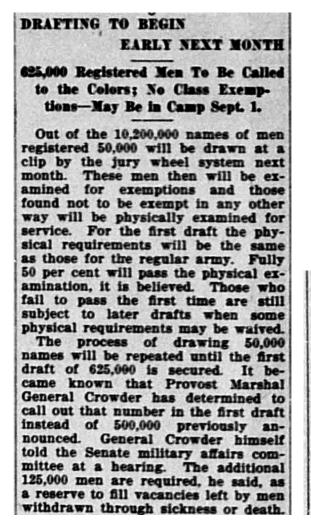
## **Enlist or Be Drafted**

When the United States entered World War I in April of 1917, the Unites States Army consisted of 121,000 men, while the total of all the state National Guard organizations was 181,000. Since the estimate of the number of men needed to win the war was between 2 and 4 million, a large army had to be raised quickly.

On May 18, 1917, the Selective Service Act of 1917 passed. Initially, all males aged 21 to 30 were required to register. After August 1918, Congress voted to expand the age range to include all men 18 to 45. By the end of World War I, some two million men volunteered for various branches of the armed services, and some 2.8 million had been drafted.



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General Crowder said the government will permit no class exemptions. All will be personal. Because a man is employed on government work or is a farmer or munitions worker does it not follow that he will be exempt. The drawing being made early in July, the government will give all men drafted an opportunity to arrange their personal affairs before calling them to the colors. According to present plans, the call to the colors will be September 1. On that date all those selected for army service must report at mobilization camps. Each will be told to what camp to report and will be furnished transportation. Draftees left for the service in groups. The newspaper published their names and departure date. Their friends and relatives often gave a party for them the night before they left. They took the train from Morristown through Madison where these same friends and relatives would cheer them as they passed through the station.

Volunteers left for the service individually, and their departure was usually acknowledged after they had gone. Some of them felt slighted as this poem describes.

VOLUNTEERS BELIEVE THEY ARE ENTIRELY FORGOTTEN		
At times during the past The Eagle has received letters from volunteers in Uncle Sam's service expressing griev- ance at the great attention given drafted men while the volunteers re- ceive little attention. One of the Mad- ison volunteers has sent the follow- ing letter and poem to The Eagle: "Enclosed you will find a poem of the feelings of the "boys", from Camp McClellan, that have been forgotten by the people excepting their parents and sweethearts. You don't realize how slighted we have felt, so please publish this and make us happy. This poem which I have written has been read by many a hundred and was cheered heartily. A lot of boys have copied it and are sending it to their home papers. Well, here is the poem:	By a Volunteer at Camp McClellan. Why didn't I wait to be drafted, And led to the train by a band, And put in my claim for exemption. Oh, why did I hold up my hand; Why didn't I wait for the banquets? Why didn't I wait for a cheer? For the drafted men get all the credit. While I am merely a volunteer. Nobody gave me a banquet. Nobody said a kind word. The puff of the engine, the grind of the wheel, Was all the goodbye that I heard. Then to the training camp hustled, To be trained for the next half a year; And in the shuffle forgotten.	I was merely a volunteer. And perhaps some day in the future When my little boy sits on my knee And asks what I did in the great war And his little eyes look up at me, I'll have to look back into those eyes, That at me so trustingly peer, And tell him that I wasn't drafted. I was merely a volunteer.

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