigrants shared very similar status to citizens including the right to vote.<sup>34</sup> Thayer was made to leave office and to allow Boyd to take office as Governor.

Miller may have won and was permitted to serve out his term as mayor, but the ongoing war and restrictions placed upon those non-naturalized German immigrants limited his movements and meant he would have to keep his enemy alien permit. Miller was not alone, and several other public officials and law enforcement effectively were unable to perform their duties as city councilmen and police officers because of their immigrant status.<sup>35</sup> In Millers attempts to

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Anna Williams Shavers, “A Century of Developing Citizenship Law and the Nebraska Influence: A Centennial Essay,” 70 Neb. L. Rev. 462 (1991), 477

<sup>35</sup> “F.C. Miller Petitions Under Law,” 1.

fix his citizenship status he sent out for Washington D.C. in April of 1918. This decision would only lead to getting him in more trouble than if he had stayed in Michigan City.

#### Mr. Miller Goes to Washington

On a Tuesday in April Fred Miller got off a train in Washington D.C. in hopes to petition federal officials to grant him full citizenship. He went with the idea that “having his naturalization completed, so that in his home town, where presides as chief executive, he might have the stigma removed of having also registers as an alien enemy of his country.”<sup>36</sup> However, Miller was not going to be able to complete his citizenship, the United States government was not issuing the second papers to immigrants who came from countries that the United States was at war with. Instead Miller ends up arrested as an enemy alien who was out of his zone without permission.<sup>37</sup> Non-naturalized residents of the United States who were from Germany and Austria-Hungary were not allowed in Washington D.C.

Miller in his term faced problems that may not have been caused by his enemy alien status. For some reason in the spring of 1918, Miller had to deal with his common council and their threats to resign. There was a “demand for an investigation of alleged worthless bonds said to have been purchased through the city legal department.”<sup>38</sup> As the war came to a close both in the United States and in Europe, Miller would not become free of the enemy alien mayor reputation that he had gained during the war.

Armistice was declared on November 11, 1918 bringing to an end a very bloody war. The lasting impacts on the German communities though would remain as would the thoughts people

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<sup>36</sup> “Miller’s Mistake,” *The Lake County Times*, April 29, 1918, 4.

<sup>37</sup> “Soldiers Refuse the Certificates,” *The Lake County Times*, May 28, 1919, 1.

<sup>38</sup> Miller’s Mistake,” 4.

had about Germany. Fred Miller would be no exception. As American troops started returning to the United States they too made their feelings known about the enemy alien mayor of Michigan City. In May of 1919 “Five Hundred returned soldiers, sailors, and marines in mass meeting her unanimously passed resolutions refusing certain certificates to be given them under hand and seal of Mayor Fred C. Miller.”<sup>39</sup> There was a general feeling that Mayor Miller embarrassed them during their time in the service and that Miller did not have worry about them when they were fighting. Additionally, that the troops were not given a proper welcome home upon their return to Indiana. The soldiers, sailors, and marines because of this wanted him to resign from the fourth of July committee.

His offence of the servicemen would continue with the American Legion Indiana chapter. In the meeting resolutions there was a call for the government to depart aliens connected the bombings that had recently taken place or who had dodged military service. At that same meeting Mayor Miller was a topic of discussion. The events that had taken place a few weeks early regarding the soldiers, sailors, and marine refusing certificates was called a “disgraceful proceeding.”<sup>40</sup> This was them siding with those who refused to accept the certificates, the American Legion did not feel it was right for a German enemy alien to be mayor and be able to be patriotic enough, going so far as to compare him to Chicago Mayor William “Big Bill” Thompson. Thompson during World War I was openly pro-German.<sup>41</sup>

World War I brought about changes to the German-American communities in Indiana and across the country. It brought about the suppression of language and culture forever

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<sup>39</sup>“Soldiers Refuse the Certificates,” 1.

<sup>40</sup> “Lake CO. Soldiers Elected,” *The Lake County Times*, June 9, 1919, 1.

<sup>41</sup> Edward McClelland, “The Most Corrupt Public Official in Illinois History: William Hale Thompson,” NBC Chicago, January 26, 2012.



changing the how German descendants connected to their roots. Overall the changes that took place and how created a complexity that is hard to explain and in its own way uniquely American in how we approach problems of culture. In Indiana Germans were a well-established group. Having been one of the first immigrant groups to settle the area in large numbers alongside old stock Americans. As the war in Europe continued there was an increasing pressure put on German-American communities to conform to the non-German world around them. Once the United States became involved in the war there was suspicion and fear of what they might do in the name of the Kaiser. There was so much fear that the government let civilians spy on their neighbors.

In LaPorte County and Michigan City the large German population seemed to be removed from the worst feeling that some parts of the United States suffered from. Mayor Fred Miller of Michigan City probably best shows the complexity of the German condition during the war. He managed to get elected but faced a term fraught with legal problems, unhappy residents, and offend doughboys.

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