

# The Lancaster Welcome Home Medal, 1919

*by Carl J. Tishler*

**D**uring a course in historical evidence at Haverford College, I was given an unusual object to investigate. The challenge of my research was to understand the function and purpose of the object. It was a quest which brought me to Lancaster and into the lives of its residents.

The object was a bronze medal attached to a blue and white ribbon. It weighed 18.15 grams, measured 1.5 inches at its widest point, and was 3 inches from the bottom of the medal to the top of the ribbon. The medal hung from a “V” shaped ribbon above it. The ribbon was dark blue on the left side and a faded white on the right side. Two bronze rings connected the ribbon to the medal.

The medal itself was a five-armed cross. The arms were equally spaced around the exterior. Each arm looked like the cross-section of a mushroom; it bulged outward as it extended outward and then rounded off towards the top. The very top of these mushrooms was folded inward. The effect of the folded mushrooms is that it made each arm look like a rose petal.

My research revealed that the crest in the center of the medal was that of the Lancaster, Pennsylvania city crest<sup>1</sup>. In 1907, it was discovered that Lancaster had no city flag or crest to send to the Jamestown Exposition.<sup>2</sup> The design that was subsequently chosen closely resembles the crest of Lancaster, England. The English crest features a three-tiered design, with a ship at the top, a plow in the middle, and then finally a sheaf of wheat at the bottom. Lancaster, Pennsylvania kept this three tiered design, but adapted it to reflect the city's unique features: A Conestoga Wagon replaced the ship, three round balls from the Penn family coat of arms were put in place of the plow, and three sheaves of wheat were put at the bottom. The crest has a “crown” at its top with a design that also includes the Penn family arms.

The House of Lancaster in England had a red rose as its symbol, and the rose motif can be found all over Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The city flag has the crest set in the middle of a rose in precisely the same fashion as on the medal.

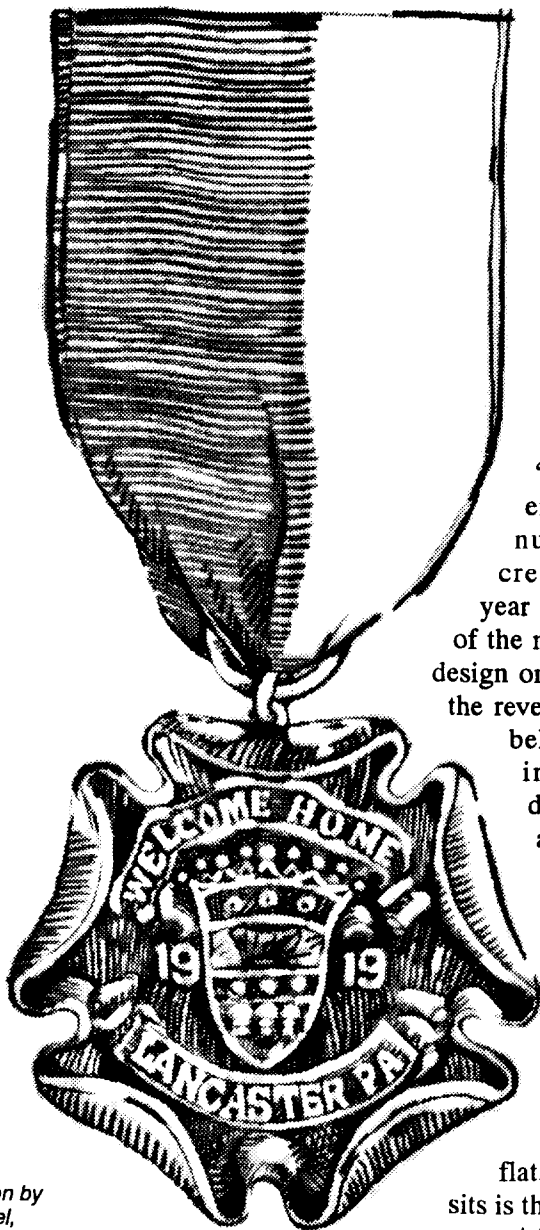


Illustration by  
Mike Abel,  
LCHS

The similarity between the medal and the city flag is striking. However, the medal is distinct in a number of ways. Above the crest are the words "WELCOME HOME" on a banner that curves around the top of the crest. This banner undulates as if it were floating in the wind.

Below the crest, written on a banner in the same font is the lettering "LANCASTER PA." On either side of the crest is the number "19," so that the crest's placement splits the year "1919" in half. The reverse of the medal is smooth and has no design on it. Towards the bottom of the reverse side is a marking that I believe is the manufacturer's imprint. The lettering is difficult to read, but according to Richard Planck's book, *State, County, City, and Organization Medals for World War One*,<sup>3</sup> the manufacturer is the JFA Company. With this in mind, it is possible to distinguish the lettering as "JFA Co." The backside is flat. The center where the crest sits is the broadest part.

After some sleuthing in

Lancaster city directories, I discovered that the JFA Company was a jewelry manufacturing firm started by J. Francis Apple in 1919. Mr. Appel had been a partner of J. William Reisner in the umbrella handle business prior to starting on his own as a jewelry designer and manufacturer at 120 East Chestnut Street, Lancaster. In 1928 Apple built a factory at 336 South West End Avenue, and by this time he was making rings and jewelry for schools (including Lancaster High School), colleges and fraternal groups. It would appear that Mr. Apple died about 1953. A reorganization of the firm followed, but the company ceased operations in 1954 and its plant was taken over by the Science Press.

When viewing the artifact as a whole, its simplicity and its balance are striking. The ribbon's colors have faded with time, but the division between the colors naturally draws the eye downwards towards the medal. This line also seems to divide the artifact into two symmetrical halves. The medal's color is now a reddish brown. Where the medal has been recently scratched (by accident), it is possible to observe a brighter, copper color.

Based on discussions with Terry Newirth of the Haverford College Chemistry Department, as well as with various manufacturers of medals, I believe that the medal is made of bronze or another closely related copper derivative. Pure copper would have partially oxidized and given the medal a greenish color, like an old penny. Bronze was also the most commonly used alloy in the production of medals during the early part of this century.<sup>4</sup> Larry Merlino of A.J. Dennison Company, a medal manufacturer, thought that gilding metal was used to produce the artifact.<sup>5</sup> Gilding metal is 95% copper and 5% alloy. Merlino also said that the medal would have been coated with a protective layer to prevent oxidation. In any event, the artifact is primarily composed of copper. The ribbon is made of fine-weave cotton, and the pin is an alloy.<sup>6</sup>

I was not able to learn the exact processes used by the Apple firm, but I have spoken with other manufacturers of medals, including the Dorrety Company, which has used the same production methods and the same machinery for the past seventy five years. Of the three main manufacturing techniques for medals, die striking appears to be the one used in making this medal. In die striking, a steel die is placed in a stamping press that drops tons of pressure onto the blank metal below. The pressure forces the metal into the cavities and grooves of the die and produces clear, sharp images. Jerry Greenspan of Main Line Trophies, Inc. pointed to the artifact's smooth reverse side and clear lettering as evidence of the die-striking process.<sup>7</sup>

Die-striking has been used for the last 100 years in much the same way.<sup>8</sup> Two factors account for the increasing costs involved in producing die-struck medals, the labor-intensive process and the rising price of copper.<sup>9</sup> According to Greenspan, it would cost roughly \$5,300 to produce 2,500 exact copies of the artifact today. The relative cost of producing this medal in 1919 would have been far less.



Seal of the City of Lancaster as it appears over the front door of the Public Safety Building on E. Chestnut Street. LCHS photo, 1995

My initial hypothesis was that the artifact was produced for distribution in 1919 to returning service men and women in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Since I looked at the artifact as “living history” I wanted to go to Lancaster to get a “feel” for the city, to read its 1919 newspapers, and to talk with its residents who were alive then. I felt that primary source material was still very much available if I wanted to pursue it. With this in mind, I interviewed Bill Chapman, a 102-year-old Lancaster County resident of the Colonial Hall Rehabilitation Center, who fought in France during World War One.

Many secondary sources, were available, such as Robert Murray’s *The Red Scare*, that enriched my own research and analysis. The search for more information led to TRIPOD and on-line data base scans. I quickly determined that the artifact was not a medal given by the military or the federal government.<sup>10</sup> The United States Army Military Institute in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania and the Lancaster County’s Veterans Affairs Director, George Worthington, were both helpful in confirming this.

I found the five volume history of the 28th Division during the Great War in the Haverford College Library. The 28th, or Iron, Division was comprised almost entirely of soldiers from Pennsylvania. From scanning the company rosters I discovered that one company, the 111th Ambulance Company, 103rd Sanitary Train was a former National Guard unit from Lancaster. The units were “nationalized” by President Wilson when the United States began to prepare to enter the war. Former National Guard units were allowed to stay together, so the 111th was entirely from Lancaster. I decided to make this company my guinea pigs, reasoning that if I tracked this company’s history during and after the war it

would intersect at some point with my artifact.

The information I had already located, indicated that the medal was given out, not sold directly by a vendor, to soldiers returning home to Lancaster from the war. When I first went to Lancaster, I checked the newspapers to see if there



*Lancastrians honored veterans of World War I on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921. With pomp and ceremony on the front steps of the Lancaster County Courthouse, the veterans were received with a thunderous ovation by the grateful citizens and public officials. LCHS photo.*

was any other event where the medal might have been distributed, and I found no other possible scenarios. The Lancaster County Historical Society, the Franklin & Marshall College Library and archives, the Stahr Armory, the Lancaster Public Library, City Hall and other municipal buildings, were some of the sources I checked. I interviewed Lancaster residents and employees at all of these locations as well as at the Colonial Hall Rehabilitation Center.

I knew that there were collectors and dealers for every imaginable type of antique. Speaking with local antique dealers would be a good way to track down “experts.” In this regard I was truly fortunate. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania is something of a mecca for antique dealers. Just a few miles up the road from Lancaster, in Adamstown, I found thousands of dealers and stands.

My strategy was to speak with anyone whose specialty was in any way related to World War One or to Lancaster at that period. For instance, I looked for antique photo dealers to see if they had any photos of the troops returning to

Lancaster, or ideally, of the troops wearing the welcome home medal. I also spoke with dealers who specialized in advertisements and posters to look for World War One vintage material. However, the focus of my search was on locating any and every militaria dealer. I found a number of dealers who immediately recognized the medal, including one who had had the medal in his collection, and one who offered me \$25 for it. Though this offer was tempting, I calculated that by this point my research was worth more.

The clear consensus among these dealers was that the medal was in fact given to Lancaster's service men when they returned from the war in 1919. I felt it was helpful to speak with anyone who could tell me about World War One. So I asked these dealers to give me names of others in the field, and I followed up these leads and further expanded my "web" of contacts.

The Franklin & Marshall library provided me with six different histories of Lancaster, and sources of information on the "Great War" and of welcome home ceremonies. In the Special Collections at Franklin & Marshall, there were World War One posters from Lancaster.<sup>11</sup> All of these posters hung in Lancaster during the war. These posters were helpful in understanding what was important to the citizens of 1919 and what the Government or war work organizations wanted to be important. The local newspapers, in particular the *New Era*, were also helpful in putting together a composite picture of Lancaster.

Both sources also helped to broaden the scope of my research. The poster that reads: "THEY DIED FOR YOU" and "BUY LIBERTY BONDS," had photos of all the Lancaster County soldiers who had been killed by mid-1918.<sup>12</sup> The poster lists not only the names, but also the units or battalions in which the soldiers served. Obviously, Lancaster's contribution to the war, in terms of personnel, was much larger than just the 111th Company. Other companies from Lancaster that also served were in the 42nd (Rainbow) and the 79th (Liberty) Divisions. In reading about the major welcome home parade in October, 1919, I discovered that there had been African-American soldiers from Lancaster in the war. Lancaster also produced a number of sailors, as well as quite a few nurses, two of whom were killed in the line of duty.

After reading these references in the *New Era*, I changed my hypothesis slightly. Since the medal contains no specific mention of a Company or a Division, and because the only symbols on the medal are those of the City, it seems likely that the medal was distributed to all service men and women who were returning to Lancaster in 1919. This also means that the medal might have been given to citizens who had served in the military and been stationed in America. The medal's emphasis is simply on the welcome home to Lancaster. There is no indication of where the recipients might have been returning from.

The other way in which the *New Era* and the war posters broadened my research was by the heavy anti-German element in them. Posters reading "HALT THE HUN!" and "REMEMBER BELGIUM," just to name two, hung in

Lancaster during the war.<sup>13</sup> As late as May, 1919, the front-page headlines of the *New Era* had references to the treaty terms imposed on “the Hun.” Lancaster had a large German community, and I wondered how these posters and headlines were received by German-Americans. Did the war splinter or unify Lancaster in this way? David M. Dunmeyer’s master’s thesis entitled *Anti-German Sentiment in Lancaster, 1915-1919* provided insight into Lancaster during the war, and helped to set the medal in its historical context. The bibliography also included a new batch of primary and secondary sources to consider. However, it did not contain any mention of the medal itself or of the welcoming home ceremonies.

At this point I returned to searching general indices and journals. I found a source that would give me the answers to all of my remaining questions in Dowagiac, Michigan. After exhausting TRIPOD and other resources, I checked databases of commercial bookstores. From one of these stores, I found the name of a publisher in Colorado that produced a large book on military collectibles. This publisher referred me to Richard L. Planck in Dowagiac, a collector of Mexican Border Service, World War One, and World War Two medals. Planck published a book based on his personal collection. This work contains photos and information on over 1000 commemorative medals from World War One, including the medal from Lancaster. While Planck’s book did not answer all of questions about the Lancaster medal, it provided an invaluable context in which to analyze and consider the medal. For instance, I discovered that the medal was not something produced just by Lancaster, but rather that it was part of an entire genre and industry niche that matured at the end of the war.

The final phase of my research involved looking into this industry. I spoke with several manufacturers as well as local foundries and metallurgists, to get a sense of how the medal was produced. It was from these discussions that I was able to determine that die-striking was the process used to manufacture the medal.

This was my research strategy and technique, though there are other methods such as a more in-depth library based search for materials. Through inter-library loans and a wider search of bibliographies, I could have found sources like Planck, contacting the national antique dealers' associations, instead, or in conjunction with the dealers in military antiques. The majority of my leads and my sources emanated from Lancaster itself.

At this point I will return to Lancaster, more specifically to Lancaster in mid-1919. While the war in Europe ended with the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, the troops from Lancaster did not return home until April of the following year. Bill Chapman recalls being one of the first soldiers serving in France to return to Lancaster County.<sup>14</sup> Chapman was a messenger during the war. He was mustered out at Fort Dix, New Jersey, before he returned home. Chapman, who was not from the City of Lancaster, said that he did not remember a welcome home parade, nor did he recognize the medal. The Lancaster County

crest is different from the city of Lancaster Crest, and all further references to "Lancaster" will be to the city alone.

The first troops to return to Lancaster were from Company A, 109th Machine Gun Battalion of the 28th Division. The company was commanded by Captain W.C. Rehm, and returned home to Lancaster on May 5, 1919.<sup>15</sup> The newspapers mentioned a Soldiers' Welcome Home Committee that arranged to meet the troops at the train station. Mayor Harry Trout seemed to be the chief organizer of this committee, though there is no specific reference to his position on the committee.

The Welcome Home Committee arranged to meet all of the other service men and women at the train station as well. Company C of the 111th returned on May 9th, and Lancaster soldiers from the 316th Infantry and the 304th Engineers came home throughout May.<sup>16</sup> The weather on July 4th was too hot for Lancastrians to watch any of the fireworks or the other ceremonies that were planned to celebrate the occasion. To make up for this, as well as to wait for all of the soldiers, sailors and nurses to return home, Lancaster held off having its grand welcome home parade and celebration until October 6th.<sup>17</sup>

The October 4th edition of the *New Era* contained a twelve-page section called the "Welcome Home Edition." This section included a detailed description of the parade to be held on the 6th, including the order the troops would march in, as well as the uniforms and caps they would wear. The paper mentions the activities and entertainment that would be provided for the service men and women. The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. provided free three-month memberships to the troops and the Lancaster Council of the Knights of Columbus donated a motor truck/canteen that would provide free candies, cigarettes and also handkerchiefs.<sup>18</sup>

The slogan on this canteen was "Everything Free, Everybody Welcome". It would be out of place, in this setting, for a vendor to be selling the medal, presumably for a profit. I could not find any mention of a medal in the newspapers.

On April 30, the *New Era* ran an article on a medal that was to be given out to Liberty Loan Volunteers<sup>19</sup> to thank them for their help. The medal was made from a captured German cannon that had been melted down. There was a picture of both sides of this medal that accompanied the article. With this in mind, it is odd that the newspaper would not make mention of a medal that Lancaster had produced for its own service men and women.

I checked the Lancaster County Archives, as well as the City Council minutes from November, 1918 to January, 1920, and could not find any references to the medal. Looking in the City Purchasing Agent's records for a transaction between Lancaster and the JFA Co., did not produce any mention of this medal. Perhaps the City itself did not produce the medal. As Randall Snyder of the Lancaster County Historical Society pointed out, whoever made the medal and



used the city crest must have done so with the permission of the City or at least of Mayor Trout.<sup>20</sup> Of course, it is possible that a person or a group produced the medal independently of the City and distributed it on its own.

The most likely time when the medal would have been distributed was on October 6, as part of the welcome home celebrations. The *New Era* on October 4 described in great detail the banquet that was to follow the parade. The following quotation is from a description on the first page of the welcome home edition: "*Besides the banquet feature, there will be souvenirs of various kinds: a solid leather card case from a generous Lancastrian as well as other momentos from war work organizations.*"<sup>21</sup> Possibly, the medal was one of these momentos. It may have been given by a group or by a single, wealthy individual. I believe that more evidence on the medal is available, but at this point I can only speculate on its precise origins.

The medal was an opportunity for the city or the group to express its appreciation and pride. At the end of the war, there were over 1000 commemorative medals produced by states, counties, towns and various organizations.<sup>22</sup> Places ranging from San Francisco all the way down to tiny Hillsboro, New Hampshire, all issued medals similar to this one. While commemorative medals have historically been given for many different purposes and occasions, the end of the Great War was a unique time. The sheer number and variety of commemorative medals from this era is amazing.

Planck believes that one reason so many medals were given related to the traditions and practices of our war-time allies.<sup>23</sup> When British soldiers returned home at the end of the war, they were given at least three medals as a sign of thanks. However, when American service men and women returned, they were given only a Victory medal. Planck suggests that the local governments and organizations in effect made up this difference by producing their own medals. One can only speculate on why the Federal government was not up to speed with our European counter-parts in this way. Perhaps it was because World War One was our first real international war. Our entrance in 1917 was our emergence from our historic isolationism with regards to European affairs. Some evidence to support this theory is gained in comparing our medal-giving practices from the Second World War with this period.

While in Lancaster, I spoke with Clyde Shoemaker, who was ten years old in 1919. Shoemaker served in the Pacific during the Second World War, and he showed me the medals he was given. Before he returned to America, the Government gave him a Victory medal, an Asiatic Pacific medal, and an American Theater medal. These were all to be worn on the uniform and to be displayed when returning home. Perhaps by World War Two, the Government had caught up to the practices of other nations. It is also possible that more medals were given during the Second World War, because America was more involved in terms of personnel, time and expenses.

George Worthington, Director of the Lancaster County Department of Veterans Affairs, said that Vietnam veterans had come into his office and complained that "In World War One they got a medal, in World War Two, they got a certificate, and when we came home we did not get anything!"<sup>24</sup> It would be fascinating to compare Lancaster's welcome home celebrations in 1919 with those from 1945, 1953, 1973, and 1991. Shoemaker did not think that he received a welcome home medal from Lancaster in 1945. 1919 again appears to be unique.

Commemorative medals were given by almost every type of organization. The Boston Bookbinders Association, the Red Cross, the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Ford Motor Company were just a few of the groups who had medals made up for the service men and women<sup>25</sup>. Not to mention all of the cities, towns, counties, and states that also produced medals. Why did all of these groups feel the need to give medals? Gratitude and relief are two important answers, but I think there is more to it.

The only distinguishing trait on a military uniform is a person's name and rank. A uniform is a vehicle for identification and classification. For a town or group that watched its citizens or members leave them and return in a new uniform, perhaps the commemorative medals represented a chance to reclaim the service men and women as their own. Consider how many of the commemorative medals contained themes of possession. Irvington, New Jersey's medal from July, 1919 reads "WELCOME HOME" and "IRVINGTON'S OWN." San Francisco's has the lettering "SAN FRANCISCO TO HER WARRIOR SONS."<sup>25</sup> The medals served to reconnect the service men and women to their previous forms of identification/association. The medals were recognition to those who gone away to serve from the citizens at home who were making their own contribution.

During the war Lancaster did not have a lot of contact with the soldiers. Unlike the war in the Persian Gulf, World War One was not televised; Lancaster heard about its service men and women primarily through letters home that were published in the *New Era* and other local newspapers. Because of the communications of the time, there may have been more of a sense of thanksgiving to see the troops return.

How was all of this expressed? It appears that everything from the medals' shape to their design and inscriptions was used. The Bookbinders Local No. 16 in Boston, Massachusetts presented a commemorative medal in the shape of a book. The Whitehead and Hoag Company of Newark, New Jersey produced a medal in the shape of a Christian cross with an American eagle on the center of it.<sup>26</sup> Churches in Philadelphia, New York City, and Jersey City, New Jersey all distributed this medal to returning church members.<sup>27</sup> This medal is an example of an organization's personal statement, but it also interesting to consider the superimposed eagle and cross in another way. During World War One, the Kaiser was portrayed as the devil by Allied propaganda.<sup>28</sup> The war was presented as a

struggle between the forces of good and evil. Defeat in this war was like Armageddon, whereas victory was a triumph for all of the ideals, virtues and beliefs that we as "Americans" treasure.

These war-time sentiments, and the fervor of the time continued after the war in the Red Scare,<sup>29</sup> but more immediately, they can be seen in the commemorative medals. Meriden, Connecticut's bronze pendant inscription reads: "LIBERTY AND DEMOCRACY VICTORIOUSLY DEFENDED," and "WELCOME HOME TO OUR HEROES." The medals from Lancaster, New Hampshire, the Bausch & Lomb Optical Company, and Delta Chapter 602 of the Order of Eastern Star are examples of the patriotic, victory theme. Lancaster, New Hampshire's has the date July 4, 1919 on it and says "AND THEY THOUGHT WE COULDN'T FIGHT."

The medals contain bursts of patriotism and victorious pride in them. Some are elaborate, while others are relatively simple in design and message. Whitehead & Hoag was one of the main manufacturers at this time, and the company produced a number of popular designs. The medals were mass-produced, and then the name of the donor was printed on the top of the ribbon on a small bar.<sup>33</sup> This might allow places like Beach, North Dakota or the Village of Nashwauk, Minnesota to present medals without having to pay for an original design. Hillsboro, New Hampshire's medal is perhaps evidence of the pitfalls of this approach. The town's name is misspelled on the medal as "HILLSBOROUGH."<sup>34</sup> One can just imagine soldiers' bewilderment at returning to find the town's name changed in their absence.

Comparing the Lancaster, Pennsylvania medal with medals from other places raises some interesting questions. Why was Lancaster's so personalized? Everything on the medal, from its shape to the its crest and message, is Lancaster. There are no bravado quotes or eagles carrying rifles on it. There is not any mention of victory, of defeating the Germans, or even of the war at all. "WELCOME HOME" is all that it says.

According to the 1920 census, the City of Lancaster had a population of 53,150. Based on the size of the city, Planck estimates that roughly 2200 of these medals were produced.<sup>32</sup> Lancaster could have let Whitehead & Hoag make a victory medal for the city identical to those made for hundreds of other cities and towns across the country, but it did not. Whoever commissioned the medal decided to use an unique design, one that could belong only to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Randall Snyder of the Lancaster County Historical Society suggests that the medal's design may be related to the history of the city flag.<sup>33</sup>

Since the city crest and flag were only twelve years old in 1919, the medal may have been an opportunity to show them off or to familiarize the citizens with them. In the years between 1907 and 1919, the welcoming home of the troops to Lancaster might have been the first such chance. If an individual citizen or group made the medal with the intention of distributing it to all the

troops, then this design would not have excluded anyone. In this sense, the medal is very diplomatic. It IS Lancaster; and every service man or women could feel that the medal was theirs.

The medal also would not offend any of Lancaster's citizens of German descent. Lancaster has a long history of German immigrants. The Amish and Mennonites first came to Lancaster in the eighteenth century from the Palatinate as a result of William Penn's policy of religious tolerance.<sup>34</sup> The congregation of the First Reformed Church was gathered in 1729. Other German settlers came to Lancaster from the nearby ports of Philadelphia & Baltimore, Maryland. By 1910, Lancaster had 5,538 Germans, roughly 11.7% of the population.<sup>35</sup>

Many of the German settled in the Eighth Ward of the city, an area referred to as "Cabbage Hill." Frank Landis, a lifetime resident of Lancaster whose wife was a German from the Eighth Ward, said that Cabbage Hill got its name because the Germans would grow cabbage for sauerkraut in their backyards.<sup>36</sup> Landis did not remember any antagonism towards Eighth Ward residents before the war. He said that there was rivalry between the wards on the baseball field, but that competition did not extend further than this.

However, 1915-1919 was an uneasy time for Lancaster's German residents. The sinking of the *Lusitania* in May, 1915 signalled the start of a period where these citizens would come under increasingly close scrutiny and pressure.<sup>37</sup> James Shand of Lancaster lost a relative on the *Lusitania*. After the sinking the local papers, especially the *New Era*, began to champion the cause of war against Germany.<sup>38</sup> When the United States entered the war in 1917, German-Americans were put in an uncomfortable spotlight.

War-time posters that hung in Lancaster, portrayed Germans in general in a very negative fashion. Germany was the enemy, the aggressor who was seeking to overrun Europe and to destroy freedom and liberty. The characterization of Germans and the Keiser as barbarians, capable of any atrocity, was something that Lancaster residents were subject to every day. These posters also reflect the patriotism and intensity of the war effort. These sentiments may be found in the commemorative medals as well.

German-Americans were disparagingly referred to as "hyphenates" and were frequently called "slackers." Along with the peace churches and anti-war individuals, German-Americans were often accused of not being "100% American."<sup>39</sup> One of the posters that hung in Lancaster read "ARE YOU 100% AMERICAN? PROVE IT!" Although Dumyer expresses the belief that anti-German sentiment in Lancaster was relatively mild during the war,<sup>40</sup> evidence of the strain the German-American community was under can be found in Lancaster's Eighth Ward's Welcome Home Souvenir.

The Eighth Ward had its own welcome home parade and banquet in July, 1919. In addition to the parade, the Eighth Ward dedicated a memorial tablet to the troops. As Klein indicates, it was not uncommon for the city's wards to have

their own, individual homecoming celebrations.<sup>41</sup> However, what separates this ceremony from others can be found in the last two paragraphs of page 39 of the Souvenir.

*"In reading over the Honor Roll you will be surprised to see so many names of the oldest residents of the Eighth Ward and more surprisingly...these same people being of German descent and in several instances the author in making a personal interview had been told of some boys who left the "Hill" had been fighting against their brothers and relatives who had been in the German Army. This will prove that the "Hill" has just as many heroes and as good fighters as can be found anywhere...."*

This was the answer to the question of 100% Americanism. It was the "proof." The article acknowledges the scrutiny and pressure that German-Americans came under during the war.

Lancaster would not have wanted to commemorate or necessarily remember these sentiments. Possibly, this is one of the main reasons why Lancaster's medal makes no mention of the war or of victory. The sacrifice and effort of its troops and the city's pride in them were things to be celebrated, and these themes come through in the medal.

After all of this research, my initial question remains. What did the medal do? What was its purpose? Looking at the medal, it struck me that the answer was right in front of me. The object's purpose is to be immediately recognizable. The medal was made to be displayed, to be shown off. It was made so that anyone would know what it was right away.

Television and video cameras did not exist in 1919. Lancastrians could not tape the welcome home ceremonies with a VCR and watch it anytime. Events were recorded on paper and photographs or committed to memory, but otherwise they were lost. A medal however is a permanent signpost. Those who received the medal could always pull it out and instantly reconnect to October 6th, 1919. They could remember the City gathering together to thank them for their sacrifices and to welcome them back home. The medal is a mark of recognition and a reminder of an historic event. With all of our technology and constantly expanding methods of recording time and events, medals are have not disappeared.

The medal industry has not dramatically changed in the last century. Medals are even made the same way today as they were in 1919. What fascinates us about medals is that they are history markers, anchoring or preserving their stories for us.

This object tells a story of civic pride and patriotism in Lancaster in 1919. It tells the story of a community seeking to come together again after a period of strain to celebrate the return of its soldiers. The city crest was the common banner under which all of the citizens could gather. I was fortunate enough to hear this story first hand.