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## "Rosie the homemaker": How national and local publications influenced women in Central Iowa on the home front during World Wars I and II

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**“Rosie the homemaker”: How national and local publications influenced women  
in central Iowa on the home front during World Wars I and II**

by

**Alyssa Kay Gianni**

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

Major: History

Program of Study Committee:  
Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Major Professor  
Amy Bix  
Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock

The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this thesis. The Graduate College will ensure this thesis is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2019

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**DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my partner and best buddy Caleb, for his love, endless motivation, and support he has always provided while I wrote this thesis.

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**ABSTRACT**

World Wars I and II had an enormous effect on the United States home front. Women found their responsibilities increasing and for some of them, this was their first time entering the workplace as they learned to balance work and their domestic responsibilities. Above all else, their domestic responsibilities remained of the utmost priority as they worked diligently to provide square, wholesome meals for their children.

As the effects of the war pressed down upon the United States, food restrictions were put in place. During World War I, rationing was not mandatory, but instead, the United States Food Administration promoted to women the need for wheatless and meatless meals to conserve necessary food items for the men and Allies overseas. Women signed and hung food pledges that showed their support of the conservation efforts. In World War II, rationing became mandatory and women had the newfound challenge of creating nutritious meals within their ration stamp restrictions. With both World War I and World War II, the government and advertisers along with newspapers and magazines published images and articles that reflected the nation at war and the crucial role women played at home in the war effort.

In Iowa, both World War I and World War II were felt greatly by the populace as the wars transformed the industries present in the state. Munitions factories recruited women and farmland became a tool as farmers grew the crops most needed for the war effort. Most Iowans were patriotic for the cause and wanted to do their part to try and bring a swift end to the wars. The local newspapers published recipes and menu ideas along with Extension agents going to the rural communities to promote the purchasing of war bonds, the growing of Victory Gardens, and the importance of conservation.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

World Wars I and II had a tremendous effect on the nation as a whole with men, women, and children all feeling the effects. Women in central Iowa felt the influence from national and local publications on how to keep the home running during wartime, including meal preparation, and how to maintain a sense of patriotism amidst their growing responsibilities. Few areas of life were left untouched by the wars, both on the front lines overseas and on the home front. As sons, husbands, and fathers were drafted into the war or aided in the war effort at home, women, many for the first time, entered the workforce. This thesis examines the history of how these wartime conditions challenged white, middle class women and farm wives in Iowa as they sought to balance their work and home roles. In particular, it focuses on the way that wartime cooking presented these women with unique challenges and on the way that food experts and advice writers (typically white, middle class women themselves) offered advice in both national and local newspapers and magazines on how to solve those problems. Companies used advertisements to offer female readers guidance on “proper” wartime food use, such as how to prepare wheatless and meatless meals during World War I and how to cope with rationing during World War II. These food advice newspaper and magazine columns, food advertisements, and other wartime materials such as cookbooks constructed a specific picture of gender, domestic responsibilities, and consumerism. But ultimately, women’s domestic roles changed very little because of either war.

Chapter One of this thesis explains the current historiography available on women’s home front roles during World War I and II. Chapter Two focuses on World War I with an examination of women’s roles during the war, the home dynamic, the advertisements and articles produced, and the food women purchased and prepared. Chapter Three examines World War II

and women's home front roles as the examination continues to look at how national publications gave advice to white, middle-class women on the home front. Chapter Four focuses specifically on the home front experience and food advice given to women in Central Iowa during World Wars I and II. Chapter Five is the conclusion, which offers a comparison between the experiences of women on the home front for both wars and how national and local publications influenced their home front experience.

During World War I, women used their opportunity to secure employment outside of the home to increase their responsibilities and contribute to the nation during the war. These women took to their roles in factories, especially in munitions factories, and on farms because they knew the work needed to be accomplished. While the United States was only involved in World War I for nineteen months, women wanted to be actively involved in the war effort because the women would "do anything they were given to do; that their hours are long; that their task is hard; that for them there is small hope of medals and citations and glittering homecoming parades."<sup>1</sup> Additionally, women began to voluntarily ration food items that were necessary for the military overseas and their views on consumption began to modernize as eating efficiently and without waste became popularized through the rise of home economics programs. These women asked themselves what they could do for their country to bring the men overseas home sooner.

In the current historiography for World War I discussion of women and food remain popular. Scholars such as Helen Zoe Veit have written about the rise of modern American eating and argued that because of the war, Americans transformed into modern eaters, which included becoming more conscientious about nutritional values and caloric intakes. In her book *Modern*

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<sup>1</sup> Per the Director of the Archives and Edward Jones Research Center at the National World War I Museum and Memorial, this quote comes from an editor of *Stars and Stripes*. "Women in World War I," *The National World War I Museum and Memorial*, n.d., Accessed November 28, 2018, <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/women>.

*Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century*, Veit stated “For almost two years, the war provided a laboratory on the American home front in which the state managed food on a national scale, making food and its management patriotic projects and extending the state’s reach into the home, onto dinner plates, and into kitchen cabinets. The Food Administration and the voluntary conservation campaign that surrounded it marked the high point of a revolution in the ways Americans at all levels of society understood food.”<sup>2</sup> Veit remarked that prior to the war being plump was in style because it showed wealth and the ability to have a reserve if famine struck, but because of the war and the need to send food overseas, thinness became the new trend. While rationing of ingredients such as butter, sugar, wheat and meat never became mandatory, the populace did their own policing. Indulging in meals using those ingredients lavishly showed a sign of selfishness and being unpatriotic. As Veit noted, “The sensual pleasures of eating went out of fashion in wartime America amid claims from both the government and from ordinary people that overeating, and waste threatened moral life. In contrast, Americans who deprioritized the depth of their self-control and, thus, their intellectual and political maturity.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition to Veit’s book, food historian Rae Katherine Eighmey discussed in *Food Will Win the War: Minnesota Crops, Cooks, and Conservation During World War I* how Minnesotan women responded to the war effort at home. Eighmey’s purpose for the book was to capture the patriotic ideals of the women in Minnesota and their desire to help in the war effort. Eighmey used a variety of primary sources including diaries, letters, newspapers, recipes, government pamphlets to give readers an in-depth analysis of how Minnesota women coped with the war on

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<sup>2</sup> Helen Zoe Veit, “Introduction,” *Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

both the local and national level. In the introduction or ‘Appetizer’ as aptly titled, Eighmey wrote, “Food conservation during World War I was, in effect, the first large-scale, social-networking enterprise of the twentieth century,” and that “throughout Minnesota people looked at the situation, saw their role, and began sharing countless tips for conserving food, getting the most from farm or garden, and other war-winning strategies.”<sup>4</sup>

Eighmey pointed to two main reasons for the success of food conservation in Minnesota and these reasons can be shared for the country as whole: “persuasive information and the actions put into motion by those social networking and peer-influence efforts” and “the war created foods themselves.”<sup>5</sup> By this Eighmey meant that individuals themselves acted as a means to get others to do their voluntary duty to conserve and not hoard ingredients, along with the plethora of new recipes that were created by the introduction of meatless and wheatless meals. Unfortunately, though, amidst Eighmey’s coverage of how Minnesotans were conserving during the war because of a sense of sacrifice and responsibility to their country, she failed to address the resistance and frustration that also existed among many who simply did not want to reduce their consumption or have wheatless and meatless meals. For example, some women were resistant to using dark or whole-wheat flour in their baked items as Eighmey stated, “many bakers opposed what they saw as unacceptable roughage in their baked goods.”<sup>6</sup> Additionally as in World War II, some housewives hoarded wheat flour and sugar. With this much resistance, it seemed peculiar that Eighmey would not address these inconsistencies in her book since not all Minnesotans were as quick to jump on the conservation bandwagon, and this could have added depth to her argument.

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<sup>4</sup> Rae Katherine Eighmey, “Appetizer,” *Food Will Win the War: Minnesota Crops, Cooks, and Conservation During World War I* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2010), xi.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, xii.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, “The Staff of Life,” 50.

Yet Eighmey's focus on Minnesota paired well with an examination of the women's home front in Iowa due to the similar nature of the two states. The economies in both states are agriculturally based, and farmers shifted some of their production to needed wartime commodities. Eighmey also addressed the differences between urban, middle-class white women and frugal white farm women, and how farm wives felt resentment towards the urban white women who arrived at their farms in their nice cars prepared to give them food advice and tell them how to reduce waste. Eighmey quoted in her book the *Farmers Equity News*, which stated "New York society women including Mrs. W.R. Vanderbilt, Jr., are touring rural New York in soft-cushioned limousines bearing 'words of advice and encouragement' to women on farms" and went on to say "Why don't the farmers and their wives run up and down Fifth Avenue with gratuitous advice about canning, preserving, and working? They are too busy *doing it!*"<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, the historiography focuses on women workers with two popular books being *Rosie's Mom: Forgotten Women Workers of the First World War* by Carrie Brown and *Fruits of Victory: The Women's Land Army of America in the Great War* by Elaine F. Weiss.<sup>8</sup> Often individuals when asked about women war workers would naturally turn to the World War II image of Rosie the Riveter and forget the women who came before who worked just as tirelessly in the factories. Carrie Brown, an independent scholar and history curator who received her PhD in American Literature and Folklore from the University of Virginia, wanted to give a voice to those oft forgotten women workers from World War I, "Rosie's Mom," as she referred to them. Brown stated, "Those images – images of women doing difficult and remarkable things during World War II – remain in our collective memory. But Rosie was not the first, and the

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<sup>7</sup> *Farmers Equity News*, July 15, 1917, cited in Eighmey, "Are You Doing Your Part?", 152.

<sup>8</sup> Carrie Brown, *Rosie's Mom: Forgotten Women Workers of the First World War* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002).; Elaine F. Weiss, *Fruits of Victory: The Woman's Land Army of America in the Great War* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc., 2008).

World War II images are not the first to record women's industrial war work. This is the story of Rosie's Mom."<sup>9</sup> Similarities do exist between the women workers in both wars, as Brown pointed out, including what happened to them at the end of the war. In striking similarity to what occurred at the conclusion of World War II, women workers during World War I lost their jobs when the war ended, some almost immediately after the signing of the armistice.

Journalist Elaine F. Weiss continued the historiographical trend of writing about women's working roles on the home front in her book, *Fruits of Victory: The Woman's Land Army of America in the Great War*, where she detailed the 'farmerettes' of the Women's Land Army (WLA).<sup>10</sup> While not the first author on the topic, Weiss was exhaustive in her research and chronicled the WLA's predecessor, the Women's Land Army of Great Britain and its successor, the American Women's Land Army of World War II. Weiss's goal was to "[attempt] to restore the farmerette to her rightful place in the American saga..."<sup>11</sup> Over twenty thousand 'farmerettes', who came from all walks of life including artists, business professionals, and college students, donned the military style uniform and went to work on farms across the United States as male farm workers went to serve their country or entered work in munitions factories. The women were not without their shortcomings as most had little to no prior agricultural experience as Virginia Gildersleeve, the head of the New York City Women's Agriculture Committee, expressed, "and I blush to say it, for I do not know the difference between a carrot and a turnip when they are put before me." Gildersleeve went on to describe the enthusiasm, though, that women had for learning the skills: "We shall have accomplished a great deal of permanent value, to continue after the war, if we have proved that agriculture, a profession which

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<sup>9</sup> Brown, "Rosie's Mom," *Rosie's Mom: Forgotten Women Workers of the First World War*, ix.

<sup>10</sup> Weiss, *Fruits of Victory: The Woman's Land Army of America in the Great War*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, "Acknowledgements," vii.

requires intelligence, science, and muscular work in the open air, can be done by women.”<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately, as Weiss described, the women were often faced with disgruntled males who did not think the United States needed to employ women to do men’s work. One man from Clarke County, Iowa proclaimed, “Leave her in town. She’d not be worth a whoop in the field, and if you put her in the kitchen, we’d starve to death.”<sup>13</sup> Particularly in the South this proved to be a contentious issue as southern farmers opted instead to hire African American field workers rather than the all-white WLA women. Even some farm women did not think these ‘farmerettes’ could handle work on the farm; one woman in Decatur County, Iowa stated, “I don’t think these land girls would work very long. They hear talk about being farmerettes, and it sounds all right; but when they discovered that meant cleaning up kitchens or working around barn lots, they’d probably go right back to the city.”<sup>14</sup> Ultimately though these ‘farmerettes’ did not let the negative comments stop them, and helped gain support for women’s suffrage and equal rights along with paving the way for women to enter the workforce in World War II.

World War II saw women entering the workforce in unprecedented numbers coupled with the expectation that they properly maintain the home and keep up with the ever-changing rationing regulations. While remaining mothers and homemakers, white, middle class women now entered the workforce in droves with the female labor force increasing by fifty percent during the war.<sup>15</sup> Yet, most of the current and earlier research about the United States’ home front experience during World War II has focused on women as “Rosie the Riveter,” leaving out women as homemakers.

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<sup>12</sup> “Girl Farmers Drive in a Muddy Parade,” *New York Times*, June 16, 1917, 6, cited in Weiss, “Suffrage Agriculture,” *Fruits of Victory*, 38.

<sup>13</sup> “Town Girls on Farms,” *Wallaces’ Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 19, 1943, 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Susan M. Hartmann, “Women’s Place in War and Reconversion,” *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 21.

In existing scholarly literature, food studies historian Amy Bentley, marketing professor Terrence Witkowski, and lawyer Emanuel Halper have studied the effects rationing had on the home front experience for white, middle-class women, along with the effects that propaganda had on consumerism in America.<sup>16</sup> This literature has increased in scope, contrasting to earlier research that focused almost exclusively on wartime recipes and the way those guided cooks on how to make do with substitutes. Yet, even today, the historical research lacks a distinct focus on how writers and editors of national magazines and local newspapers created material intended for female readers and to support the war effort by aiding women with challenges of balancing their wartime work outside of the home with the unusual wartime cooking conditions.

The historiography also remains contentious about World War II as a watershed moment for white, middle class women, if their paid employment was meant to solely be temporary while men served overseas, or if these two things could be true at the same time. Historian William Chafe in his book, *The American Women: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Role, 1920-1970*, viewed World War II as a watershed moment for women, and he based this belief on the percentage of women who entered the workforce.<sup>17</sup> Chafe argued that the war enlarged “women’s role by promoting new patterns of behavior and ideas about what women could and could not do.”<sup>18</sup> It is possible that women initially envisioned their employment as temporary,

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<sup>16</sup> Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Terrence H. Witkowski, “World War II Poster Campaigns: Preaching Frugality to American Consumers,” *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Spring 2003), 69-82, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4622151>.; Emanuel B. Halper, “Supermarket Use and Exclusive Clauses, Part Five – The Supermarket Business Model is Completed as Supers Adapt to World War II Conditions,” *Real Property, Probate and Trust Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Spring 2007), 113-211, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20787096>.

<sup>17</sup> William Chafe, *The American Women: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Role, 1920-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).

<sup>18</sup> Chafe, *The American Women*, 195, cited in Mary Martha Thomas, “Introduction,” *Riveting and Rationing in Dixie: Alabama Women and the Second World War* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 2.

but in the end, the changes in their lives during the war wound up having long-term repercussions that turned the era into something of a watershed.

Other scholars have argued instead that women simply filled a necessary void in the workforce as men went off to war. Leila Rupp, Professor of Feminist Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, argued in her book, *Mobilizing Women for War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945*, that even though women were urged into the factories, their prominent role remained as wives and mothers and that continuity rather than change predominated for women.<sup>19</sup> Historian William Graebner agreed with Rupp that World War II was not a watershed moment for women; he stated, “Women spent the decade meeting the needs of men and capital; filling the factories as producers, then, after the war, soothing the fragile male ego, doing housework, and heading the family’s department of consumer affairs.”<sup>20</sup> Yet, Susan Hartmann in her book *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* disagreed with both of those perspectives and instead argued that the wartime experience for women varied considerably and generalizations about their experiences should not be made.<sup>21</sup>

While the war disrupted homemakers’ lives and their typical domestic routines, with more women entering the workforce, this thesis adds to the perspective exemplified by Leila Rupp’s work. As this thesis will show, the home front messages white, middle class women received from both national and local publications continued to advise women that their work in the home and the kitchen was extra-valuable in wartime as an expression of patriotism, and that whether or not they held outside employment, women could do their part for the war effort by

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<sup>19</sup> Leila Rupp, *Mobilizing Women for War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

<sup>20</sup> William Graebner, “War and Peace,” *The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne, 1991), 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond*.

doing a good job at home with rationing and cooking. Historian Maureen Honey noted “Housewives . . . were portrayed as vital defenders of the nation’s homes. The work women did in the home was glorified as essential to victory because homemakers were providing a stable environment for soldiers, defense workers, and the country as a whole.”<sup>22</sup> Such conservative positioning suggests that World War II was not a watershed moment for white, middle class women, but rather one in which continuity existed. An assumption existed that women would return home after the war and leave the jobs for the veterans and go back to “normalcy,” but that existed alongside campaigns to get women into the workforce for the duration.

An additional source particularly beneficial with regards to World War II and the Iowa home front experience was Lisa Ossian’s *The Home Fronts of Iowa*. Ossian originally wrote it as her dissertation under the advisement of Dr. Dorothy Schwieder. She addressed four home fronts in her book: the farm front, the production front, the community front, and the kitchen front. She wrote about these distinct home fronts because she believed too much of the literature written about the US’s involvement at home revolved around “paid industrial work” or on “topics such as patriotism and discrimination,” which therefore created “an unequal depiction of the home front activities.”<sup>23</sup> With her unique approach to explaining the various home fronts in Iowa, she “provide[d] a clearer picture of the nonmilitary work as well as the rhetoric surrounding American citizens’ involvement in the war effort as deemed necessary by the federal government.”<sup>24</sup> This thesis builds on the research and writing Ossian completed as it seeks to examine food and its consumption along with food advertisements on both a macro level (nationwide) and a micro level (central Iowa).

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<sup>22</sup> Maureen Honey, “Middle-Class Images of Women,” *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 135.

<sup>23</sup> Lisa L. Ossian, “Preface,” *The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1939-1945* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 2009), ix.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, ix-x.

Furthermore, it is worth noting how World War II presents a unique case study for the history of media campaigns in the United States. Terrence Witkowski, Professor of Marketing at California State University, Long Beach, argued that media campaigns telling Americans how to spend their money often have mixed results. According to Witkowski, World War II proved to be the exception “in that government persuasion appears to have been effective in inculcating frugal consumption habits among home front consumers.”<sup>25</sup> Newspaper and magazine advertisements played on the heart strings of the consumers by asking them to conserve and be frugal, all within the context of aiding the war effort. During the war, the articles and advertisements found in national magazines and regional/local newspapers highlighted to women their important home front role. One iconic example of this imagery was Norman Rockwell’s *Four Freedoms*, which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1943. The most familiar of his illustrations was *Freedom from Want*, which showed an extended family sitting around the table together, consuming an elaborate, fully-trimmed meal.<sup>26</sup> *Freedom from Want* portrayed the sense of abundance that white well-to-do Americans viewed as a desirable ideal, along with the typical gender roles that were thrown out of balance by the war. Analyzing this illustration, Bentley stated, “The image of the ordered meal unquestioningly promoted the long-held assumption that women, as wives, mothers, and domestics, would serve nutritious and abundant meals for their families, even though women were increasingly involved in work outside their homes as ‘Rosie the Riveters’ or in other, more traditionally feminine kinds of work, both voluntary and paid.”<sup>27</sup> Bentley was one of the first historians to acknowledge the way that typical literature on the home front focused on the image of Rosie the Riveter, but that historians also needed to look at the

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<sup>25</sup> Witkowski, “World War II Poster Campaigns: Preaching Frugality to American Consumers,” 69.

<sup>26</sup> Norman Rockwell, *Freedom from Want*, *The Saturday Evening Post* (Indianapolis: Curtis Publishing Company, March 6, 1943).

<sup>27</sup> Bentley, “Islands of Serenity,” *Eating for Victory*, 60-61.

domestic experiences of women during wartime. In spite of predominant cultural images such as Rosie the Riveter being a mother and housewife remained women's number one responsibility in both wars.

## CHAPTER TWO. WORLD WAR I: WOMEN AND THE HOME FRONT

The United States formally entered World War I on April 6, 1917 as President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the need to make the world safe for democracy. Prior to the declaration of war, the U.S. had been providing assistance to its future allies through food aid. Just over four months after entering the war, on August 10, 1917, President Wilson established the Food and Fuel Act or the Lever Act, which created through Executive Order No. 2679-A, the United States Food Administration.<sup>28</sup> President Wilson placed Herbert Hoover in charge of the agency based on his experience leading the Commission for Relief in Belgium. This agency managed the food supply for the troops fighting overseas and worked to ensure that the United States' allies did not go hungry through conscientious marketing and propaganda campaigns on the home front that encouraged women to reduce their consumption, conserve, and save, so those fighting would have all the food they needed.<sup>29</sup>

From the onset of the U.S.'s involvement in World War I, the U.S. government knew the inherent importance of women to winning the war. The Secretary of the Interior, Franklin Knight Lane, stated in June of 1917, "This war cannot be won without the help of women. I do not mean their help as mechanics or laborers, as farmers or nurses. The help that they can give of supreme value, is their moral support, their spiritual stimulus. Unless our women feel the greatness of the moral issues involved in this contest, and unless they have raised their boys to fight, if necessary, for the things for which we stand, the war cannot be won."<sup>30</sup> The home front citizenry contributed to the war effort with great zeal, and throughout the war and the necessary

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<sup>28</sup> "Records of the United States Food Administration | Series List," *The National Archives at Fort Worth*, August 15, 2016, Accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/fort-worth/finding-aids/rg004-food-administration.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Herbert Hoover, "Introduction," in William Clinton Mullendore, *History of the United States Food Administration 1917-1919* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1941), 3.

<sup>30</sup> Ida Clyde Clarke, "Introductory," *American Women and the World War* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1918), 9.

reconstruction, the U.S. provided 33,841,307 pounds of food and relief (e.g. soap, medical supplies, clothing) to Europe or a total value of \$5,234,028,208.<sup>31</sup> Hoover attributed this generosity to “patriotic devotion and self-sacrifice” of American women and farmers.<sup>32</sup>

While the United States never enacted a mandatory rationing program during the war, the U.S. Food Administration expected women on the home front to do their patriotic part to conserve and reduce consumption to aid the war effort. Hoover, unlike many of his Allied colleagues, did not believe forced rationing would be effective, and instead “believed that the spirit of self-sacrifice of the American people could be relied upon for so great a service as to accomplish the necessary results upon a voluntary basis.”<sup>33</sup> Hoover continued, stating, “Voluntary action has the great value of depriving those who can afford it and not those who have no margins for sacrifice.”<sup>34</sup> Along with this belief came a certain amount of guilt that women faced as Hoover’s propaganda campaigns “routinely pointed to the heroic, starving women of England and France. Wouldn’t American women conserve for the sake of their starving sisters across the Atlantic?”<sup>35</sup>

Because of this belief in not having forced rationing and the guilt Hoover placed upon women, housewives (and working mothers) across the nation were asked to sign pledge cards created by the United States Food Administration that stated their willingness to help conserve food. The U.S. targeted women by asking, “Have you ‘spunk’ enough, have you ‘sense’ enough, and are you eager enough to be a real mother, so you will listen and learn? Don’t say there is nothing new for you to learn about cooking and feeding. The food administrators who have

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<sup>31</sup> Hoover, “Introduction,” in William Clinton Mullendore, *History of the United States Food Administration 1917-1919*, 42

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Laura Schenone, “Recipes for Tough Times,” *A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove: A History of American Women Told Through Food, Recipes, and Remembrances* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 283.

studied for many years are still learning everyday. And you can learn to *change* appetites, to cook *differently*, and thus feed your family *better* than before at less expense.”<sup>36</sup> The cards read “I am glad to join you in the service of food conservation for our Nation, and I hereby accept membership in the United States Food Administration, pledging myself to carry out the directions and advice of the Food Administrator in my home, insofar as my circumstances permit.”<sup>37</sup> The United States held Food Pledge Week from October 29<sup>th</sup> through November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1917 with the goal of enlisting as many women as possible to take the pledge with First Lady Edith Wilson, who signed the first pledge card.<sup>38</sup> Women, for the most part, happily signed and displayed their food pledge cards, signaling to other women their willingness to do what it took to conserve to supply the Allies overseas with over ten million American households participating.<sup>39</sup> Writer Ida Clyde Clarke dedicated her book, *American Women and the World War*, to “A poor Scandinavian woman in Iowa [who] cheerfully signed a food pledge card believing it meant that the Government agents would confiscate her canned fruits and vegetables, and asking only for more time so that she could get more done for her country.”<sup>40</sup> Some women were not nearly as eager to conserve and gave such excuses as, “The government wastes more in a week than I can save in a year. Let them practice what they preach,” “I never have saved, and I never will,” “It is none of Hoover’s business, nor the government’s, what I do,” and “I want to

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<sup>36</sup> United States Committee on Public Information, Division of Four Minute Men, “Volunteers Must Help the Food Administration,” *Food Pledge Week*, Bulletin No.18, October 29, 1917, World War I Collection. University of Colorado Boulder. <https://cudl.colorado.edu/luna/servlet/UCBOULDERCB1~58~58>.

<sup>37</sup> United States Committee on Public Information, Division of Four Minute Men, *Food Pledge Week*, Bulletin No.18, October 29, 1917, World War I Collection. University of Colorado Boulder. <https://cudl.colorado.edu/luna/servlet/UCBOULDERCB1~58~58>.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> United States Food Administration, “War Economy in Food, Our Problem and Its Solution,” *War Economy in Food, with Suggestions and Recipes for Substitutions in the Planning of Meals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 7.

<sup>40</sup> Ida Clyde Clarke, *American Women and the World War*, vi.

set a table I will not be ashamed of.”<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, though, for those women, vigilante housewives harassed neighbors who they suspected of hoarding flour or sugar, and even dug through their trash to find evidence of their unpatriotic ways.<sup>42</sup>

With their pledges, women voluntarily committed to “Hooverizing” their kitchens with the observation of Meatless Tuesdays and Wheatless Wednesdays along with the conservation of sugar and fat every day.<sup>43</sup> The need to conserve even greater quantities of meat and wheat became of higher importance at the beginning of 1918 as more of the Allied forces relied on food from the United States as more of their own men were called in from the field and onto the battlefield. Because of this need, on January 18, 1918 President Wilson proclaimed that Mondays and Wednesdays should be completely wheatless with families on the other days observing one wheatless meal; additionally, Tuesdays would be meatless along with one meatless meal a day and no pork products on Saturday.<sup>44</sup> President Wilson stated, “I am confident that the great body of our women, who have labored so loyally in co-operation with the Food Administration for the success of food conservation, will strengthen their efforts and will take it as a part of their burden in this period of national service to see that the above suggestions [meaning the observance of wheatless and meatless meals] are observed throughout the land.”<sup>45</sup>

So, while women might still have not had the right to vote, they were able to exercise their patriotic duty of conserving for the men overseas. Although many of these women who

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<sup>41</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 7, 1917, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Schenone, “Recipes for Tough Times,” *A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove*, 284.

<sup>43</sup> The term “hooverize” became synonymous with conservation and gained its own entry in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary with a definition of “to economize especially in the use of food.” “Hooverize,” *Merriam-Webster*, n.d., Accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hooverize>.

<sup>44</sup> United States Food Administration, “War Economy in Food, Our Problem and Its Solution,” *War Economy in Food, with Suggestions and Recipes for Substitutions in the Planning of Meals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 9-10.

<sup>45</sup> “President’s Proclamation Calling on Citizens for Meatless, Porkless and Wheatless Periods: A Proclamation,” *The New York Times*, New York, New York, January 27, 1918, 2.

were part of the National American Women's Suffrage Association were loyal to the nation as far as cooking and conserving went. "Yes, we'll still be women in all our cherished feminine ways – the aromas of fresh-baked bread rising from our kitchens" but they expected after the war to receive the right to vote for their patriotic loyalty. As they saw it, "For if food had in fact won the war, then didn't women deserve a seat at the dinner table?"<sup>46</sup> The suffragists found examples elsewhere of universal suffrage to use as their rallying cry for why suffrage needed to exist in the United States. These women used "other countries involved in the war that had already adopted or were about to adopt universal suffrage, such as Canada, England, Russia, France, Denmark, and Italy" as examples in their own suffrage movement.<sup>47</sup> President Woodrow Wilson, who for the longest time remained of the mind that suffrage should be a state's issue, gave a speech to the U.S. Senate on September 30, 1918, where he issued his support of universal suffrage on the federal level.<sup>48</sup> After a hard fought battle by the suffragists to secure their right to vote, Congress passed the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment on June 4, 1919, and it became ratified on August 18, 1920.<sup>49</sup>

Even without having yet secured the right to vote or having equal status, the U.S. government wanted women (and children) to feel that what they were doing made a genuine difference and that their work was valuable. Without their devoted support to the war effort, the U.S. troops overseas would not have fared as well, and their nutritional requirements would not have been met. These women, while not serving on the front lines overseas, served on the front lines of the American home front effort. It was up to them to tend the home and prepare meals, care for the children, and for many, it also meant working outside the home for the first time. To

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<sup>46</sup> Schenone, "Recipes for Tough Times," *A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove*, 287, 292.

<sup>47</sup> "Women's Suffrage and WWI," *National Park Service*, October 15, 2018, Accessed May 1, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/womens-suffrage-wwi.htm>.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

ensure that enough women were willing, able, and available to work outside of the home in government war industries, the Woman's Committee through the Council of National Defense established a voluntary registration for women in the summer of 1917 where they identified in what areas women already possessed training in and which areas they would be interested in receiving training.<sup>50</sup> For instance, a woman could have indicated she had experience in fruit raising and as an office assistant, and upon the government learning this information, they could have recruited her for work in those areas.<sup>51</sup> The Woman's Committee ensured that all women understood why this registration would occur through a letter it sent out on September 22, 1917:

#### Objects of Registration for Women

1. To give every woman an opportunity to offer to her country such service as she is best fitted to render.
2. To interpret to the Government the possibilities of the woman power of the country.
3. To furnish accurate information to the Government of the capacities in which women are now serving, whether in their own homes or in paid pursuits, trades, or professions.
4. To have in every community lists of women carefully classified, who are willing to be called upon for trained or untrained services to the State or the Nation.
5. To ascertain which women are available for service outside the home, and which are not.
6. To list the women who wish to take training in order to give more efficient service.
7. To be able to furnish women for local paid positions, whether in Government service or not.
8. To be able to place women who can volunteer their services in positions of usefulness in many fields.
9. To have a registry of the capacities and training of the women of the country as the basis of the work of the Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense.<sup>52</sup>

The government made clear to women that their participation in registration was purely voluntary, they could withdraw their intentions of serving at any time without punishment, and

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<sup>50</sup> Clarke, "Registration," *American Women and the World War*, 46-51.

<sup>51</sup> For an example of a registration card, see: Council of National Defense Registration Card for Ella Josephine Willis, Applications to the Iowa Council of National Defense, Women's Committee, 1917-1918, *World War I Diaries and Letters*, Cora Call Whitley Papers, Iowa Women's Archives, The University of Iowa Libraries. Iowa City, Iowa, <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/wwid/id/3300>.

<sup>52</sup> Clarke, "Registration," *American Women and the World War*, 52.

they could not be called to service without their consent. Instead the government would use the registration information to place women with the proper training and willingness into roles and jobs as needed.

While the United States needed women to enter the workforce in certain capacities, including in wartime factories, what the government made clear was that women's main responsibilities remained squarely in the home. Women simply practicing thriftiness in their home, with respect to meal preparation and repairing of clothes instead of purchasing new, aided in the war effort. Above all else, though, was food conservation: "No matter how many days a week American women may give to selling Liberty Bonds or war saving stamps, to making bandages, sweaters or socks, their efforts will be in vain, if they have not done their part toward feeding those who fight for them."<sup>53</sup> Women who might have been accustomed to indulging their families at mealtimes had to reduce their servings and waste nothing. This notion of wasting nothing aligned with Hoover's Clean Plate Club. Hoover asked Americans to clean their plates at every meal for the sake of the country because "... to know of the shortage of food, and to have left on the plate half slices of bread, and bits of butter; to see sugar in the bottom of the tea-cup, is an irritation."<sup>54</sup> These women had to learn how to plan balanced, nutritious meals, how to use vegetables and less popular meat choices as substitutes (including one warning from the Food Administration that if the war dragged on, snake meat might become a delicacy), and how to protect food against spoilage.<sup>55</sup> While some housewives scoffed at the idea of saving leftovers

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<sup>53</sup> Alexander J. Barron, *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book* (Pittsburgh: Pierpont, Siviter & Co., 1918), 6.

<sup>54</sup> *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 2, 1917, 16.; *The gospel of the clean plate, don't waste any food*/L. Mallory, United States, 1917, Photograph, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002695598/>.

<sup>55</sup> "The ladies will probably protest and say that they will never, never eat snakes. But it is quite probable that snake meat will be considered a delicacy if the war continues." U.S. Food Administration, Educational Division, Illustrations and Plates Section, 10/1918 – 10/1919, "Photograph of Miss Renaud Painting Model of a Snake," *Photographs of Food Conservation Activities, 1917-1919, Record Group 4: Records of the U.S. Food Administration, 1917-1920*, National Archives, College Park, Maryland cited in Nicholas Gilmore, "Herbert

and reducing their waste, waste quickly added up across the nation: "... if only a single ounce of edible food, on the average, is allowed to spoil or be thrown away in each of our 20,000,000 homes, over 1,300,000 pounds of material would be wasted each day."<sup>56</sup> With waste capable of accruing quickly, it was paramount that women realized that waste related not only to the food wasted but also to the labor wasted. Additionally, as the Food Administration made known, conservation did not equal a reduction in quality as a filling meal could consist of "a shark steak, potato bread, and greens from a family victory garden" with a Lintz tart for dessert made with "rye flour, lemon zest, and cinnamon with an almond paste filling" and only small amounts of both butter and sugar, with twelve ounces of each needed.<sup>57</sup>

With a staggering amount of food being sent to the United States' European allies, propaganda campaigns on the federal, state, and local level convinced American women of their need to conserve. The posters created covered every aspect of the Food Administration "beginning with the simplest of directions to save wheat, meat, fat, and sugar, and ending with an appeal to the conscience of the American people to carry on in the spirit of brotherly love and sympathy for the starving peoples of liberated Europe the same work they had performed for the sake of winning the war."<sup>58</sup> These posters and the accompanying newspaper advertisements and articles sought to promote a volunteer spirit within Americans on the home front, so citizens clearly understood both their role and their crucial importance in the war effort. Newspapers used creative tactics to encourage conservation and adherence to the food pledge; one strategy

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Hoover's Meatless Wheatless World War I Diet," *The Saturday Evening Post*, Indianapolis, Indiana, February 5, 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke, "Food Conservation," *American Women and the World War*, 63.

<sup>57</sup> "Herbert Hoover's Meatless Wheatless World War I Diet," *The Saturday Evening Post*, Indianapolis, Indiana, February 5, 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Edith Guerrier, *We Pledged Allegiance: A Librarian's Intimate Story of the United States Food Administration*, The Hoover Library on War, Revolution, and Peace Miscellaneous Publication No. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1941), 18.

newspapers used was through printing lighthearted poems such as this one written by Mabel Clapp.

*Hoover's Goin' to Get You!*

The darned old Hoover Pledge has come to our house to stay;  
To frown our breakfast bacon down and take our steak away;  
It cans our morning waffles, and our sausage too, it seems,  
And dilates on the succulence of corn and spuds and beans,  
So skimp the sugar in your cake, and leave the butter out,  
Or Hoover's goin' to get you if you don't watch out!

Oh, gone now are the good old days of hotcakes thickly spread;  
And meatless, wheatless, hopeless days are reigning in their stead;  
And gone the days of fat rib roasts, and two-inch T-bone steaks,  
And doughnuts, plump and golden brown, the kind that mother makes,  
And when it comes to pie and cake, just learn to cut it out.  
Or Hoover's goin' to get you if you don't watch out!

So spread your buckwheats sparingly, and peel your taters thin;  
And tighten up your belt a notch and don't forget to grin.  
And if sometimes, your whole soul yearns for shortcake high and wide,  
And biscuits drenched with honey, and chicken, butter fried,  
Remember then that Kaiser Bill is short on sauer kraut.  
And Hoover's goin' to get him if we'll all help out!<sup>59</sup>

Poems, articles, and advertisements promoted to women their part in the effort, and explained how the men and Allies overseas relied on their food conservation to survive. The slogan of 'Food Will Win the War' reverberated across the nation and women felt the voluntary need to forgo the luxuries they once took for granted such as baking plentiful amounts of cakes and pies, and eating meat at every meal. These sentiments were expressed by writer and suffragist, Ida Clarke, who stated, "The mother in the kitchen, alone with her conscience and her memories, became a food administrator in her own right. . . . but the fact that 'food will win the war,' and

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<sup>59</sup> Mabel Clapp, "Hoover's Goin' to Get You," *The Salina Daily Union*, Salina, Kansas, November 5, 1917, 8. Also featured in *The Jefferson County Tribune*, Oskaloosa, Kansas, November 15, 1917, 2.; *The Daily Notes*, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, December 24, 1917, 3.; *Northfield Norwegian American*, Northfield, Minnesota, January 25, 1918.; *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Iowa City, Iowa, December 28, 1917, 6.; and *Quad-City Times*, Davenport, Iowa, December 5, 1917, 11.

that every woman had been drafted into the ranks of the army of American Housewives, sank deeply into the consciousness of every loyal American woman.”<sup>60</sup>

These efforts were not relayed solely to housewives and working mothers, but patriotic conservation efforts were also communicated to children. One such example is the “Harl Pledge for the Junior Army of the Food Release,” written by Mrs. Mattie T. Harl of Council Bluffs, Iowa, endorsed by Hoover, and subsequently adopted by the public schools in Council Bluffs in September 1917:

I hereby promise that I will not fretfully or complainingly find fault with the food set before me while my country is at war, nor will I criticise such food in any manner while at the table, but if it is necessary to talk it over I will do so cheerfully and helpfully when not at table, and I will in every way do my best to make it easy for those who must feed me to do so without leaving anyone else hungry.

And if I forget this pledge I promise to fine myself one penny for each time it is broken, same to be paid into the school fund for the aid of Belgian children or other funds established for the purpose.<sup>61</sup>

Children, in their own right, became tools of government propaganda. They would recite such pledges and receive food pledge cards in their classrooms to take home to their mothers to sign and return. Teaching children the necessities of voluntary conservation made the situation easier for women to cope with when children understood why conservation had to occur. Children learned why they could not have certain food items and understood that the variety of meals created that stretched meat and were different than their pre-war experiences were not to cause complaint regardless of their dislike for the food. Furthermore, the establishment of children ‘fining’ themselves for breaking the pledge was their own way of contributing to the war effort.

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<sup>60</sup> Clarke, “Food Conservation,” *American Women and the World War*, 62.

<sup>61</sup> This pledge spread outside Iowa and was distributed to every student in Arkansas. *Arkansas Democrat*, Little Rock, Arkansas, September 10, 1917, 5.

Some schools even had children sign food pledge cards and become voluntary members of the Food Administration. Additionally, children were instructed to not waste their lunches at school, but to bring home their leftovers for later use as it was stated, “there is food enough for all if we do not waste it. Lunch-basket leaks will be stopped once the children have their attention called to the need of their cooperation.”<sup>62</sup>

Magazines such as the *Ladies' Home Journal* also circulated to women the necessity for them to engage in conservation to aid the war effort. At the beginning of the 1900s, the *Ladies' Home Journal* had a circulation of almost one million, and both the editors at the magazine and the U.S. Food Administration knew that this large of a readership for one magazine would prove to be a strategic place to promote women's home front responsibilities.<sup>63</sup> Edward Bok, the editor-in-chief of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, wanted the magazine to be a resource for women during the war and to boost morale during trying times. With Bok's strategic leadership and keen government insight in knowing the U.S. would soon declare war, the *Ladies' Home Journal* on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1917, published their first war issue, three weeks after the declaration of war, which made it “the only monthly that recognized the existence of war, and its pages had already begun to indicate practical lines along which women could help.”<sup>64</sup> Bok continued with his support of the government and Food Administration, which resulted in Hoover's “first public declaration as food administrator to the women of America” being published in *Ladies' Home Journal*.<sup>65</sup>

Bok knew that to stay ahead of the other women's magazines, the *Ladies' Home Journal* needed to include both what women *wanted* to see and read and what women *needed* to see and

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<sup>62</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 28, 1917, 16.

<sup>63</sup> The *Ladies' Home Journal* surpassed the one million circulation mark in 1904. Theodore, Peterson, “The Birth of the Modern Magazine,” *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1956), 14, 56.

<sup>64</sup> Edward William Bok, “A War Magazine and War Activities,” *The Americanization of Edward Bok: The Autobiography of a Dutch Boy Fifty Years After* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), 389.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 390.

read. Included in the magazine were color images of meals created using wartime recipes that conserved and substituted ingredients, yet appealed to housewives and working mothers as they sought to place appetizing meals on their tables every night. Included in the April 1918 edition of the *Ladies' Home Journal* was information from the Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense for their recipe booklets: "Start the Day Right With a Good Breakfast, Do You Know Corn Meal?, A Whole Dinner in One Dish, Choose Your Food Wisely, Make a Little Meat Go a Long Way, Do You Know Oatmeal?, Food for Your Children, Instead of Meat, Vegetables for Winter, and Plenty of Potatoes."<sup>66</sup> During the war, "from six to sixteen articles per month were now coming from Mr. Hoover's department alone," which had a direct influence on women as they read the magazine and used it for wartime meal inspiration and general advice. In essence, "the magazine had thus practically become the semiofficial mouthpiece of all the various government war bureaus and war-work bodies."<sup>67</sup>

While magazines encouraged women in proper wartime conservation, they also instructed women to volunteer and work where they were needed. With the *Ladies' Home Journal* having a circulation rate over a million, countless numbers of women heeded the advice from the magazine and contributed their fair share to the war effort. One essay from the *Ladies' Home Journal* in April 1918 proclaimed, "The foursquare woman is a volunteer. No able-bodied woman has a right to occupy space in our land who is not doing, or preparing to do, some active service for the right to occupy the space she fills. Are you a foursquare woman? Then register for your place in the ranks of the army at home. There is no lack of opportunity for those with a will

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<sup>66</sup> Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, "The Woman's Committee of the United States Council of National Defense: An Official Department Reflecting its Interests and Needs," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1918, 28.

<sup>67</sup> Bok, "A War Magazine and War Activities," *The Americanization of Edward Bok: The Autobiography of a Dutch Boy Fifty Years After*, 390-391.

to serve, and the foursquare woman will find it.”<sup>68</sup> The foursquare woman became the woman that housewives wanted to become. Housewives wanted their wartime contributions to be visible expressions of patriotism, so that others knew they not only maintained the home but also aided in helping the men overseas return sooner by volunteering and/or working in a wartime sector.

Additionally, the *Ladies' Home Journal* included advertisements in their magazine that either directly connected to the war effort or alluded to it, which went against what some advertisers found to be in good taste. *Printers' Ink*, the first national trade magazine for advertising, warned that “there is one thing that advertisers cannot afford to do, and that is to use patriotism as an appeal to sell goods. Patriotism is a sentiment so lofty that it is almost sacred, and any attempt to attach a dollars-and-cents significance to it is nothing short of desecration. Dragging a patriotic note as a selling point into advertising copy is neither good taste nor sound business.”<sup>69</sup> While *Printers' Ink* found timely allusions to the war effort to be acceptable, the magazine's writers found no place for advertisements that told Americans to prove their patriotism by buying certain items and wanted to remind advertisers that the war was not an event to cash in on. What advertisements did sprout up for the war effort were ones that appealed to a mass audience, so “conservation themes abounded, especially in food advertisements.”<sup>70</sup>

While the *Ladies' Home Journal* published for a white, middle class audience, magazines such as *The Farmer's Wife* also existed to provide wartime cooking and household advice to females living on a farm and for those women who might have taken up farming responsibilities with their husbands off fighting. *The Farmer's Wife* helped women understand how best to

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<sup>68</sup> Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, “The Woman's Committee of the United States Council of National Defense: An Official Department Reflecting its Interests and Needs,” *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1918, 28.

<sup>69</sup> “Avoid Patriotism as Sales Argument,” *Printers' Ink* (New York: Printers Ink Pub. Co., April 26, 1917), 118 cited in Daniel Pope, “The Advertising Industry and World War I,” *The Public Historian*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Spring 1980), 10.

<sup>70</sup> Pope, “The Advertising Industry and World War I,” *The Public Historian*, 11.

conserve wheat and how certain vegetables would give the same nutritional value as bread (regardless of the practicality of consuming that large of a quantity of certain vegetables). The magazine stated, “that one dish of lima beans, one-third cup of corn, two tomatoes, three cucumbers, three cups of chopped celery, 18 ounces of lettuce (more than two heads), or five cups of cabbage each had the same energy-producing value as two slices of bread.”<sup>71</sup>

Besides women reading and sharing magazines, new cookbooks popped up that taught women how to make healthy, appetizing meals that conserved and substituted where necessary, and some cookbooks even provided sample meal plans so women were able to plan ahead. One such cookbook was the *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book*, which was published in 1918. Along with recipes the book contained anecdotes about food, ingredient substitutions, and the benefits of consumption during the war. One example suggested making popcorn balls as a healthy, flavorful alternative to traditional sugary sweets. The cookbook stated, “‘Popcorn has Power.’ Popcorn is very valuable as a food. Give the children popcorn balls made with honey or corn syrup. The children will be happy and satisfied, and you will be helping your country by saving on other sweets.”<sup>72</sup> This cookbook heavily promoted substitution to homemakers and included right at the beginning of the cookbook a list of ingredients to be conserved and then gave substitute options. One example showed that while wheat was to be conserved, there existed a plethora of other wheat alternatives such as barley, corn, oats, potatoes, rice, rye, and tapioca.<sup>73</sup> Additionally, cookbooks would give precise bits of advice on how best to navigate meal planning and conservation in the kitchen with such advice as: “At formal dinners no white

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<sup>71</sup> *The Farmer's Wife* (St. Paul: Webb Publishing Co., May 1918), 100 cited in Eighmey, “Homegrown Vegetables Year-Round,” *Food Will Win the War*, 86.

<sup>72</sup> Twentieth Century Club, “War Candy,” *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book* (Pittsburgh: Pierpont, Siviter & Co., 1918), 125.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, “We Must Substitute,” *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book*, 9.

bread is served. No butter is served at social luncheons or dinners. Use no toast as garnish. Use no croutons. Use no bacon for trimming. Use left-over meats, minced or in stews. Use vegetables in omelets. Use potatoes in many forms – stuffed, puffed, scalloped with cheese.”<sup>74</sup>

Cookbooks also suggested to women the ways to supplement their diets without a constant supply of high quality meat. Milk became a patriotic staple item in many women’s kitchens. Women turned to creating meals that relied on milk and cream to thicken up meals to make them wholesome without the necessity of adding meat. The cookbook, *Food and Victory*, explained that “a quart of milk contain[ed] as much food value as a pound of steak” and that “If one must economize in food, *spend less for meat, but not for milk*” because there was no substitute for milk.<sup>75</sup> It took a while for women to warm up to the idea of milk as food since it was not chewed: “many people think of milk only as a beverage, but if they understood that it is in reality a nourishing food, they would increase their daily allowance.”<sup>76</sup> Eggs, cheese, and nuts also became suitable options as meat substitutes that added nutrition and flavor to meals. Amongst all the new recipes that called for conservation and substitutions, cookbooks cautioned women to not go overboard with trying new recipes that could leave family members unsatisfied with the taste. Cookbooks stated, “Don’t give the new dishes a black eye by having too many of them at once. Use all the ingenuity you have to make them both taste and look well. Food habits, like other habits, are not easily changed. Lead gently into the new realm.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> United States Food Administration, “Meal Planning,” *War Economy in Food, with Suggestions and Recipes for Substitutions in the Planning of Meals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 15.

<sup>75</sup> Carlotta Greer, “Eat Less Meat,” *Food and Victory: A War Supplement to Text-Book of Cooking* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1918), 48.

<sup>76</sup> “The Dairy,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 4, 1917, 23.

<sup>77</sup> United States Food Administration, “War Economy in Food, Our Problem and Its Solution,” *War Economy in Food, with Suggestions and Recipes for Substitutions in the Planning of Meals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 12. Also found in: Twentieth Century Club, “Breads,” *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book* 16.

Oftentimes, these wartime cookbooks broke the recipes down into sections based on what ingredients were being conserved and then offered reasonable substitutions or recipes that called for minimum amounts of these rationed ingredients. *Food and Victory* contained chapters on wheat conservation, the reduction of sugar consumption, conserving of fats, consuming less meat, and methods of food preservation.<sup>78</sup> Wheat was an item that needed to be conserved due to the shortages that arose when former wheat fields in Europe became battlegrounds and many men who were involved in agriculture in the United States were called to service. Women pondered why corn could not be sent to the Allies, but corn was an American staple item and the Allies did not possess “the necessary equipment to grind it and are without sufficient fuel to bake corn-meal quick breads.”<sup>79</sup> Suitable wheat substitutes for women to use consisted of cornmeal, oats, rice, rye, squash, pumpkins, and potatoes.

Recipes that called for a reduction in the use of sugar were also highlighted in cookbooks because the Allies’ supply of sugar was held in the hands of the enemy. Women were asked to reduce their use of granulated sugar, which was one hundred percent sugar and instead use substitutes for pure cane sugar.<sup>80</sup> Such substitutes consisted of corn syrup, molasses, honey, maple syrup, sorghum, and the use of dried fruits such as raisins and figs as sweeteners. Additionally, cookbooks strongly urged women to not use sugar in their canning of fruits during a time of shortage because sugar was not necessary and if making preserves, syrups proved a suitable alternative to sugar.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore because of the conservation of both white and brown sugar, sweets and candies were not to be made with those sugars, but a tasty alternative was to

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<sup>78</sup> Greer, “Table of Contents,” *Food and Victory*, v-vi.

<sup>79</sup> Greer, “Save the Wheat for Victory,” 1. Also mentioned in: United States Food Administration, “War Economy in Food, Our Problem and Its Solution,” *War Economy in Food, with Suggestions and Recipes for Substitutions in the Planning of Meals* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 7 and in “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 28, 1917, 16.

<sup>80</sup> Greer, “The American ‘Sweet Tooth,’” 23.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

use prunes and dates stuffed with marshmallows, nuts, and peanut butter, along with making gelatin dishes and simple puddings.

The Food Administration also instructed women to conserve fats wherever possible since soldiers overseas needed the fat for fuel and fats were used in munitions processing. Frying foods became unpatriotic as excess amounts of fat were wasted in the process, and the alternative of baking rather than frying saved fats and was healthier.<sup>82</sup> Women were instructed to take any excess or unusable fats to a soap maker, and if not feasible, to make soap at home as to not waste any fat. Advertisements proclaimed to women, “Does your front window profess patriotism and your back door confess waste? ... Join the ranks of the great Conservation Army, don the uniform and **wage war on waste!** You have pledged yourself to conserve fats - make your own soap with the precious fat you would otherwise throw away.”<sup>83</sup> Soap making allowed women to do their part for the war and not waste any useful fats.

Hand in hand with the reduction of fats came the reduction of meat in people’s diets. While meat provided an excellent source of protein and iron, this could be supplemented through the consumption of fish, eggs, beans, peanuts, milk, and cheese along with eating more chicken as an alternative to red meat. Women were not accustomed to using these items as substitutes for their typical daily allotment of beef or pork, and might have been surprised at how nutritious, inexpensive, and tasty an item like cottage cheese could be, where one pound of cottage cheese provided more protein than one pound of veal.<sup>84</sup> One suggested dinner menu that used cottage

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<sup>82</sup> Greer, “Fat is Fuel for the Fighter,” 39-40.

<sup>83</sup> “Lewis’ Lye,” *Farmers’ Review*, Chicago, Illinois, February 2, 1918, 94.

<sup>84</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 31, 1918, 12.; In the September 27, 1918 *Wallaces’ Farmer*, “The Dairy” column gave this breakdown for how much protein one pound of cottage cheese provided compared to meat: “1.27 pounds of sirloin steak, 1.37 pounds of chuck rib beef, 1.46 pounds of fresh ham, 1.58 pounds of loin pork chop, 1.09 pounds of round steak, 1.52 pounds of fowl, 1.44 pounds of smoked ham, 1.31 pounds of hind leg of lamb, 1.37 pounds of breast of veal.” “The Dairy,” *Wallace’s Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 27, 1918, 16.

cheese for the main dish and substituted barley for wheat bread was “cottage cheese loaf, mashed potato, string beans or spinach, radishes, dressed lettuce or green onions, barley bread; jam tart, coffee.”<sup>85</sup> Cottage cheese loaf consisted of cottage cheese, chopped nuts (typically made with peanuts), leftover cereal, bread crumbs, chopped onion, a small amount of fat, soda “to neutralize acid in cheese,” salt, pepper, parsley, mixed herbs, and Worcestershire sauce all combined into a loaf, baked, and then served with either a tomato or brown sauce.<sup>86</sup> Cookbooks also advocated for using meat extenders if meat was used because of the flavor it provided. Meat could be extended through the use of bread crumbs or by use in stews where adding additional vegetables made the dish stretch while still incorporating meat. Women might not have considered such combinations before the war, but “it is to be hoped that war conditions will awaken the housekeeper to the fact that many of the food materials heretofore little used are both tasty and nourishing.”<sup>87</sup>

While some cookbooks from the World War I era supplemented their favorite, classic dishes with wartime recipes and how to make do with substitutes, other cookbooks were entirely dedicated to camouflaging one’s cooking and making do with mock dishes. Helen Watkeys Moore wrote and compiled the cookbook, *Camouflage Cookery: A Book of Mock Dishes*, which was published in 1918 to help housewives understand their varied recipe options.<sup>88</sup> Moore compiled recipes from various sources as well as her own to create a one-stop manual for women on how to cook with substitutes. The book contained such recipes as mock clam chowder, mock tenderloin steak, mock cherry pie, and mock hollandaise sauce.

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<sup>85</sup> Greer, “Eat Less Meat,” 47.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.; A similar recipe was provided in *Wallaces’ Farmer* on May 31, 1918, which along with using peanuts also called for the use of peanut butter in the recipe. “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 31, 1918, 12.

<sup>87</sup> Greer, 57.

<sup>88</sup> Helen Watkeys Moore, *Camouflage Cookery: A Book of Mock Dishes* (New York: Duffield & Company, 1918).

Besides food conservation, women played a major role in food production and preservation mainly with the planting of Victory Gardens. In 1917, it was estimated that families planted 3,000,000 gardens, which cut down on the fruit and vegetable needs of women at grocery stores.<sup>89</sup> With the growth of home gardens came an increase in canning. Canning gained popularity because of the war and women turned to canning to conserve their fruits and vegetables for consumption throughout the cold winter months. Articles and advertisements on canning appeared in journals, newspapers, and magazines to convince women that canning was not only beneficial for the war effort but that canned foods also tasted good. Along with canning, drying and pickling grew in prominence to preserve fruits and vegetables without the need for sugar.

Along with cookbooks, magazines and newspapers also played a huge role in how farmers and African Americans received their information about food conservation, wheatless and meatless meals, and how to use substitutes. These magazines and newspapers were geared towards women of all walks of life. The mainstream newspapers such as *The New York Times* wrote for mainly a white, middle class audience as they were able to afford the daily newspaper more easily, but magazines and newspapers also existed for farmers with the semi-monthly *Farm and Fireside* and for an African American audience with the both *The Bystander* published in Des Moines, Iowa and *The Chicago Defender*.<sup>90</sup> *Farm and Fireside*, published semi-monthly in Springfield, Ohio, provided advice to farmers on how to cope with life on the farm during the war.<sup>91</sup> Articles gave farmers' wives advice on speeding up their housework and how to use more peanut butter in their cooking with recipes such as cream of peanut soup, peanut butter nut loaf,

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<sup>89</sup> Clarke, "Food Conservation," 71.

<sup>90</sup> *Farm and Fireside* (Springfield: The Crowell Publishing Company, January 1918), Print.; *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, 1917-1918.; *The Chicago Defender*, Chicago, Illinois, 1918.

<sup>91</sup> *Farm and Fireside* (Springfield: The Crowell Publishing Company, January 1918), Print.

peanut graham bread, peanut war cake, and peanut date confections. The magazine's advertisements also reflected the wartime roles and responsibilities of women with one recommending that women serve mincemeat war pies with no top crust to save on flour.<sup>92</sup>

The advice provided to African Americans closely mirrored what appeared in those newspapers and magazines written for a white audience, as articles focused on conserving food for the Allies, curtailing elaborate banquets and lunches when not necessary, and reducing the use of wheat and meat.<sup>93</sup> One particular article pointed out to women the necessity to consume more potatoes to aid in the war effort. The U.S. had a surplus of potatoes in storage, which were rotting before being consumed and during a time of war, wastefulness was unpatriotic. The potato was a weapon against waste as the article pointed out, "If you fail to use the war weapon that is in your hands you cannot expect your country to win any more than you can fancy the army conquering if it throws away its rifles or abandons its artillery."<sup>94</sup> Food waste would get women shamed by other women and labelled as unpatriotic. Every food item that could be consumed, preserved, or canned for the war effort needed to be to help the men win the war and return home sooner.

As World War I came to its conclusion, the United States Food Administration removed its suggestions to have wheatless and meatless meals. As Hoover always intended, the U.S. never instituted a forced rationing system, but instead relied on individuals pledging to reduce the use

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<sup>92</sup> Monica Kelly, "Speeding Up Housework: How a Few Hands Can Manage to do the Work of Many," *Farm and Fireside* (Springfield: The Crowell Publishing Company, January 1918), 28, Print.; Ethel Aiken Lyons, "Use More Peanut Butter: Try These New and Delicious Dishes," *Farm and Fireside* (Springfield: The Crowell Publishing Company, January 1918), 29, Print.; "None Such Mince Meat," *Farm and Fireside* (Springfield: The Crowell Publishing Company, January 1918), 29, Print.

<sup>93</sup> "Food Badly Needed By All Our Allies: Eating Houses and Restaurants Must Readjust Price Schedules," *The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition)*, Chicago, Illinois, October 19, 1918, 7.; "Help Win the War," *The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition)*, Chicago, Illinois, February 9, 1918, 8.

<sup>94</sup> "Need for General Use of Potatoes Pointed Out By U.S.," *The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition)*, Chicago, Illinois, February 2, 1918, 9.

of such items as sugar, wheat, and meat that were in high demand less and instead use ingredients that were more readily available and could not easily be transported overseas to the military. Housewives and working mothers alike who pledged or volunteered to keep food conservation at the forefront in their homes did so with both a sense of patriotism and a bit of guilt, for other women shamed those who did not contribute. World War I also saw the advent of the U.S. government heavily using advertising poster campaigns to show citizens on the American home front, particularly the women, their role in the war effort, and these campaigns were expanded upon as the U.S. entered World War II when rationing became mandatory.

## CHAPTER THREE. WORLD WAR II: WOMEN AND THE HOME FRONT

The United States entered World War II on December 7, 1941 after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. With the U.S.'s entry into the war, wartime jobs remained unfilled as men were drafted and sent overseas, which left women to enter the factories to complete the work. While women began to work in munitions plants and in other wartime industries, the focus (as was also the focus in World War I) was that women still needed to remain as a housewife first and not let their responsibilities at home and to their children take a backseat. So even though women took wartime jobs, their responsibilities at home did not decrease. If anything, their role increased with the male figure often absent from the picture overseas fighting in the war or busy with wartime production on the home front. This left women to work, take care of the children and the home, and run necessary errands. These tasks were not new to poor, farm wives, and African American women who always juggled these responsibilities, but these tasks were sometimes new for white middle-class women who previously might have had a domestic servant. So, while these tasks were new to some women, the sense of urgency increased for all as women balanced home and work in the name of national defense. Along with the above-mentioned tasks, women now had to prepare healthy, inventive meals with ration coupons, a new mandatory system that constrained their shopping options.

Food rationing went into effect in the United States in May of 1942 when the Office of Price Administration (OPA) began rationing sugar and coffee, and then eventually canned goods, butter, and meat.<sup>95</sup> Rationing allowed everyone equal access to these food items that were in short supply, otherwise, people with money might buy more to stockpile, leaving the less

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<sup>95</sup> "World War II Rationing on the U.S. Homefront," *Ames Historical Society*, 2018, Accessed March 26, 2018, <http://www.ameshistory.org/content/world-war-ii-rationing-us-homefront>.

affluent without them.<sup>96</sup> Every member of the family received a ration book with red and blue points; the red points set out monthly allowances for meat, sugar, butter, fat, cheese, and oil, and the blue points allowed users to purchase canned and bottled goods.<sup>97</sup> To buy these items, the consumer needed both the correct number of points and money. Once the consumer used their ration stamps in a given month, they no longer would be able to purchase those rationed items.

Homemakers needed to decide on weekly menus based on those limits. When planning meals, women who wanted to make the most of the system would also look at which grocery stores were offering weekly special deals and reduced prices, along with reduced point values regulated by the OPA. Women could also gather meal-planning ideas from menus printed in the weekly columns in newspapers. While rationing altered how women thought about meal plans, Bentley recognized that “food rationing was just one element of the substantial restructuring of U.S. society, politics, and economics during World War II, all of which created great anxiety for many Americans.”<sup>98</sup> This anxiety, paired with women taking on greater responsibilities as they entered the workforce, put more pressure on women to be both a homemaker and a worker. As stated previously, poor, farm, and African American women had always felt this pressure as they struggled to feed their families in light of specific constraints – both limits on time, since those women were more likely to hold outside jobs, and the limit of being poor.

War was all encompassing especially for women who saw their homemaking lives uprooted by the war. 6.5 million new female workers entered factories and shipyards to aid the war effort, which led to a wartime high of 19,170,000 women in the labor force in 1944.<sup>99</sup> Yet

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<sup>96</sup> Ossian, “The Kitchen Front,” *The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1939-1945*, 127.

<sup>97</sup> Kelly A. Spring, “Food Rationing and Canning in World War II,” *National Women’s History Museum*, September 13, 2017, Accessed March 26, 2018, <https://www.nwhm.org/articles/food-rationing-and-canning-world-war-ii>.

<sup>98</sup> Bentley, “Rationing is Good Democracy,” *Eating for Victory*, 9.

<sup>99</sup> Hartmann, “Women’s Place in War and Reconversion,” *The Home Front and Beyond*, 24.; Hartmann, “Women’s Work and the Female Labor Force,” *The Home Front and Beyond*, 85.

for many this work was meant to only be short-term until the men returned from war. Rupp stated, “Even though the image of the American women changed from that of wife, mother, and homemaker to that of war worker, these changes were superficial. They were meant by the government and understood by the public, to be temporary ... Rosie was still primarily wife and mother, and her factory job could be viewed as an extension of these duties.”<sup>100</sup> Regardless of her responsibilities at work, a women’s first and most important responsibility remained to her family.

Married women represented the greatest change to wartime employment. Hartmann stated, “One in every ten married women entered the work force during the war, and they represented more than 3 million of the new female workers, while 2,890,000 were single and the rest widowed or divorced.”<sup>101</sup> Wives who gained employment outside of the home increased “from 13.9 [percent] in 1940 to 22.5 [percent] in 1944.”<sup>102</sup> This was the first time in the nation’s history when married women were a greater part of the labor force than single women.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, married women with children also entered the workforce in a great number: “more than half a million women with children under ten took jobs as their proportion of all women in this category increased from 7.8 percent in 1940 to 12.1 percent in 1944.”<sup>104</sup> As these married women settled into their wartime work responsibilities, many of them hoped to remain on the job after the war. Between 1943 and 1945, forty-five to sixty-eight percent of married female workers indicated they wished to remain working at the conclusion of the war.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Rupp, “Rosie the Riveter: American Mobilization Propaganda,” *Mobilizing Women for War*, 138.

<sup>101</sup> Hartmann, “Women’s Work and the Female Labor Force,” *The Home Front and Beyond*, 78.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Hartmann, “Women’s Work and the Female Labor Force,” *The Home Front and Beyond*, 78, cited in D’Ann Campbell, “Wives, Workers, and Womanhood: America during World War II,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1979, 13-30.

<sup>105</sup> Hartmann, “Women’s Work and the Female Labor Force,” *The Home Front and Beyond*, 90.

Some of these married homemakers previously had hired African American domestics to cook and clean in their homes, and now women sought wartime occupations for higher wages “as federal law for the first time forbade racial discrimination in defense industries.”<sup>106</sup> The first half of the 1940s signaled a large shift in African American women leaving domestic service. From 1940 to 1944, the percentage of African American women who worked as domestic servants dropped from 59.9 to 44.6 percent.<sup>107</sup> So, not only did affluent housewives have to enter the workforce, but they also now had to cook and clean with less or no hired help. Some even “complained that ‘defense jobs’ were creating rising wages and a shortage of ‘really competent Negro women.’”<sup>108</sup> A number of these married women had never held employment before, or some for a brief period before marriage, yet wartime messages pushed these women to enter the factories and fill other labor gaps. The *Mobile Register* (Alabama) proclaimed in 1942, “now unless millions of housewives go to work . . . we can’t adequately supply as large an army as we hope to by the end of next year.”<sup>109</sup> Government, industry, media coverage, and other messages told women that for the sake of the war effort, they should enter the workforce to do their part in serving the country and perhaps allow their loved ones to return home sooner.<sup>110</sup>

The United States government made a concerted effort, through its propaganda campaigns, to reiterate the importance of the homemaker and the crucial way she could support the war effort. James Landis, the director of the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense, stated in July

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<sup>106</sup> Rebecca Sharpless, “If I Ever Catch You in a White Woman’s Kitchen, I’ll Kill You,” *Cooking in Other Women’s Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1865-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 177.

<sup>107</sup> Karen Tucker Anderson, “Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II,” *The Journal of American History* Vol. 69, No. 1 (June 1982), 83, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1887753>.

<sup>108</sup> Sharpless, “If I Ever Catch You in a White Woman’s Kitchen, I’ll Kill You,” *Cooking in Other Women’s Kitchens*, 178.

<sup>109</sup> *Mobile Register*, November 23, 1942, cited in Thomas, “Recruitment and Training,” *Riveting and Rationing in Dixie*, 24.

<sup>110</sup> Thomas, “Recruitment and Training,” *Riveting and Rationing*, 26.

1943, “War is not always a battle line, war is a housewife pouring fat into a container, preserving vegetables grown in her garden, buying foods with understanding and knowledge, accepting uncomplainingly the necessities of rationing.”<sup>111</sup> Official and unofficial messaging sought to shape these women’s understanding of their role in the war and its importance. Leaders aimed to help women comprehend why rationing was mandatory (in contrast to the voluntary food conservation programs during World War I) and why they needed to enter the workforce. Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, a former Assistant Professor of English at the University of Kentucky, has pointed to Landis’s remarks as indicating that “what makes housewifely activity war work is the community’s understanding of such activity as war work, an understanding obtained through volunteerism and propaganda: a community is at war ‘to the degree’ that it is conscious that it is at war. For the propagandist, war is as much a constructed phenomenon as a series of discrete events.”<sup>112</sup> Women needed to be actively engaged in the war effort and this engagement in part was constructed through advertisements and articles geared towards homemakers.

As women faced these new challenges of work-life balance, rationing made it difficult at times to create nutritious and flavorful meals for their families. New cookbooks, articles, and advertisements started to grow in popularity, especially those that promised to help women produce easy-to-prepare meals after they came home from work. Marjorie Mills, author of the 1943 cookbook *Cooking on a Ration or Food is Still Fun*, said that she kept receiving letters from women who said, “We’re stumped. We need cooking procedures that are not in any of our books. We need good meatless main dishes, recipes low in fat and sugar, hearty soups and chowders, and above all meals that won’t take too much time to prepare. Yet we want those

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<sup>111</sup> Michael Renov, *Hollywood’s Wartime Women: Representation and Ideology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 45, cited in Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, “Feeding the Hungry Heart: Gender, Food, and War in the Poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay,” *Food and Foodways*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1996), 81.

<sup>112</sup> Kaiser, “Feeding the Hungry Heart,” 81.

meals to be satisfying and a joy to our families in difficult days. Please help.”<sup>113</sup> National magazines such as *Ladies' Home Journal* and *McCall's*, ran articles in virtually every issue, advising homemakers how to prepare quality, healthy meals for their families. Newspapers serving both large and small communities, such as *The New York Times* and *The Ames (Iowa) Daily Tribune* along with other local/regional publications, published articles multiple times a week discussing strategies to live under wartime conditions. While national women's magazines had long running columns of homemaking advice before the war started, and many newspapers had long had a “women's page” that had columns and articles about cooking, what became new during World War II was that these old-style food-advice articles and columns began to focus almost exclusively on addressing wartime cooking conditions.

At the start of the war, magazines and newspapers were telling their readers, specifically white, middle-class women, that their duty and responsibilities during wartime remained in the home. *The Ladies' Home Journal* in April 1943 had advertisements that stated “American housewives are responsible for keeping eighteen times as many men properly fed on the Production Front as those who feed the men on the Fighting Front,” and “This battle station is closer to the fighting front than you may think!”<sup>114</sup> While magazines and newspapers at the beginning of the war contained advertisements speaking to housewives, the federal government, employers, and schools began emphasizing the manpower shortage and the need for women to enter the workforce. As the war mounted and worker shortages increased, the messages conveyed to women within magazines and newspapers shifted. More than ever, the campaigns discouraged women from remaining at home, urging them to join the workforce to help end the

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<sup>113</sup> Marjorie Mills, “Preface,” *Cooking on a Ration: Food is Still Fun* (New York: Literary Classics, Inc., 1943), ix.

<sup>114</sup> “Youngstown Pressed Steel Division,” *Ladies' Home Journal* (Philadelphia: The Curtis Publishing Company, April 1943), Print, 160.

war. Historian Dorothy Schwieder noted that “by 1943, as more and more men were drafted, it became clear that new sources of labor were needed. The government then began a campaign to attract more women into the labor market, including married women with children. Slogans abounded such as ‘The More Women at Work – The Sooner We’ll Win.’”<sup>115</sup> The government and industry needed women to enter the workforce because of the labor shortage with ten million men drafted into service or occupied with other wartime responsibilities.<sup>116</sup> Advertisements sold to women the idea that they needed to work to help the wartime industries. Maureen Honey stated, “The images of war workers in advertising during the recruitment campaign had the major purpose of attracting women into fields drained by the enlistment of men and encouraging public acceptance of women in new roles. This was accomplished by demonstrating that women were capable of non-domestic work...”<sup>117</sup> Many women wanted to work and these advertisements increased their acceptance in the workplace by their male counterparts who at times created unwelcoming environments when they believed women were incapable of working at the same efficiency and quality levels as men.

Even First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was involved with urging women to take a wartime position. She actively took part in wartime restrictions that affected the rest of the nation including implementing food rationing at the White House. In 1941, she helped with the creation of a government information film, “Women in Defense,” that proclaimed women’s role in industrial work and scientific research. This film also urged industries to set up daycare centers in the factory where mothers could take their children.<sup>118</sup> Additionally some factories created

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<sup>115</sup> Dorothy Schwieder, “World War II and the Years Beyond,” *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), 284.

<sup>116</sup> “Research Starters: The Draft and World War II,” *The National WWII Museum*, n.d., Accessed March 26, 2018, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/draft-and-wwii>.

<sup>117</sup> Maureen Honey, “Middle-Class Images of Women,” *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 110.

<sup>118</sup> “First Lady Biography: Eleanor Roosevelt,” *National First Ladies’ Library*, n.d., Accessed March 26, 2018, <http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33.>; Emily Yellin, “Qualified Successes,” *Our*

“Victory Shifts” that allowed women to work during the day when their children were at school. A typical “victory shift” was from 9am to 3pm and these shifts, “officials believed, enabled housewives to get children to school along with making breakfasts and dinners as well as contributing to the industrial war effort.”<sup>119</sup> As women were urged into the workforce, the advertisements from the *Ladies’ Home Journal* in April 1944 read, “I lead a double life – Uncle Sam said, ‘I want you’ to both Johnny and me” and “You can shorten Johnny’s loneliness! Take a war job now!”<sup>120</sup> As the messages conveyed changed, newspapers and magazines needed to tailor their advertisements and articles to match the needs of the time.

*The New York Times* met this challenge and published numerous wartime articles with advice for the “wartime homemaker,” including “information about budgeting in war-time” and “how to pursue home decorating on a budget.”<sup>121</sup> On the specific subject of cooking, *The New York Times* featured an almost daily “News of Food” column, aimed at assisting women with wartime meal production. During the Depression, the paper had run a “Food News of the Week” column that emphasized ways for women to stretch their household budgets.<sup>122</sup> But by the end of February 1943, the wartime column began running weekly menu plans that showed women how many ration stamps would be needed to purchase the required ingredients for their meals. These menus took into consideration new ration point allotments, anticipated shortages, and increased availability of certain ingredients, working within those constraints to produce the most nutritionally well-rounded meals for families. Almost daily articles aimed to help women understand the rationing system, to better “fight the fight” on the home front. Women saw it as

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*Mothers’ War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 288-289.

<sup>119</sup> Ossian, “The Production Front,” *The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1939-1945*, 84.

<sup>120</sup> *Ladies’ Home Journal* (Philadelphia: The Curtis Publishing Company, April 1944), Print.

<sup>121</sup> Nikki Usher, “Service Journalism as Community Experience: Personal Technology and Personal Finance at *The New York Times*,” *Lifestyle Journalism*, ed. Folker Hanusch (New York: Routledge, 2013), 110.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

their patriotic duty to help win the war at home by winning the war in the kitchen, which meant reducing their consumption of certain ingredients, making do with substitutes, and saving fats to help produce explosives.

Margot McConnell, under the pen name Jane Holt, wrote many of the “News of Food” columns about wartime menus and rationing. Working for *The New York Times* between 1941 and 1943, McConnell served as an assistant women’s page editor and wrote hundreds of articles, mostly homemakers’ cooking advice.<sup>123</sup> McConnell, as a female food writer, was able to connect better with her readers, as she herself understood the limitations rationing placed on homemakers to produce quality, healthy meals for their families. As expected, female food writers and home economists wrote most of the magazine and newspaper articles that addressed the home and family.

Upon McConnell’s departure, Jane Nickerson took over the “News of Food” column and wrote under McConnell’s pen name of “Jane Holt” for a few years before she began to write under her own byline.<sup>124</sup> Nickerson began her career with *The Times* in 1941 and in 1942 became the first food editor, where she remained until 1957.<sup>125</sup> Under Nickerson, *The Times* hired a home economist, former Columbia University instructor Ruth P. Casa-Emellos, to test the recipes featured in the “News of Food” column and adapt “them, when necessary, for home use.”<sup>126</sup> This testing allowed readers assurance that the meals they would prepare for their families would be high quality, healthy, filling, and scientific meals that were not a waste of

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<sup>123</sup> “Margot M’Connell, Editor, Food Writer,” *The New York Times*, July 8, 1976, 34.

<sup>124</sup> Kimberly Wilmot Voss, “The Origins of Food Journalism in US Newspapers,” *The Food Section: Newspaper Women and the Culinary Community* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 30.

<sup>125</sup> “Food Columnist Reveals Recipes for Exciting Career,” *Ocala (FL) Star-Banner*, April 28, 1974.

<sup>126</sup> Voss, “The Origins of Food Journalism in US Newspapers,” *The Food Section*, 19.; “Ruth Casa-Emellos, 88, Dies; Kitchen Expert at The Times,” *The New York Times*, May 9, 1986.

ration stamps and money. Nickerson even interviewed home cooks to ensure she was writing about issues that mattered to homemakers, which included how to cope with rising food costs.<sup>127</sup>

While Nickerson became the food editor, she started at *The Times* using the pen name “Jane Holt” for continuity purposes. Pen names were used frequently by female writers as male editors perceived female hires as a “revolving door” with an expectation that women would leave the profession upon marriage and having children.<sup>128</sup> Setting up pen names allowed for greater stability and reliability as a new writer could step into the role, use the same name as the previous writer, and retain the trust and social capital of that institution. Another reason for the use of pen names was because of the many negative caricatures that surrounded women in the rough field of journalism. Stereotypes denigrated female reporters and editors as “simple at best and unethical at worst,” while, truthfully a good majority of them “were trained journalists or home economists.”<sup>129</sup> Even before the war, newspaper and magazines were very gendered. Male editors typically only assigned women to work for a “women’s page,” which consisted of the “four Fs: family, fashion, food, and furnishings,” since they believed women were not qualified enough to cover anything else.<sup>130</sup> Even Nickerson’s impressive work as the first food editor for *The Times* is often overshadowed by her successor, Craig Claiborne, who became the first male food editor in the United States. Claiborne had much admiration for Nickerson and stated, “She was a diligent researcher with a thoroughgoing interest in learning more about the world of cuisine. ... [She] was, to my mind, the most inventive and diligent food [writer] in Manhattan. What she did not know she researched with great gravity and concern.”<sup>131</sup> Nickerson’s

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<sup>127</sup> Voss, “The Origins of Food Journalism in US Newspapers,” *The Food Section*, 19.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, “Preface,” *The Food Section*, 1.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, “The Origins of Food Journalism in US Newspapers,” *The Food Section*, 13.

<sup>131</sup> Craig Claiborne, *Craig Claiborne’s A Feast Made for Laughter* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982), 122-125.

prominence as a female journalist and editor remained uncommon. Many women found writing for the women's page to be both an opportunity and a trap; women could publish but found it difficult to ever advance past those types of stories.<sup>132</sup>

While some women found advice in *The New York Times*, other women sought wartime advice in national magazines such as *The Ladies' Home Journal* and *McCall's*. "While it would be impossible to know precisely what role any of these magazines played in the lives of American women during and after World War II, there are several important indications that they had a significant part in defining women's aspirations regarding work and family, appearance, health, and happiness."<sup>133</sup> One indicator was how far reaching magazines were, and during the war, *The Ladies' Home Journal* had the highest magazine circulation rate in the world with over 3.8 million subscribers.<sup>134</sup> In fact, the readership numbers would be much greater than official circulation rates, as women shared their magazines among their group of friends. For example, in 1944 Iowa had a subscription rate of 75,959, but the number of readers most likely would have reached over 100,000.<sup>135</sup> Women had varying reasons for buying magazines, but one woman's response in the March 1942 issue of *Woman's Home Companion* (one of the top five women's magazines at the time) might encapsulate what a lot of women hoped to gain: "We all want but one thing from our magazines: inspiration, . . . something that helps us make our lives better and richer with the beauty of living."<sup>136</sup> So, while the war raged on, women sought solace

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<sup>132</sup> Voss, "The Origins of Food Journalism in US Newspapers," *The Food Section*, 11-31.

<sup>133</sup> Nancy Walker, ed., "Introduction," *Women's Magazines, 1940-1960: Gender Roles and the Popular Press* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1998), 4.

<sup>134</sup> Nancy Walker, ed., "Introduction," *Women's Magazines, 1940-1960*, 1-2.; Theodore Peterson, "The Expanding Magazine Market," *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1956), 55.; Douglas B. Ward, "The Geography of the *Ladies' Home Journal*: An Analysis of a Magazine's Audience, 1911-1955," *Journalism History* Vol 34, No. 1 (Spring 2008), 2.

<sup>135</sup> Ward, "The Geography of the *Ladies' Home Journal*," *Journalism History*, 5.

<sup>136</sup> Walker, "Introduction," *Women's Magazines, 1940-1960*, 5.

in magazines to find a fulfillment in their domestic roles, and to enrich not only their own lives but also those of their families.

During the war, these popular national magazines published articles and advertisements that related both to women and their domestic responsibilities and emphasized the need of women to enter the workforce. At the same time, editors subtly (or sometimes not so subtly) communicated the message that after the war, women should return to the home. Honey stated, “Believing that wartime employment patterns for women were a temporary, stopgap measure, necessary only while the men were gone, advertisers assumed war workers would either go home or seek jobs in female areas.”<sup>137</sup> Articles began reminding readers that the nation still needed women in typically-feminine work roles such as teaching and clerical positions. Other pieces warned about supposedly rising rates of juvenile delinquency. Honey noted, that was “one of the social ills blamed on working mothers after the war which contributed to the postwar conservative reaction against working women.”<sup>138</sup> Even during the war, the messages and advertisements in magazines continued to emphasize the images of women cooking and cleaning, similar in many ways to prewar content, keeping domestic responsibilities visible. In the June 1944 issue of *Woman’s Home Companion*, J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, stated “women’s ‘patriotic duty’ was not on the ‘factory front’ but on the ‘home front’: ‘*There must be no absenteeism among mothers.*’”<sup>139</sup> In such rhetoric, a mother’s place remained squarely in the home as first priority, where she should provide nutritious meals for her family despite the challenges of wartime shortages.

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<sup>137</sup> Honey, “Middle-Class Images of Women,” *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 120.

<sup>138</sup> Maureen Honey, “Recruiting Women for War Work: OWI and the Magazine Industry during World War II,” *Journal of American Culture* Vol. 3 (Spring 1980), 51, cited in, Nancy Walker, ed., “Introduction,” *Women’s Magazines, 1940-1960*, 16.

<sup>139</sup> Walker, “Introduction,” *Women’s Magazines, 1940-1960*, 17.

Like *The New York Times*, national magazines provided women with wartime food advice, including sample menus intended to help working mothers decide on their week's meals without much effort. These wartime menus started to become popular beginning in the summer of 1942. As historian Joanna Hayes has explained, "women's magazines had jumped into the fray with Victory Menus, 'sugarless' recipes, advice on nutrition, substitutions, quick meals, and warnings about waste, hoarding, and buying on the black market."<sup>140</sup> Magazine and newspaper publishers understood that their role on the home front was to educate the wartime homemaker on how best to serve her country and family. Because of this "role as advisers to wives, mothers, homemakers, and to a lesser extent career women ... the magazines took on a function that we might assume had earlier been that of a young woman's mother."<sup>141</sup>

Advertisements filled magazines that promoted the home front effort and instructed women which products to buy to best fulfill their patriotic duties. A relationship existed between the advertisements featured and the content of the articles, in which the messages conveyed overlapped and complemented each other. For instance, in *McCall's* July 1943 edition, the publication ran a feature titled, "McCall's Magazine *Your Guide to Daily Living*," which told women about milk rations, cannery jobs, food substitutes, and fat recycling, among other things. On the opposite page from the article, a Del Monte advertisement instructed women to can their own produce at home and also suggested that women should work in canneries.<sup>142</sup> In this same edition, *McCall's* ran ninety advertisements with approximately fifty-seven percent of them

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<sup>140</sup> Joanne Lamb Hayes, "The Home Front Warrior," *Grandma's Wartime Kitchen: World War II and the Way We Cooked* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 4-5.

<sup>141</sup> Walker, "Introduction," *Women's Magazines, 1940-1960*, 9.

<sup>142</sup> "McCall's Magazine *Your Guide to Daily Living*," *McCall's* (New York: McCall Corporation, July 1943), Print, 6-8.

focused on wartime conditions such as rationing and the purchasing of war bonds.<sup>143</sup>

Additionally, there were twenty-eight content pieces within three sections (news and fiction, homemaking, and style and beauty), where forty percent of the content focused on wartime home front efforts such as how to plan meals and how to both store and dehydrate Victory crops.<sup>144</sup> This information helped to reinforce the concept that the war affected every part of American women's lives, from their choice in beauty products to the selection of cuts of meat available for purchase.

Not surprisingly, in both the *McCall's* and *Ladies' Home Journal* editions from July 1943 there were no advertisements or articles that featured African Americans.<sup>145</sup> Magazines remained racially divided and these national magazines featured white, middle class women because that was the intended market. As reflected in readership numbers, white, middle class women were taking part in a growing consumer culture. "Those states with high per capita readership also had high per capita rates of electricity, refrigerators, and radio in their homes."<sup>146</sup> Unfortunately, because of this African Americans remained nonexistent within popular magazines of the time. Assistant Professor at the University of Kansas and former business desk editor at *The New York Times* Douglas B. Ward stated, "Like nearly every other American magazine of the time, it [*The Ladies' Home Journal*] kept its distance from African-Americans and had its lowest per capita readership in areas with the highest African-American population. Curtis Publishing frequently emphasized the strength of its readership among native white families, saying that African-

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<sup>143</sup> *McCall's* (New York: McCall Corporation, July 1943), Print.; For comparison, *The Ladies' Home Journal* in July 1943 had 140 advertisements with approximately fifty-one percent of the advertisements focused on wartime conditions. *Ladies' Home Journal* (July 1943), Print.

<sup>144</sup> *McCall's* (July 1943), Print.; For comparison, *The Ladies' Home Journal* in July 1943 had forty-eight content pieces and forty-six percent focused on wartime home front efforts. *Ladies' Home Journal* (July 1943), Print.

<sup>145</sup> *McCall's* (July 1943); *Ladies' Home Journal* (July 1943).

<sup>146</sup> Ward, "The Geography of the *Ladies' Home Journal*," *Journalism History*, 10.

Americans were ‘sub-normal’ in their buying ability.”<sup>147</sup> Additionally, Nancy Walker, a former English Professor at Vanderbilt University, stated, “advertisers and subscribers during the period would not have reacted favorably to articles about issues of primary concern to blacks or to pictures of black women using vacuum cleaners, unless, as was occasionally the case, they were obviously servants.”<sup>148</sup> Many white, middle class women did not want *their* magazines tainted with the images of African Americans as being equal in status and therefore, magazine editors opted to not include them.

Magazines went to great lengths to provide white, middle class women with the necessary resources and advice to prepare healthy meals during wartime. The publication *American Cookery*, formerly the magazine published by the Boston Cooking School, even sent its writers into military bases to learn the best techniques for homemakers to prepare meals and reduce their waste. Veteran food writer Ida Bailey Allen went to several military bases to speak with the chefs, where “she learned all about the proper care of food to prevent waste, new ways to cook leftovers, how proper cooking conserves the nutrients in food, how to make some money-saving soups, and vegetable spreads to take the place of butter.”<sup>149</sup> The resulting *American Cookery* articles adapted military cooking techniques for individual use, scaling down the size of recipes. The writers suggested to women that the diets that the military had selected for American soldiers would be sufficient for those on the home front as well, since the meals were nutritionally balanced, cost-effective, and geared toward available ingredients.

National magazines and newspapers provided natural vehicles for the government to distribute wartime messages to the public. As Joanna Hayes has written, “tucked in among all the

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>148</sup> Walker, “Introduction,” *Women’s Magazines, 1940-1960*, 6.

<sup>149</sup> Hayes, “The Home Front Warrior,” *Grandma’s Wartime Kitchen*, 5.

helpful hints provided by the magazines' home economists are government messages sponsored by the magazines or by advertisers who had converted to war production and had nothing to sell but wanted to keep their names before the public until the war was over."<sup>150</sup> Food companies made concerted attempts to remain prominent even if families did not always have the money to buy their items during the war. Historian Richard Polenbergs noted that businesses understood that "with the availability of consumer goods limited by economic rationing, 'businessmen were not primarily interested in motivating people to buy more, but by linking their product[s] with the war they hoped to keep alive brandname preferences, build up postwar demand, and maintain good will.'"<sup>151</sup> Some companies spoke to consumer and wartime needs in their advertisements, instructing mothers on what items to purchase and even when to make such purchases. For example, one Del Monte 1943 ad campaign told women, "Buy-For-A-Week and help your country: Think of the tires and gas you'll save if you lump as many of your weekly food purchases as you can into one order!"<sup>152</sup>

The government had a full-fledged propaganda campaign that distributed posters, pamphlets, and other material discussing ways that women could and should support the war effort. At the same time, federal officials also had a more subtle hand in much of the content and advertisements found within periodicals, since they were working closely with these publication editors.<sup>153</sup> Three government agencies, the War Advertising Council, the Writers' War Board, and the Magazine Bureau of the Office of War Information, "exerted considerable influence on the women's magazines to support the war effort – specifically, to encourage women to cope

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Richard Polenbergs, *War and Society: The United States 1941-1945* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1972), 135, cited in Mark Weiner, "Consumer Culture and Participatory Democracy: The Story of Coca-Cola During World War II," *Food and Foodways*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1996), 112.

<sup>152</sup> Hayes, "The Home Front Warrior," *Grandma's Wartime Kitchen*, 17.

<sup>153</sup> Hayes, "Eat to Win," *Grandma's Wartime Kitchen*, 27.

effectively with rationing and shortages, to do volunteer work, and, to a lesser extent, to enter the labor force.”<sup>154</sup> These representatives distributed published guidelines, the *Magazine War Guide*, to magazine editors from July 1942 through April 1945, which affected the content.<sup>155</sup> One area where the government used its influence was in using magazines and newspapers to publicize its campaign encouraging homemakers to plant Victory Gardens. Articles reminded women that growing and preserving their own fruit and vegetables would free up food supplies for servicemembers and allies overseas. Magazines published articles carefully explaining the process of canning to women, to avert the spread of botulism or other mishaps.<sup>156</sup> *Good Housekeeping* went a step further, giving women advice on how to make best use of stored food. The magazine warned, “There are two mistakes you can make in using your home-canned foods. The first – serving favorites too often. The second – using your supply so sparingly that you’ll have some left over when the summer’s garden crop comes along.”<sup>157</sup>

Companies that sold canned foods, such as Del Monte, adapted during wartime to reach homemakers with Victory Gardens, given that availability of their canned products was limited anyway. One 1943 Del Monte ad quoted a fictional female Victory Gardener as talking about the importance of home-canning and saying, “I learned the hard way all right! – and believe me, since I put up fruit of my own I appreciate Del Monte quality more than ever!”<sup>158</sup> In ad campaigns, Del Monte and Libby’s urged women to buy the canned goods that were still available to them, even if those certain items were not their typical choices. Those

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<sup>154</sup> Walker, “Introduction,” *Women’s Magazines, 1940-1960*, 15.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>156</sup> Louella G. Shower, “Canning Confidence,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (May 1944), Print.; Jane Holt, “News of Food – Department of Agriculture Stresses Proper Technique in Using Glass Jars,” *The New York Times*, August 18, 1943, 24; Elizabeth Woody, “Canning Helps,” *McCall’s* (July 1943), Print, 36-37, 53.

<sup>157</sup> Hayes, “Cultivate and Can,” *Grandma’s Wartime Kitchen*, 54.

<sup>158</sup> Hayes, “Cultivate and Can,” *Grandma’s Wartime Kitchen*, 60; John Bush Jones, *All-Out for Victory: Magazine Advertising and the World War II Home Front* (Waltham: Brandeis, 2009), 101.

advertisements also encouraged readers to can the vegetables they were growing themselves, to reduce the necessity of buying up the limited supplies of fresh fruits and vegetables.<sup>159</sup> In wartime, everyone had to make concessions, and canned goods were not as plentiful as women might have hoped. Del Monte even incorporated canning calendars into its advertisements and urged homemakers to can as much as possible, so they would not go without fruits and vegetables. One advertisement stated, “We’ll bring you all you want when the war is won. But until it is, please do your part – and put up all you can!”<sup>160</sup> The advertisements from Del Monte and Libby’s helped and encouraged women to can, which created a constituency or market for the post-war. While women might not have readily had access to their favorite vegetables in canned form during the war, they could rest assured that the canning companies would deliver in the post-war.

Advertisements and advice instructed women to go beyond canning, by using techniques to make their meat go farther. Meat was a highly sought-after commodity during the war, with better cuts of meat costing both a lot of money and ration stamps. This left many women unable to afford the fancier cuts they might have usually bought; instead, they chose from roasts or less desirable meat such as liver. Both newspapers and magazines featured articles and advertisements on how to stretch the limited supply of meat across several meals while keeping the nutrient value of meat intact for the family. *The New York Times* even let its readers know that the King and Queen of England were faring no better with the rationing of meat. Its story stated, “Any Americans inclined to grumble about wartime food restrictions may be interested to

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<sup>159</sup> “Del Monte Foods,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (April 1944), Print.; “Libby’s,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (April 1943), Print, 68.

<sup>160</sup> “Del Monte Foods,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (July 1943), Print, 78.

learn that they are probably eating better than Britain's royal family, which is lucky to have meat more than once a week."<sup>161</sup>

Articles and advertisements informed homemakers about ingenious strategies to make their limited meat rations seem like more. One article from *The New York Times* discussed a mix made up of "breadcrumbs and salt, flour and beef extract and dehydrated vegetables" that would allow one pound of ground hamburger to serve six or seven people.<sup>162</sup> Additionally, *The New York Times* every week published menus reflecting those limitations, under headlines such as: "Only One Meat Dish Offered for the Week in Suggestion for Families' Daily Menus," "6-Pound Leg of Mutton Has Leading Place in the Suggested Menus for Next Week," and "New Pork Bonus Enables Meal Planners to Use More Meat in Week's Menus."<sup>163</sup> An advertisement from *Ladies' Home Journal* advocated using different sauces, such as chili sauce, cocktail sauce, and catsup, to stretch the meat allotments and to add variety and excitement to meals based on the more common, cheaper cuts.<sup>164</sup> An advertisement from *McCall's* instructed women on how to properly braise meat, to get the best flavor out of the lower quality cuts of meat.<sup>165</sup> Newspaper and magazine columnists even told homemakers how to make special holiday meals based on smaller meat portions. These columns advised women to purchase only half a ham for Easter or to substitute a chicken instead of a turkey for Thanksgiving.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> "Royalty is Subject to Rationing, Too," *The New York Times*, March 1, 1943, 16.

<sup>162</sup> Jane Holt, "News of Food – A Mix Designed to Extend Hamburger; Rigid Food Rationing System Criticized," *The New York Times*, May 12, 1943, 22

<sup>163</sup> Holt, "News of Food – Only One Meat Dish Offered for the Week in Suggestion for Families' Daily Menus," July 10, 1943, 16.; Holt, "6-Pound Leg of Mutton Has Leading Place in the Suggested Menus for Next Week," October 2, 1943, 10.; Holt, "New Pork Bonus Enables Meal Planners to Use More Meat in Week's Menus," February 19, 1944, 16.

<sup>164</sup> "Snider Packing Corporation," *Ladies' Home Journal* (April 1943), Print, 115.

<sup>165</sup> "How to Braise Meat," *McCall's* (July 1943), Print, 51.

<sup>166</sup> "Armour and Company," *Ladies' Home Journal* (April 1943), Print, 14.; Jane Holt, "News of Food – Chicken Replaces Thanksgiving Turkey: Tips Given to Aid Preparation of Meal," *The New York Times*, November 20, 1943, 10.

Even though families received red points for meat purchases, newspapers and magazines encouraged women to prepare meatless meals when shortages occurred. Keeping Victory Gardens allowed homemakers an ample supply of fresh vegetables to supplement their diets when other dietary staples ran short. Periodicals advocated for meatless meals and provided homemakers with nutrient filled recipes, to reassure them that a diet without meat could still contain a good source of protein. One article from *The New York Times* “News of Food” section indicated that the writers developed and selected recipes for meatless meals to meet certain criteria; those dishes were geared to be “(1) ... relatively substantial, (2) use foods that are pretty generally liked and (3) except for small amounts of fat, do not take any ration points.”<sup>167</sup>

While most of the magazines, newspapers, and advertisements featured targeted white, middle class women, magazines existed for those in the farming industry. The *Poultry Tribune*, founded in 1895, provided farmers and their wives all the necessary information for how to raise poultry on their farms.<sup>168</sup> Articles instructed farmers on how to save labor with headlines such as “Eleven Wartime Aids to Save Labor: How They Handle 4,000 Hens Per Man at Fellows Brothers Farm” and how to stretch the dollar, “Stretching the Feed Dollar: Uncle Sam’s Needs Must Be Met! How Poultrymen Can Do It Best.”<sup>169</sup> Additionally, there was a featured column called “The Poultrywoman’s Homemaking” written by Mrs. E.J. Tilton, the Home Department Editor, which helped ‘poultrywoman’ know how large of a garden to plant, how to can vegetables, etc.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Jane Holt, “News of Food – Tested Recipes for Meatless Dishes Make Tasty Meals During Shortage,” *The New York Times*, June 17, 1943, 18.

<sup>168</sup> *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, June 1943), Print.

<sup>169</sup> “Eleven Wartime Aids to Save Labor: How They Handle 4,000 Hens Per Man at Fellows Brothers Farm”, *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, May 1943), 10,27.; “Stretching the Feed Dollar: Uncle Sam’s Needs Must Be Met! How Poultrymen Can Do It Best,” *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, June 1943), 13.

<sup>170</sup> “The Poultrywoman’s Homemaking,” *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, May 1943), 44.; “The Poultrywoman’s Homemaking,” *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member

Along with magazines dedicated to farmers, there were newspapers that specifically targeted the African American market. *The Chicago Defender*, founded in 1905, was a weekly newspaper that provided necessary wartime advice along with articles and advertisements that appealed to an African American audience unlike what they would have found in the *Ladies' Home Journal* or *The New York Times*. Articles helped women understand the regulations on canned goods rationing; how to conserve food, electricity, and gas during cooking; how to cope with the impending meat rationing restrictions; and how to prepare sugarless cakes with recipes for chocolate covered sugarless cake, chocolate cream sugarless cake, and prune spice sugarless cake.<sup>171</sup> *The Chicago Defender* also had articles that featured 'Victory Food Specials' for items such as fresh tomatoes and nuts. A Victory Food Special featured one food item, for typically two weeks, to increase consumption of the item that was in abundance and provided a high nutritional value. Recipes on how to use the excess tomato crop included fried tomatoes, baked eggs in tomato cups, scrambled eggs with tomatoes, stewed tomatoes and onions, tomato sauce, and for how to can tomatoes and tomato sauce.<sup>172</sup> Nuts were also a featured item, specifically, "English walnuts, pecans, almonds, filberts, and other domestic-grown tree nuts," which had

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Agricultural Publishers Association, June 1943), 44. For additional examples of this column see: The July-August 1943 edition, which offered advice on cooking with eggs, "The Poultrywoman's Homemaking," *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, July-August 1943), 38-39.; The December 1943 edition offered advice on preparing for Christmas and provided an example dinner menu, "The Poultrywoman's Homemaking Department," *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, December 1943), D, F.; The September 1944 edition provided mothers advice on how to pack nutritious, point saving school lunches for their children, "The Poultrywoman's Homemaking Department," *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, September 1944), 59-60.; and the April 1945 edition gave woman tips on cleaning their homes and printed a recipe for Jellied Chicken Loaf, "The Poultrywoman's Homemaking Department," *Poultry Tribune* (Mount Morris: Member Agricultural Publishers Association, April 1945), 56.

<sup>171</sup> "Explanations on Rationing of Foods Given: Typical Family Asks About Rules," *The Chicago Defender* (*National Edition*), Chicago, Illinois, February 13, 1943, 16.; "Housewives, Read These Suggestions: Tell How to Conserve to Win the War," *The Chicago Defender* (*National Edition*), Chicago, Illinois, February 20, 1943, 17.; "Meat Ration Will Begin January 1<sup>st</sup>," *The Chicago Defender* (*National Edition*), Chicago, Illinois, October 3, 1942, 9.; and "Sugarless Cake Recipes Solve Menu Problem: Can Hang Up Sign, 'Cakes As Usual,'" *The Chicago Defender* (*National Edition*), Chicago, Illinois, March 14, 1942, 18.

<sup>172</sup> "Fresh Tomatoes Become Victory Food Special: Variety of Recipes Given; Canning Urged," *The Chicago Defender* (*National Edition*), Chicago, Illinois, August 22, 1942, 17.

near record level amounts grown and contained “both proteins and fats as well as being good sources of certain essential minerals and vitamins” that proved beneficial as a meat substitute in recipes such as a pecan and rice loaf.<sup>173</sup>

World War II touched every area of American lives on the home front as women and children had to cope with wartime restrictions placed upon them. Unlike in World War I where rationing was not mandatory, World War II saw the U.S. government implement a system of rationing for items that were in short supply such as sugar, meat, butter, gasoline, tires, etc. Because of rationing, women had to get creative with the meals they served their families as they had to learn how to navigate both the ration point system and their budget. The iconic image of Rosie the Riveter was created and served as a symbol for women to understand that they could do it too and enter the workplace while retaining their feminine beauty and looks. The advertisements and propaganda posters created throughout the war expressed to women their important role in the war effort and how to maximize their contributions whether through working, stretching meat and creating point saving meals, growing Victory Gardens, or purchasing war bonds. Both World Wars affected Americans across the nation, a case study of Central Iowa follows, which showed how a landlocked, Midwest state felt the burdens of the war and tried to remain patriotic Iowans throughout both wars to best provide their valuable contributions to the war effort.

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<sup>173</sup> “Nuts to You Who Want To Help Win the War,” *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)*, Chicago, Illinois, November 7, 1942, 17.

CHAPTER FOUR. WORLD WAR I AND II HOME FRONT EXPERIENCE IN  
CENTRAL IOWA

World Wars I and II both created reverberations felt across the United States, even in the Midwestern state of Iowa. These wars caused hardships and new challenges for Iowans to face as men and women went off to war overseas, women entered factories, and had to cope with ever changing food regulations and restrictions. Amidst all these stresses, Iowans remained, for the most part, an overwhelmingly patriotic state as its citizens wanted to take an active role in getting the men home sooner. Even though Iowa remained physically removed from the fighting, the wars touched the lives of everyone in the state. As historian Loren Horton has observed, “Iowans worked in war industries, displayed flags, collected recycled materials and kept watch for spies in their midst.”<sup>174</sup>

When the United States formally declared war on the Central Powers in World War I, Iowans predominantly supported this decision. In Iowa, 500,000 men registered for the draft and ultimately 115,000 served in the war overseas, and because of this, women found more jobs suddenly available to them.<sup>175</sup> Unfortunately, though, there were those due to their heritage who were not viewed the most favorably as “the war strengthened Iowans’ xenophobic feelings and repressive measures, such as Governor William Harding’s foreign-language ban.”<sup>176</sup> German immigrants living in Iowa felt the brunt of these harsh feelings, and were singled out and questioned on who their loyalty was with, Germany or the U.S.

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<sup>174</sup> Loren Horton, “World War II: Iowans on the Home Front,” *Iowa Public Television Iowa Pathways*, n.d., Accessed April 2, 2018, <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/mypath/world-war-ii-iowans-home-front>.

<sup>175</sup> Loren Horton and Tom Morain, “Iowa in World War I,” *Iowa Public Television Iowa Pathways*, n.d., Accessed January 27, 2019, <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/mypath/iowa-world-war-i-0>.

<sup>176</sup> Schwieder, “Town Life in the Middle Land,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 162.

The war affected many areas of life for Iowans as Liberty Bonds (war bonds) were sold, Victory Gardens were kept, and wheatless and meatless meals were consumed. In the understanding of the times, participating in all these wartime efforts made one a patriotic individual, while Iowans who chose not to participate were unpatriotic and willing for the war to drag on longer than necessary. Some Iowa newspapers published the names of those who purchased Liberty Bonds, which in turn shamed and ostracized those who did not contribute as “it seemed that in wartime objectionable actions could be tolerated under the guise of ... promoting Americanism. And the repression, suspicion, and fear created by wartime conditions and action perhaps made Iowans tolerant of and susceptible to later excesses. ...”<sup>177</sup> J.F. Deems, the Federal Food Administrator for Iowa, also voiced his appeal to women to sign the pledge cards, “It is common sense patriotism for every housewife to get one of these cards and sign it. The canvassers are doing their part nobly and are being assisted by the war mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts. Surely the appeal of the women who have given their men to the national army will have its weight with every household in Iowa.”<sup>178</sup> Therefore, if a woman chose to not participate in wartime activities such as the purchasing of Liberty Bonds or during World War I not signing the food pledge, she risked the repercussions that could ensue from not contributing.

African Americans in Iowa fared slightly better because of the war and the access provided to greater job opportunities. Des Moines had the largest population of African Americans at the time of the war due to its size and therefore, the potential that existed for employment, and the city also organized the first Iowa chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1915.<sup>179</sup> While some African Americans in

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<sup>177</sup> Schwieder, “Town Life in the Middle Land,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 162-163.

<sup>178</sup> Ivan L. Pollock, “Food Pledge Campaign,” *The Food Administration in Iowa, Vol. I* (Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1923), 137.

<sup>179</sup> Schwieder, “Cultural Diversity,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 200.

Des Moines rose through the ranks and became working professionals and community leaders, the reality remained for most that “the average black held a menial job and could hope for little or no upward mobility socially, economically, or politically. Generally, blacks in Iowa’s capital received the same treatment as their counterparts in the heavily industrialized cities convulsed by more violent racial tensions.”<sup>180</sup>

In Des Moines, Iowa, *The Bystander* was published for an African American audience, and was listed as “the best advertising medium to reach colored people in the west.”<sup>181</sup> This weekly newspaper provided much of the same information as the more popular publications that targeted a white, middle class population while showing an African American influence with one example being advertisements for products for natural hair.<sup>182</sup> Wartime articles and advertisements focused on home canning demonstrations, the purchasing of war savings certificates, and on keeping a wartime garden.<sup>183</sup> *The Bystander* even highlighted the ignorance of some individuals when it came to gardening. One reader wrote, “As I wish to do my bit for the allies by growing my own provisions on a strip of rocky ground back of my house, please send me, f.o.b. one dozen potato seeds, one bee with hive complete, one dozen fruit seeds assorted, ten square yards of grass, one path, six feet of wall flowers with wall, and one dozen flour plants. I am especially particular about the grass, which should be green, and not the brown kind I see in so many gardens.”<sup>184</sup> The articles provided African Americans the proper understanding of how to patriotically support the war effort on the home front.

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<sup>180</sup> Jack Lufkin, “The Founding and Early Years of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Des Moines, 1915-1930,” *The Annals of Iowa* 45 (1980), 441-442.

<sup>181</sup> *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 10, 1917, 1.

<sup>182</sup> “Herolin Medicine,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 10, 1917, 2.; “Magic Hair Grower and Straightening Oil,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 10, 1917, 4.

<sup>183</sup> “See the Canning Demonstrations,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 10, 1917, 4.; “The First Trust & Savings Bank,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 21, 1917, 4.; and “The War Garden,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 5, 1917, 2.

<sup>184</sup> “The War Garden,” *The Bystander*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 5, 1917, 2.

Agriculturally speaking, Iowa flourished because of the war. Because Iowa farmers were able to convert their farms into production for the war and then sell to the U.S. government to feed the soldiers overseas, they were able to fetch high prices for their corn, cattle, and hogs.<sup>185</sup> Farms in Iowa even exceeded production records during the war with Iowa farmers increasing “their production of basic crops – corn, oats, wheat, barley, and rye – by 26 percent over the average yearly production for the ten-year period preceding the war. Hog production also rose, increasing 15 percent from 1917 to 1918.”<sup>186</sup> Unfortunately for Iowa farmers, these years of prosperity failed to continue after the war.

During both world wars, the Iowa State College Cooperative Extension, headed by director Ralph K. Bliss, worked to educate Iowans on their role in the conflicts, and proved very successful as they “helped mobilize Iowa’s farming population to meet the demands imposed by both world wars.”<sup>187</sup> One major issue that plagued the Extension agents during World War I was the lack of available farm labor, which resulted in shortages across the state at a time when farmers needed assistance planting and harvesting to support the war effort. Cooperative Extension agents also made it part of their mission to educate farmers about liberty bond drives and helped spark the sale of them since “the failure of farm people to purchase liberty bonds was explained by the fact that rural people were unfamiliar with bond investments and that it was difficult to carry on such campaigns in rural areas where communication networks were poor.”<sup>188</sup> With the agents assisting and educating rural communities, Iowa was able to meet all of its

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<sup>185</sup> Loren Horton and Tom Morain , “Iowa in World War I.”

<sup>186</sup> Schwieder, “A Home First and a Business Second: Agriculture and Farm Life in the Middle Years,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 149. Also cited in Dorothy Schwieder, “The Iowa State College Cooperative Extension Service Through Two World Wars,” *Agricultural History*, Vol. 64, No. 2, The United States Department of Agriculture in Historical Perspective (Spring 1990), 223.

<sup>187</sup> Dorothy Schwieder, “The Iowa State College Cooperative Extension Service Through Two World Wars,” *Agricultural History*, 219.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

liberty bond quotas after the first two campaigns. Home demonstration agents with the extension services provided additional necessary support by giving demonstrations on how to can, preserve, and dry fruits and vegetables. The visibility of these agents throughout Iowa expanded during World War I and “by the summer of 1918, Extension could boast of a county agent in every county and 41 permanent home economists” and “had the distinction of being the first State of the Union to secure the services of a home demonstration agent in every county.”<sup>189</sup> From the advice given by home demonstration agents, Iowa women were able to save copious amounts of sugar and wheat, and dried plenty of fruits and vegetables. Iowa State College (ISC) gave these statistics in September 1918 for the savings: “3,646,623 pounds of sugar have been saved since May – 40 counties reporting,” “13,721,465 pounds of flour saved since May – 41 counties reporting,” “35,558 people drying fruits and vegetables – 52 counties reporting,” and “670 volunteer demonstrations since May – 65 counties reporting.”<sup>190</sup> Much of this success could be attributed to the home demonstration agents who put in countless hours educating rural Iowa women on the power of conserving and reduction of consumption.

Besides the Extension agents providing farmers and farmer’s wives with wartime advice, *Wallaces’ Farmer*, an agricultural newspaper based out of Des Moines, Iowa, also gave women advice on how to prepare healthy meals within wartime restrictions and how to accept their new wartime responsibilities along with explaining to women their duty to purchase war bonds to aid the war effort. These women often took on dual roles as both housewife and farmer as their husbands and sons were either off fighting or aiding the war effort at home. During World War I, the “Hearts and Homes” column, written by Mrs. Henry Wallace, appeared in *Wallaces’ Farmer*,

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<sup>189</sup> Schwieder, “The Iowa State College Cooperative Extension Service Through Two World Wars,” *Agricultural History*, 223.; Pollock, “Co-Operating Organizations,” *The Food Administration in Iowa, Vol. I*, 82.

<sup>190</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 13, 1918, 20.

which instructed women on how to make their meat stretch farther, how to can fruits and vegetables, how to save sugar, and how to make do with substitutes, among other topics.<sup>191</sup>

In one column from April 20, 1917 Governor William Harding of Iowa said, “Food is going to be the deciding factor in the world war. Food is the thing that Iowa women can give her soldier boys. Food and labor are going to be scarce unless women step into the breach. In doing so, there is room for just as heroic work on their part as among their brothers who face machine-gun fire. Learn to save and preserve the food raised. A clean and empty garbage can will be the sign of true Americanism from now on.”<sup>192</sup> One of the major topics across the “Hearts and Homes” column and in *Wallaces’ Farmer* in general was the importance of canning. On June 22, 1917, *Wallaces’ Farmer* dedicated its front page to informing farmer’s wives on how to can fruits and vegetables properly and even included a time table for canning. *Wallaces’ Farmer* stated that with every family canning their garden’s surplus of fruits and vegetables this would “help to take care of a possible glutted market, will conserve one of the country’s vital resources, and will help to feed the hungry after harvest time.”<sup>193</sup> Rural women attended classes taught by Extension home demonstration agents and while some women learned new skills from the classes, others simply gained a new appreciation for canning and how it aided the war effort. One enthusiastic canner stated, “I came home with the impulse to can everything about the place. I find my work easier when I realize that what I am doing in my small kitchen is part of a great movement, and I work more swiftly, more accurately, more efficiently, for being a part of this great movement.”<sup>194</sup> While another veteran canner stated, “I am an old hand at canning, but I know now I was never a good hand. Every year I lost a few cans. I realize, after seeing a

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<sup>191</sup> *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, April 1917-November 1918.

<sup>192</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, April 20, 1917, 18.

<sup>193</sup> “Canning to Conserve,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 22, 1917, 1.

<sup>194</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, July 6, 1917, 12.

specialist demonstrate canning that the loss was due to my not being careful enough to sterilize my cans and lids.”<sup>195</sup>

The “Hearts and Homes” column also urged women to maintain their club ties and friendships with other women to not allow the war to disrupt their social lives entirely. By remaining in contact with other women, this allowed women to keep an eye on each other to ensure they were all respecting and adhering to their patriotic responsibilities. As the one article said, “Your patriotic duty is to keep in touch with your neighbor. No matter that you have bread to set, and clothes to sprinkle, and supper is late, if there is an evening meeting, go. If there is an afternoon meeting, go, and share your experiences with your neighbors. Seek solutions for your mutual problems. Sing patriotic songs. Learn who among you is lacking in patriotism. Get together!”<sup>196</sup> While women were to maintain their social ties, the ‘fourth meal’ typically consumed at such gatherings was to be eliminated. Women in Iowa fully held to this recommendation, and “in few states did clubs, lodges, church societies, and other organizations so completely adhere to the pledge to abstain from using food for social purposes as they did in Iowa.”<sup>197</sup> The patriotic ideals that were now in place in the name of wartime conservation were customs farm wives were already used to such as not serving luxurious salads and desserts or being wasteful or her ability to use various odds and ends in the kitchen to make an appetizing meal.<sup>198</sup>

Additionally, this column featured wartime menu ideas from various sources including the ISC Home Economics Department to explain to homemakers how meals that might sound

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 24, 1917, 13.

<sup>197</sup> Ivan L. Pollock, “Minor Campaigns,” *The Food Administration in Iowa, Vol. II* (Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1923), 7.

<sup>198</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 14, 1917, 16.

unappetizing or simple by name could be wholesome and delicious. The women instructors offered these three menus: “Tamale pie with tomato sauce; baked apples; oat-meal bread. Macaroni loaf; graham bread; fruit gelatine. Stuffed biscuits; green corn; apple sauce; corn-meal ginger bread.”<sup>199</sup> These were high quality, nutritious meals and items such as the macaroni loaf allowed women to use meat that people loved, but in a smaller quantity when paired with macaroni and breadcrumbs. Besides these meals, the extension department through ISC also offered some unusual wartime recipe suggestions that included whole wheat ginger bread, scalloped fruit with rice, batter pudding, and oatmeal bread.<sup>200</sup>

*Wallaces' Farmer* provided women with valuable menu ideas for meatless days and wheatless meals. While food pledges and the decision to follow the wheatless, meatless, and porkless meal and day suggestions were all voluntary, most women followed the plan, which made those women who opted against it stand out more. One sample menu for a meatless day consisted of “Breakfast – Cream of rye with figs, poached eggs on toast, toast and butter, coffee. Lunch – Scalloped cabbage with cheese, rye muffins with butter, fruit cup. Dinner – Baked split peas, buttered beets, spinach with vinegar, oatmeal bread and butter, raspberry shortcake” and a sample wheatless meals menu consisted of “Breakfast – Oranges, oatmeal, soft-cooked eggs, corn meal muffins, coffee. Lunch – Cream of celery soup with rye croutons, Tuna fish salad garnished with green cucumber pickles, rye bread and butter. Dinner – Baked fresh salmon or beef, creamed potatoes, buttered string beans, cabbage, beet and horseradish relish, oatmeal bread, jellied apples, honey, cookies.”<sup>201</sup> Also, since corn was king in Iowa and “king of Mrs. Iowa’s kitchen,” sample menus were created by the ISC Home Economics Department where

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<sup>199</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 2, 1917, 16.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>201</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 8, 1918, 28.

corn stood as the staple mealtime item, “Breakfast – Cream of rice and raisins, milk, raised honey muffins, butter, corn syrup, coffee, cream. Lunch – Corn tambile, potatoes au gratin, tomato relish, apple and cabbage salad, corn-and-wheat bread, date pudding, lemon sauce, coffee or tea. Dinner – Cornmeal mush fried in corn oil, corn syrup, corn-and-wheat bread, cherry sauce, oatmeal crisps, tea, lemon.”<sup>202</sup>

“Hearts and Homes” also helped women to cope with wartime restrictions during the holiday season. The government and Food Administration did not want families to forgo their Thanksgiving and Christmas plans because of the war, of which everyone felt the burden. While traditional meals could not always be served, there were plenty of alternative, flavorful options that were almost or just as good. One sample Thanksgiving menu consisted of “cream of celery soup, roast turkey with dressing or bean roast, creamed onions, brown bread, baked squash, cabbage salad, dill pickles, and ice cream or Bavarian cream.”<sup>203</sup> If the cost of turkey was out of reach for a family, a bean roast would be a suitable, filling alternative that took pressed cooked beans mixed with one tablespoon of butter, two eggs, bread crumbs, and salt and pepper to taste, and then was either fried or baked, depending on a family’s taste preference.<sup>204</sup> Additionally for Christmas, sweets used fruit substitutes such as figs, dates, raisins, and coconuts instead of relying on sugar for a sweetener.<sup>205</sup>

With all the advice that *Wallaces’ Farmer’s* “Hearts and Homes” column provided to women, there was no excuse for women to not serve their families filling, nutritious, and appetizing meals. Meal ideas and conservation techniques were shared frequently along with suggesting menu ideas for how to cope with wheatless and meatless meals. One column summed

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<sup>202</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 22, 1918, 27.

<sup>203</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 23, 1917, 15.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 14, 1917, 16.

up all the advice given, “If housekeepers do not know how to cook nowadays, it truly is not the fault of Uncle Sam. Every household is receiving recipes, leaflets and bulletins. One can hardly pick up a paper without facing directions for using wheat substitutes; the advertisements flaunt recipes at every turn.”<sup>206</sup> Besides columns dedicated to the war effort, advertisements also focused on the home front. The advertisements covered a variety of products and services that ensured that American farmers and their wives knew of their importance in the war. Some advertisements prompted farmers to purchase more farmland, particularly in Montana where there were “millions of acres of rich virgin land awaiting the plowshare to convert them into food producing areas,” which would increase their production of corn and grain and therefore, enable them to supply more food both for the home front and for the troops overseas.<sup>207</sup> Advertisements had such headlines as “Help Uncle Sam, Raise More Food and Win the War” with messages that proclaimed, “As a patriotic duty, for the good of our homeland and its defenders, you are urged to PRODUCE MORE FOOD. ... “Help your Uncle Sam and help yourself at the same time. Don’t delay. The whole world needs the product of your toil, and needs it urgently.”<sup>208</sup>

Other advertisements abounded for the Great Majestic range and the messages presented in these advertisements changed because of the war. At the start of the war, farm wives were instructed to purchase new ranges because of their usefulness and a headline that proclaimed, “Equipped to do her bit!” as the advertisement read, “with a Majestic in your kitchen, you can do

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<sup>206</sup> “Hearts and Homes,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, April 26, 1918, 18.

<sup>207</sup> “Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Ry.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 12, 1917, 25. Advertisements with a similar theme: “The Straus Brothers Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, July 27, 1917, 18.; “Decker’s Protodod,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 30, 1917, 2.; “John A. Salzer Seed Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 15, 1918, 35.; “Northrup, King & Co., Seedsmen,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 15, 1918, 37.; “Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Ry.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 15, 1918, 38.; and “Northrup, King & Co., Seedsmen,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 1, 1918, 30.

<sup>208</sup> “Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 1, 1918, 16.

more to help the nation save food and prevent waste.”<sup>209</sup> Yet as the war extended well into 1918, the message to purchase a range shifted as metal grew scarce and was needed for the war. Headlines read out “Wars are won with metal – save it.,” “Iron and steel are needed for war.,” and “The Nation’s needs come first.”<sup>210</sup> Advertisements instructed women to keep using their old ranges and repair them when necessary rather than buying new, as the iron and steel used in the production of new ranges were necessary to make ammunition, tanks, and railroads for the war.

Food advertisements also held their place in *Wallaces’ Farmer* particularly for Pillsbury’s flour and Calumet baking powder. Pillsbury used the slogan, “The Flour Question Settled Because Pillsbury’s Best” in their advertisements and proclaimed to consumers that theirs was the most nutritious and was the best value on the market.<sup>211</sup> Pillsbury went to great lengths to ensure the quality of their flour and that it would be an economical, dependable purchase every single time. In one advertisement, Pillsbury provided a recipe for a pie crust to show that a special type of flour was not necessary and proclaimed, “If folks knew what delicious pie crust they could make with this all-purpose flour, they would say good bye to ‘special pastry’ flours forever.”<sup>212</sup> Additionally, women were instructed how to make their wheat flour go further by mixing different types of flour together such as rye and barley flour along with corn meal.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> “Majestic Mfg. Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 19, 1917, 20. Advertisements with similar messaging: “Majestic Mfg. Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 2, 1917, 18.; “Majestic Manufacturing Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 15, 1918, 24.; and “The Majestic Manufacturing Co.,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 29, 1918, 16.

<sup>210</sup> “Great Majestic,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 27, 1918, 14.; “Great Majestic,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 18, 1918, 19.; and “Great Majestic,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 1, 1918, 20.

<sup>211</sup> “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 2, 1917, 17. This slogan was also featured in advertisements from: “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 7, 1917, 20.; “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, January 4, 1918, 16.; “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 1, 1918, 24.; and “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 15, 1918, 30.

<sup>212</sup> “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 1, 1918, 24.

<sup>213</sup> “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 15, 1918, 30.; “Pillsbury Flour Mills Company,” *Wallaces’ Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 15, 1918, 31.

Calumet baking powder in their advertisements claimed to be “the biggest help on the farm” and the best baking powder available where it was even used by the United States Army and Navy.<sup>214</sup>

By World War II, *Wallaces' Farmer* was now *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* and by June 1943 boasted “more than 260,000 circulation.”<sup>215</sup> This publication featured the “Homemaking Department” column that provided women with wartime cooking advice and menu suggestions that worked within the scope of rationing such as how to cope with both meat and sugar rationing and how to properly incorporate substitutes into meals. Articles also instructed women on the necessity of raising a wartime Victory Garden, so that families did not have to rely on the grocery for their produce needs. One such article, “Vegetables for Victory” explained how the Moser family of Fernald, Iowa, in Story County grew a garden in 1941 that produced \$82.07 worth of vegetables and how it would be easy for them to simply expand their garden to increase production.<sup>216</sup> *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* featured advertisements from International Harvester explaining to women the importance of planting large wartime gardens. Their advertisements proclaimed, “Plan a *big* garden. If you had one last year, don't be afraid to *double* your acreage. Remember it's for Victory in a year of scarcity! ... Plan your way through the picking and harvesting, the canning and preserving, the disposal of your surplus crops. Plan to *share* your garden – *both the work and the yield* – with families in town who have no room for gardens. And buy a War Bond with Victory Garden profit!”<sup>217</sup> With

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<sup>214</sup> “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 22, 1918, 26.; “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 6, 1918, 18. Advertisements with similar messages: “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 23, 1917, 15.; “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, December 7, 1917, 20.; “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, January 11, 1918, 18.; and “Calumet Baking Powder,” *Wallaces' Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 8, 1918, 28.;

<sup>215</sup> “Town Girls on Farms,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 19, 1943, 1.

<sup>216</sup> “Vegetables for Victory,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 7, 1942, 20.

<sup>217</sup> “International Harvester,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 6, 1943, 9.

families raising their own crops, there would be no scarcity of fruits and vegetables come winter and supplies of such would be freed to provide to the men serving overseas.

Along with planting gardens came the necessity of canning and preserving the fruits and vegetables grown. From a survey that *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* conducted asking hundreds of Iowa farmers, the average Iowa farm wife planned "to can 101 quarts per person this summer [1942]."<sup>218</sup> Some farm women found this number low and expected to can closer to 200 quarts, but the actual amounts canned were hard to estimate when crops might not have produced as much as expected or the limited sugar rations proved detrimental in the canning process. Many women felt it would be a point of patriotic pride to not have to purchase any fruits or vegetables from the store because they were able to grow enough for their needs and contribute to the war effort in this way. Along with canning, Iowa farm women knew of the importance of pickling. Pickling usually signified the end of canning season as the excess vegetables left in the garden such as cucumbers, onions, and peppers could now be pickled, and "every pickle should have a good flavor, a blend of sour, sweet, salt and spices in just the right proportions."<sup>219</sup> A high quality vinegar made all the difference along with the proper proportion of granulated sugar or brown sugar used. *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* provided women with popular pickle recipes such as dill pickles, sweet dill pickles, and bread and butter pickles while also giving recipes for non-traditional pickles as easy mustard pickles and crabapple pickles, along with additional recipes for cucumber relish and chili sauce, which contained tomatoes, peppers, celery, and onions cooked with brown sugar and vinegar.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> "Homemaking Department: How Much Will You Can?" *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 30, 1942, 10.

<sup>219</sup> "Homemaking Department: Pickles in War-Time," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 4, 1943, 22.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 26.

Iowa farmers knew they held a crucial place in the home front war effort during World War II and that they needed to answer the nation's call for wartime assistance. A survey featured in *Wallaces' Farmer and the Iowa Homestead* asked several hundred farmers from across Iowa, "In time of war, should the government have the right to tell the farmers what crops they must raise and what prices they are to get?" and fifty-four percent of Iowa farmers responded yes, twenty-seven percent stated no, and nineteen percent remained undecided.<sup>221</sup> This strong favorable response proved that Iowa farmers were willing to change their production and have their crop prices fixed, if it meant this would help the war effort. Iowans were more in favor of farm control than the national average, which had a fifty-one percent positive rating for farm control.

With limited amounts of meat available for purchase in World War II, *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* provided women with the necessary advice and wartime menu ideas of how to make their meat stretch using gravies and sauces. The scraps of fat left at the bottom of the pan that formerly might have been washed down the drain, fed to the pigs, or saved in a cup as cooking fat now were the base for meat-flavored sauces. A one-dish recipe for stretching meat was coined "ground meat sauce" where any sort of ground raw meat was browned in a skillet with some fat and then cooked with onions, green peppers, and tomatoes until tender, and served over "spaghetti, macaroni, rice or potatoes."<sup>222</sup> These one-dish meals not only conserved and stretched the weekly allotment of meat, but also proved to be quite flavorful when seasoned well. While another dish called for "tak[ing] a head of cabbage, cut[ting] out the center and fill[ing]

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<sup>221</sup> "We're All Soldiers Now!" *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, April 18, 1942, 8.

<sup>222</sup> "Homemaking Department: Sauce for Stretch," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 6, 1943, 24.

the hole with hamburger and a well-seasoned bread dressing,” the meat was then covered with the cabbage leaves, cooked in a pressure cooker, and served with a cream sauce or gravy.<sup>223</sup>

*Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* also advocated to women that they seek out meat stretching tips and tricks from women who came to the United States from geographic areas where meat conservation had been a necessity for decades or longer. The article pointed to several places as examples including Latin America, China, and Armenia. In Latin America, meat was stretched with beans to make chili con carne. The Chinese “mix bits of veal with celery, chestnuts, mushrooms, bamboo tips, to make chow mein,” and in Armenia, lamb breasts were stuffed with rice and currants, and squash was stuffed with meat, onions, parsley, and rice.<sup>224</sup> While Americans knew how to stretch meat through sauces, these flavorful meals from around the world enriched the diets of Americans and provided appetizing new ways to make their meat rations go further.

Additionally, while it might have been presumed that farmers fared better with meat and butter rationing if they had their own supplies of fresh meat, farmer’s city friends thought that farmers should also restrict their meat and protein consumption unless it was chicken or eggs for which there was no limit.<sup>225</sup> The editors argued that, “As a matter of patriotism, of making sure that the army and navy have enough to eat, every family in farm or city is expected to stick to the rations outlined, no matter how much food they may have on hand.”<sup>226</sup> Such statements put city folks’ minds at ease who believed that farmers would have a larger allotment of meat available for consumption.

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<sup>223</sup> “Homemaking Department: Tricks with Meat,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 1, 1943, 14.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> “Homemaking Department: Your Meat Ration,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 20, 1943, 20.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

As in World War I, *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* did not advocate for families to give up entirely their holiday traditions. *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* in 1943 stated that even after providing turkeys to enlisted service members overseas, there would still be “446 million pounds of turkey, hens and gobblers to grace civilian tables.”<sup>227</sup> The publication urged women to roast a turkey as tradition typically dictated, and to then use the leftovers to make turkey soup, turkey hash, turkey tetrazzini, and turkey budget pies, which combined turkey, potatoes, carrots or celery, onions, cream sauce or cream soup, and cheese and then placed into a pie dish with both a bottom and top pastry crust.<sup>228</sup> By 1944, there was a shortage of turkeys available and families were asked to make do with a duck, goose, or chicken, but with the proper seasoning and stuffing, the turkey would not be missed.<sup>229</sup>

Along with the featured columns, advertisements covered several themes including wartime recipes and how to cope with rationing while using certain brand name ingredients. Folger's Coffee uniquely targeted women with their two-for-one advertising tactic of telling women that their brewed coffee was not only the best but that the metal coffee jar lids were perfect for use in home canning. By purchasing Folger's there would be no need to purchase or scramble for other glass jars for canning as their ads proclaimed, “These new sealing lids and Folger jars save rubber, metal and glass for Uncle Sam - - and save money for you!”<sup>230</sup> Advertisements also promoted items that could help women stretch their meat including for Minute Tapioca, which could be used as a binder in meat loaf and alternatively also used to make a cream for dessert. The advertisements boasted “Minute Tapioca is a perfect binder – doesn't

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<sup>227</sup> “Homemaking: ‘Let's Talk Turkey,’” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 20, 1943, 18.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, 18-19.

<sup>229</sup> “Homemaking: The Thanksgiving Bird,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 20, 1944, 20.

<sup>230</sup> “Folger's Coffee,” *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 27, 1942, 11.

taste – doesn't show! It makes meat go far – and it makes tongues go – 'Ah-h-h!' Try it tonight and *see!*"<sup>231</sup> While not always seen as a traditional binding ingredient as breadcrumbs, tapioca mix did provide the same effects without changing the flavor of the meat.

Among the most widely advertised products were for baking powder, yeast, and flour, all of which touted that their brand was the best. Clabber Girl baking powder was featured frequently explaining to women how their baking powder was of the highest quality and made the best tasting baked goods, as their advertisements proclaimed, "...the baking powder that has been the baking day favorite in millions of homes for years and years."<sup>232</sup> In competition with Clabber Girl was Calumet baking powder, which during World War I claimed, in their advertisements, to be the best baking powder on the market. In World War II, their advertisements featured singer and radio personality, Kate Smith, swapping stories with men and women from across the nation. Each advertisement featured her sharing stories and then providing one of her favorite recipes for the readers. In one advertisement, Smith swapped stories with Miss Honey of Death Valley, California where Miss Honey explained how miners in Death Valley showed her the importance of using Calumet baking powder, and Smith went on to explain the reasons why Calumet was the best because it was a "double-acting baking powder."<sup>233</sup> In another advertisement, Smith swapped stories with Mr. Dedman of San Diego, California who proclaimed that in all of his years cooking, under various conditions, Calumet baking powder had never let him down and "has always proven a worthy ally," for which Smith

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<sup>231</sup> "Minute Tapioca," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 14, 1942, 24.

<sup>232</sup> "Clabber Girl Baking Powder," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 14, 1942, 24. Advertisements with similar messaging: "Clabber Girl Baking Powder," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 21, 1942, 21.; "Clabber Girl Baking Powder," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 16, 1942, 17.; and "Clabber Girl Baking Powder," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 6, 1943, 21.

<sup>233</sup> "Calumet," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 15, 1943, 18. For a similar advertisement, see: "Calumet," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 2, 1943, 26.

thanked him for the letter and provided the recipe for butterscotch nut rolls.<sup>234</sup> These advertisements all shared the common theme of Smith informing readers about the letters she received from both men and women of all walks of life and how Calumet was their baking powder of choice because of its double acting power.

Yeast advertisements were also featured prominently in *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead* as women baked a lot of bread during the war to make filling, wholesome meals. Fleischmann's yeast touted itself as being the only yeast where the vitamins went into the bread and were not lost in the oven, and therefore, this made it the best.<sup>235</sup> Other brands such as Maca and Yeast Foam also attempted to state that their yeast was of the highest quality. Maca yeast stood out for its fast-acting capabilities and for being money saving without losing any taste, plus the recipes Maca provided used honey in place of sugar to aid with rationing restrictions.<sup>236</sup> This brand assured housewives that the fuss of baking with yeast was gone when theirs was quick rising and required no refrigeration. Yeast Foam proudly stated in their advertisements, "WE PAY YOU if it Doesn't Make the Best Bread Ever!" and explained that the yeast could be kept in the pantry, which saved trips to the grocery store during a time of both gas and tire rationing.<sup>237</sup> Yeast Foam even partnered with Hewett P Mulford's seed and bulb company to offer readers seeds if they tried Yeast Foam and sent in the wrapper.<sup>238</sup> All of the yeasts were comparable in quality, so most of it came down to brand preference and affordability.

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<sup>234</sup> "Calumet," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, August 21, 1943, 15.

<sup>235</sup> "Fleischmann's," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 21, 1942, 21.

Advertisements with similar messaging: "Fleischmann's," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, January 9, 1943, 18.; "Fleischmann's," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, May 1, 1943, 16.; "Fleischmann's," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, June 5, 1943, 18.

<sup>236</sup> "Maca," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 16, 1942, 17.

<sup>237</sup> "Northwestern Yeast Company," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, February 20, 1943, 11. For a similar advertisement, see: "Northwestern Yeast Company," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 16, 1943, 29.

<sup>238</sup> "Northwestern Yeast Company," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 6, 1943, 21.

Two main competitors stood out in flour advertisements, Mother's Best Flour and Pillsbury. Mother's Best Flour was an all-purpose flour meant to be used for all baking and cooking needs, and the advertisements often featured wartime recipes, some of which were for tasty treats without the use of sugar.<sup>239</sup> While Mother's Best Flour certainly had a customer basis, Pillsbury's Best flour had brand recognition, received the "first 'E' award in milling industry," and provided women with rationing tips such as the reminder "that when you use enriched white flour – which fortunately is plentiful – you further your government's nutrition program."<sup>240</sup> Pillsbury's enriched flour provided families with necessary vitamins that they might not be receiving because of rationing, informed women that pairing the enriched flour with milk made for a hearty helping of protein, and also published recipes as part of their advertisements to aid women with the wartime restrictions. One advertisement featured a seven-in-one recipe that would allow women to stretch their meat, vegetable, and fruit dishes. The seven-in-one recipe was made up of flour, salt, shortening, and baking powder, and the advertisement then featured seven ration-point-saving dishes that could be made, which were baking powder biscuits, fruit pinwheels, cross-bar tea biscuits, fresh or canned fruit shortcake, meat and vegetable casserole, fruit nut coffee cake, and savory meat or sea food slices.<sup>241</sup> Additionally, Pillsbury also created advertisements that indicated their unwavering support of the war effort and how they were proud to do their part on the home front. One advertisement proclaimed, "Listen, Adolph; listen, Benito; you too, Son of Heaven. Don't get any screwball ideas that the Yanks in khaki and blue

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<sup>239</sup> "Mother's Best Flour," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 1, 1943, 16.

Advertisements with similar messaging: "Mother's Best Flour," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 5, 1943, 18.; "Mother's Best Flour," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 19, 1943, 12.

<sup>240</sup> "Pillsbury's Best," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, March 6, 1943, 20.

Advertisements with similar messaging: "Pillsbury's Best," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 1, 1943, 15.; "Pillsbury's Best," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, October 16, 1943, 29.

<sup>241</sup> "Pillsbury's Best," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, April 3, 1943, 19.

are the *only* American fighters. ... We're putting in all we've got, to grow and harvest the *fightin' food* that fuels up this whole gangster-smashing machine."<sup>242</sup> Pillsbury positioned itself as the patriotic brand of flour in the United States and one in which the enriched flour they produced would best serve the nutritional needs of a family.

Other advertisements related to the war effort were featured in *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*. Wheaties cereal advertised that with increased wartime work loads this led to an increased need for a filling, nutritious morning meal to help individuals sustain energy until their next meal. Some of their advertisements featured folklore legend, Paul Bunyan, and stated, "Now that you have to work like Paul Bunyan to meet those gigantic war production schedules, you'd better plan to eat more, too."<sup>243</sup> Along with cereal advertisements were ones for both Pen-Jel and Sure-Jell (powdered pectin products) that encouraged women to make jams and jellies to preserve their crops and was an easy way to have these items amidst rationing.<sup>244</sup> Finally, Anheuser Busch, a brewery, advertised with proclamations such as "By all means, let 'em eat cake .... and candy, too" and became involved in wartime production with a separate Corn Products Division that produced large amounts of corn syrup along with leading production for the manufacturing of rubber, munitions, batteries, baby foods, etc.<sup>245</sup>

Along with the advice provided in *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, the Iowa State Extension offices assisted rural women to understand their role on the home front. By World War II, the Iowa Extension program had expanded greatly including adding support staff and having additional volunteers at the ready along with expanding in its ability to disseminate

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<sup>242</sup> "Pillsbury Flour Mills Company," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, May 15, 1943, 19.

<sup>243</sup> "Wheaties," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 5, 1943, 19.

<sup>244</sup> "Pen-Jel," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, June 19, 1943, 15.; "Sure-Jell," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, September 4, 1943, 22.

<sup>245</sup> "Anheuser Busch," *Wallaces' Farmer and Iowa Homestead*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 6, 1943, 38.

information through increased publications and broadcasting from the WOI radio station based in Ames, Iowa. Educational cooperators were tasked with educating between twelve to sixteen families and providing them with pamphlets that encouraged “increased production of hogs, dairy products, poultry and eggs ...”<sup>246</sup> The purpose of the pamphlets was to highlight to farmers the importance of increasing the production of these items, because food would help to win the war and the farmers’ production was a necessary component and led to an increase in farmers mobilizing for the war effort. Iowa farmers for every year of the war surpassed the previous year’s production and felt great pride in their contributions for the war effort. Besides giving farming advice, the “home economists advised Iowa women on how to deal with rationing and food shortages, how to make up food budgets, how to grow even larger vegetable gardens, and how to can food with lower percentages of spoilage.”<sup>247</sup> While the farmers and rural women deserved much of the credit for the production records set and the sheer amount of fruits and vegetables canned, the Extension agents also deserved recognition for their contributions in helping to spread this information.

Along with farmers involvement in wartime production, African Americans in Iowa also contributed to the war effort during World War II. Dorothy Schwieder felt it was safe “to assume that African Americans in Iowa also found considerable opportunities for job advancement.”<sup>248</sup> Schwieder also found it very probable that some African Americans came to Iowa for wartime work, while others moved from smaller communities to “urban areas such as Des Moines and Ankeny.”<sup>249</sup> This movement from rural areas to urban sectors, historian Karen Anderson has

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<sup>246</sup> Schwieder, “The Iowa State College Cooperative Extension Service Through Two World Wars,” *Agricultural History*, 225.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>248</sup> Schwieder, “World War II and the Years Beyond,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 283.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*

noted was “the greatest benefit of the wartime experience for black women workers.”<sup>250</sup>

Although she also remarked that while African American women gained employment during the war, they also would most likely be the first fired when the men returned home. She stated, “The persistence of discrimination and the late entry of black women into production work, rather than their on-the-job conduct, meant that nonwhite females were more likely than others to experience layoffs resulting from contract completions or seasonal cutbacks. Once fired, they faced great difficulties in finding comparable work.”<sup>251</sup>

Because of the war, Iowa saw a tremendous increase in women entering the workforce. Schwieder noted, “Although the percentage of Iowa women working outside the home had been increasing since 1900 (except for the decade between 1910 and 1920), the greatest increase would come during World War II: Between 1940 and 1944 the number of working women increased 56 percent.”<sup>252</sup> While Iowa had a lot of wartime positions available to women, the local *Ames Daily Tribune* reinforced to women their valuable domestic responsibilities by such columns as the “War Kitchen” and “Society News” page. As during peacetime, the society page featured wedding announcements, divorce decrees, a calendar of events, and club meeting information. But during the war, this page also featured ration calendars and wartime recipes. Additionally, the Ames paper ran advertisements on the society page from grocery stores, department stores, and clothing stores. Those advertisements emphasized to women to be mindful of their wartime domestic responsibilities, as well as providing special messages proclaiming the need to purchase war bonds.<sup>253</sup> Advertisements featured on the society page

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<sup>250</sup> Anderson, “Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II,” *The Journal of American History*, 97.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>252</sup> Schwieder, “World War II and the Years Beyond,” *Iowa: The Middle Land*, 282-283.

<sup>253</sup> *The Ames Daily Tribune*, Ames, Iowa, December 1941 – August 1945.

often highlighted the special conditions of wartime cooking; for instance, advertisements reminded women to save used fats because for each pound of fat they turned in to their local butchers, they received two extra red points.<sup>254</sup>

While national publications such as *The New York Times*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *McCall's* provided women with important advice, local publications held a place in reaching white, middle class readers as well. Iowa women had access to national publications, but many of them instead may have turned to local or regional newspapers for their wartime cooking and food advice. With the uncertainties of war and what this meant for the nation, women might have felt a kinship with a local newspaper, particularly when the writers could have been their next-door neighbor. Newspapers in Iowa often reported on all aspects of the war, including news of what was occurring in Europe and in the Pacific. Those papers also carried advertisements to buy war bonds, grocery store advertisements with the latest ration schedules, and food sections with wartime recipes for homemakers.<sup>255</sup> The war drew Iowans together, and newspapers and other publications that allowed the home front citizenry to feel connected to the war increased camaraderie throughout the state.

Although local writers wrote many of the articles within regional newspapers, the food section "War Kitchen" in the *Ames Daily Tribune* was a nationally syndicated column written by Gaynor Maddox.<sup>256</sup> Both Maddox and his wife Dorothy wrote under his byline through the Newspaper Enterprise Association, which served as a newspaper syndication service.<sup>257</sup> The "War Kitchen" column ran several times a week and offered advice to women on proper

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<sup>254</sup> *The Ames Daily Tribune*, January 29, 1945, 3.; *The Ames Daily Tribune*, February 5, 1945, 3.; *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 5, 1945, 3.; *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 22, 1945, 3.

<sup>255</sup> Loren Horton, "World War II: Iowans on the Home Front," *Iowa Public Television Iowa Pathways*, n.d., Accessed April 2, 2018, <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/mypath/world-war-ii-iowans-home-front>.

<sup>256</sup> Voss, "Appendix," *The Food Section*, 184.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*

nutrition, recipes that used the Basic Seven Food Groups, and how to reduce waste in the kitchen.<sup>258</sup> Maddox stressed the importance of meal planning to mitigate some of the stress involved with preparing meals that fit within the limits of both ration points and money. Maddox also wrote that food waste was unacceptable, “Leftovers in the refrigerator challenge the homemaker. Every scrap of meat must be used. A few leftover stewed tomatoes, a slice or two of dry bread – these may just start the list of foods that must not be wasted.”<sup>259</sup> His column echoed the principle of federal authorities and homemaking advisors that to waste food was akin to treason at a time when everyone had to make do with less.

Like *The New York Times* and other national publications, Maddox urged readers in smaller cities such as Ames to seek out protein-rich alternatives to meat. Without proper nutrition, war workers might not be as efficient, which could impede wartime production on the home front. Maddox urged women to understand the value of other protein-rich foods such as beans, peanuts and peanut butter, eggs, and milk. He noted that while many Americans might not realize it, peanuts were “high in Vitamin B complex and equal to beef for high quality protein – they are a worthy alternate for a diminishing meat supply.”<sup>260</sup> Recipes such as peanut butter and watercress sandwiches and liver scrapple squares might not sound appetizing today, but during the war, homemakers had to get creative with the meals they served their families.<sup>261</sup>

Additionally, Maddox advocated that women use wholesome cereals in their cooking as an added source of protein. He wrote that grains contained “about 11 percent protein which

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<sup>258</sup> The Basic Seven Food Groups was a precursor to the four food groups, the food pyramid, and “My Plate.” “A Brief History of USDA Food Guides,” *USDA*, n.d., accessed May 30, 2019, <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/brief-history-usda-food-guides>.

<sup>259</sup> Gaynor Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, November 4, 1944, 2.

<sup>260</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, July 9, 1945, 3.

<sup>261</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 1, 1945, 3.; Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 12, 1945, 3.

becomes highly effective in combination with relatively small amounts of milk, eggs, fish, or cheese.”<sup>262</sup>

Maddox understood that women still wanted meat in their diets, particularly if they were feeding husbands, fathers, sons, or other men engaged in war work, GIs home on furlough, or family on special occasions. Accordingly, his column provided women with advice on how to stretch their meat purchases. One creative way to do this was to incorporate hearty helpings of vegetables into the dishes. In one recipe, Maddox gave a recipe for a ground meat ring, which served eight because “when you can get ground beef, make it go as far as possible. Combine it with some other protein food such as eggs, and pick up the flavor and vitamin in value with vegetables.”<sup>263</sup> Another similar recipe, vegetable hamburgers, served eight and combined a half pound of chopped beef with minced onion, celery, carrots, spices, and mayonnaise to form patties that were pan fried like a traditional hamburger.<sup>264</sup>

Chicken and fish became staple items for people in Ames and across the country, since these items typically were more readily available. Maddox stated that “chicken is almost worth its weight in gold today. Treat every scrap with respect and that includes the fat which many celebrated French chefs prefer to butter.”<sup>265</sup> Throughout the war, the “War Kitchen” column featured over a hundred recipes that incorporated these wartime staples of fish and chicken. Those preset meal suggestions aimed to make life easier for homemakers who would rather not have the pressure to create their own meal ideas. In one recipe, Maddox provided a chicken dish that served four when paired with fresh vegetables from the homemaker’s own Victory

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<sup>262</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 12, 1945, 3.

<sup>263</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, January 23, 1945, 3.

<sup>264</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 6, 1945, 3.

<sup>265</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, July 21, 1945, 2.

Garden.<sup>266</sup> Maddox frequently urged that homemakers also use more fish in their cooking. He reminded readers that “unless Americans learn to use more fish in their daily menus, there is danger that a huge amount of this valuable non-rationed and delicious protein may go to waste.”<sup>267</sup> Some of the featured recipes were fried filet of sole, fish-chip loaf, and baked fish molds.<sup>268</sup>

Besides educating homemakers on how to stretch their meat supply and what alternatives to use for protein, Maddox gave women recipes on how to bake delicious treats with their limited sugar and butter supply. Recipes used sugar substitutes such as peanut butter and honey and called for margarine in place of butter when possible. Maddox educated homemakers that “margarine has important food value including a minimum of 9000 USP [United States Pharmacopeia] units Vitamin A in every pound. The newest types of fortified margarine have good appearance and flavor, and are easy to mix for cooking purposes.”<sup>269</sup> Maddox realized that sometimes mothers wanted to make special desserts that required both butter and sugar. To accommodate those desires for treats within wartime constraints, he provided recipes that used minimal amounts of each to make the ingredients go further. One recipe for baked Indian pudding only called for ¼ cup of sugar and one tablespoon of butter, with molasses and cornmeal added to bring the pudding together with the proper consistency and sweetness.<sup>270</sup>

The “Wartime Kitchen” column not only provided daily menus and recipes for homemakers, but also educated homemakers on mealtime etiquette and how to celebrate special events. Maddox instructed women on the proper set up of the table including what linens to use,

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<sup>266</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, June 20, 1945, 3.

<sup>267</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, January 2, 1945, 3.

<sup>268</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, January 4, 1945, 3.; Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1945, 3.; Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, May 9, 1945, 3.

<sup>269</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, October 30, 1944, 3.

<sup>270</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, February 17, 1945, 2.

what table decorations would be proper, and on the placement of utensils and dishes at the place setting.<sup>271</sup> This advice suggested to readers that even during the war, maintaining proper decorum could keep a sense of occasion and celebration. Maddox wrote that while wedding receptions could and should be joyous, special occasions even during the war, the harsh realities of “rationing, war work still to be done, and good taste preclude any but a simple reception.”<sup>272</sup> Maddox indicated that there were three simple needs that a wartime homemaker should bear in mind when planning a reception: “1. To create a pleasing picture; 2. To make serving smooth and easy; 3. To fulfill the claims of sentiment and tradition.”<sup>273</sup> After meeting those needs, he advised, the rest of the reception should remain simple and sentimental.

Furthermore, Maddox believed in teaching teenage girls the art of cooking under wartime restrictions. He believed this was necessary “not only to insure a home front food army, but also to train a generation of future mothers to feed their families adequately regardless of money or markets.”<sup>274</sup> With the proper guidance, young girls would be able to create wholesome meals no matter the conditions. Maddox also occasionally incorporated advice from the experts to add more credibility to the column. For example, in 1945, Maddox’s column drew on the work of food specialist Peter Grieg, who wrote “Ten Wartime Gastronomical Resolutions for 1945,” which offered such advice as serving your family a boiled sheep’s head as long as the “family is not squeamish.” Maddox also noted Grieg’s recommendation of serving “big hot-cooked onions with a kidney stuffed in the top of each instead of Welch rarebits” as party fare.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, March 28, 1945, 3.

<sup>272</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, May 29, 1945, 3.

<sup>273</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, May 29, 1945, 3.

<sup>274</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, July 16, 1945, 3.

<sup>275</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, January 20, 1945, 2.

Finally, Maddox discussed canned fruits and making jellies in the column, which was one home front activity that many women in Ames remembered participating in.<sup>276</sup> In one column, Maddox gave a recipe for strawberry and currant jelly, which made about twelve 6-ounce glasses full and could be kept in a “cool, dark place” for long-term storage.<sup>277</sup> Making jellies and canning fruits allowed women to take the plentiful harvest of fresh fruits and preserve them for later use in the winter months. Women in Story County, Iowa, like women across the nation, took to canning fruit from their Victory Gardens, to cut down on the need to buy canned goods. In later oral history interviews, Ames residents Doris Olson and Ruth Brown both recalled canning during the war. Olson, who was eleven years old when the United States entered the war, remembered her mother canning fruits and vegetables on their farm from their large garden. She also remembered that they had some beef from their own cows, but instead of canning the meat, they took it to a locker in Nevada, Iowa.<sup>278</sup> Brown, who was twenty-six years old at the start of the war, remembered the labor-intensive work that canning required. She and her husband, Farwell, a well-known Ames historian, lived on thirty-five acres of land, which allowed her to grow an extensive array of fruits and vegetables of which she kept a careful record. For instance, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, she canned seven pints of peas and on the 13<sup>th</sup>, ten glasses of rhubarb.<sup>279</sup> Brown remembered canning in the hot Iowa summers and said that she has “never canned like that since that time.”<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Doris Olson, Interview by Cynthia Bennett, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, Tape Recording, Ames, October 29, 2004.; Ruth Brown, Interview by Cynthia Bennet, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, Tape Recording, Ames, August 11, 2003.

<sup>277</sup> Maddox, “War Kitchen,” *The Ames Daily Tribune*, April 9, 1945, 3.

<sup>278</sup> Doris Olson, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, October 29, 2004.

<sup>279</sup> Ruth Brown, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, August 11, 2003.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*

These women and others remembered rationing and wartime efforts but thought of them more in positive terms as doing their patriotic duty rather than resenting these chores and limitations as an obligation. Olson recalled the rationing and commented, “we did do without some things and was glad to do it. I think most everybody was willing to sacrifice. It just seems to me they were. I can’t remember anything otherwise.”<sup>281</sup> Brown even waxed nostalgic, regarding the war years as good years for her and her family. While she understood that the war was difficult for families whose husbands and sons went off to war, when she thought “back to the years of living on the acreage they were happy years for us.”<sup>282</sup>

Because of Iowa’s isolated position in the Midwest, it would be easy to presume that Iowans would not be heavily involved in the home front war effort. Yet as both Doris Olson and Ruth Brown remembered most Iowans saw it as their patriotic necessity to support the home front war efforts for World Wars I and II. Housewives, farmer’s wives, and working mothers alike all took it upon themselves to ensure that their families remained their top responsibility even as their additional responsibilities increased outside of the home whether that was from working on their farm or in a wartime factory. Ultimately the home front efforts for both World War I and II, both nationally and in Iowa, were successful because the majority of Americans knew it was their patriotic duty to purchase war bonds, have a Victory garden, participate in voluntary and mandatory rationing restrictions among other home front efforts.

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<sup>281</sup> Doris Olson, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, October 29, 2004.

<sup>282</sup> Ruth Brown, “Ames Remembers World War II,” *Ames Historical Society*, August 11, 2003.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

Between the two world wars existed stark differences and striking similarities that affected how women on the home front experienced and handled the challenges of war and balancing work and home responsibilities. One major difference was how rationing never became mandatory during World War I as it was in World War II. Instead, Hoover, the Food Administration, and local, state, and the federal government relied on the home front citizens to do their own policing and conserving of goods. Women signed the voluntary Food Pledge, hung the card in their front window to show their family's support of wheatless and meatless meals, and frowned upon and shamed women who did not do their part regardless of their location or means to conserve. For the women who chose not to participate in the food pledge and conserve, it was often because these women found the recipes in poor taste for not being relevant to their living situation for example providing women in the Midwest with seafood recipes better suited for women living in New England. Another example was when Edith Guerrier of the Library Division of the United States Food Administration encountered Miss Cornelia Marvin from the Oregon State Library. Marvin disapproved of the recipes sent out by the Food Administration and stated, "Here they send us recipes fitted to Minneapolis flours which never in the world will work with our flours here on the Pacific Coast. Why don't they let us make up our own recipes instead of thinking that all the wisdom in the world regarding cooking is lodged around the dome of the Capitol in Washington?"<sup>283</sup> Women, for the most part, heeded the advice and recommendations that the Food Administration provided, yet also wanted the advice to be tailored to their needs. Because of this desire to have their needs met through tailored advice, local publications had a high popularity.

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<sup>283</sup> Guerrier, *We Pledged Allegiance*, 31.

Unlike World War I, rationing became mandatory during World War II and women had to learn how to cope with the food limitations placed upon them. Luckily for women, wartime advertisements and articles abounded to offer advice and recipes to stretch ingredients and how to be creative with meal planning. Editor of the Iowa Publication, *Kitchen Klatter*, Leanna Driftmier even reminded readers about the importance of not fretting over rationing because “When you have time to fret over the things we can’t have like coffee, sugar and tires, remember the other things we don’t have like bombings, invasions, starvations, etc.”<sup>284</sup> While government wartime posters and advertisements were used in both wars, World War II, because of the increased pressure of forced rationing, saw an even greater number of these posters being created along with numerous advertisements flooding magazines and newspapers. These posters and advertisements communicated to women the crucial role they played on the home front whether they were a homemaker or worked outside of the home along with taking care of her family. Because these national and local publications told women that their work in the home and kitchen was valuable in wartime, white, middle class women in Ames, Iowa and across the United States performed their domestic roles willingly and with a patriotic zeal during both world wars.

Additionally, through government posters and advertisements women understood that taking wartime employment could affect wartime efficiency and possibly shorten the duration of the war. So many married, single, and widowed women entered the workforce under the assumption that this work was temporary until the return of peace. Even for the women who wanted to remain in the workforce after the war, many of them were met with disapproving

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<sup>284</sup> *Kitchen Klatter*, January 1943, 1, cited in Ossian, “The Kitchen Front,” *The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1939-1945*, 133.

remarks from men who felt more qualified for the work and who felt that women should not take work from those returning overseas who needed the job and income.

Ultimately neither World War I nor World War II was a watershed moment for white, middle class women; articles and advertisements featured these women working with manicured nails and perfectly made up faces who rushed home after their factory shift to prepare meals for their families. The only new thing about her domestic work was the urgency placed upon it and her role within the home. Even while becoming Rosie the Riveter, women were to aid the battle as the kitchen soldier manning the “home” front. The war certainly disrupted millions of women’s lives across the country, though upon its conclusion, women remained rooted in their domestic sphere of work as men returned to work, and these homemakers saw little change in their roles.

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