

ABSTRACT

“Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?”: Waco and McLennan County in 1942.

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This thesis analyzes the experiences and actions of Waco and McLennan County residents during 1942, the first full year of World War II. People living on the home front participated in the war effort in a variety of ways, each person accepting the government's claims that all Americans must make serious sacrifices in order to help win the war. The pervasive popular belief, however, was the result of a surge in government propaganda that characterized all sacrifices as crucial acts of great patriotism. Traditional race and gender roles in wartime employment were temporarily challenged only because of a crippling labor shortage that plagued the nation and threatened to harm production. The federal government imposed a massive, haphazard, and largely unnecessary series of rationing programs to combat an alleged shortage of food, tires, gasoline, and other essential items. Vast salvage drives for scrap metal and rubber, as well as government war bond sales programs demanded positive responses from the public and prompted local organizations to commit to meeting difficult government quotas. It was a fearful time when rampant patriotism motivated the American public's willing compliance, all for the sake of the federal government's main purpose of unifying the nation for victory.

"Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?": Waco and McLennan County in 1942
by

Bradley Travis Turner, B.A.

A Thesis

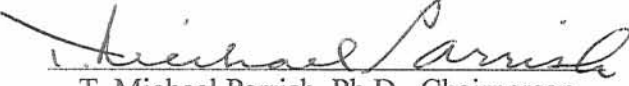
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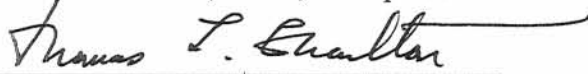
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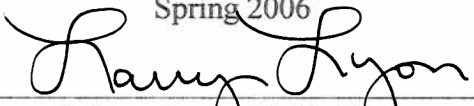


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PREFACE

The 1940s were the most tumultuous times in human history. Events unfolded to include the emergence of a terrible economic depression, the decline of global empires, two world wars, and the growth of a strong, centralized American federal government. 1942 was a year of chaos. The United States had entered the war years behind the production levels of her enemies. Homes across the nation were torn apart. Circumstances did not matter if a person ignored the newspapers; this war came to his or her front door step and pantry on a daily basis.

This study focuses on McLennan County, Texas, during 1942. Little scholarly work has been done on this subject. There are a few chapters in local history books, recent newspaper articles, and a small number of books that reference McLennan County minimally. Most recent publications on the home front pertain to other cities around the nation that have no relation to Texas.

This study addresses the McLennan County home front by using primary sources, especially newspaper articles from the period. The focus is on how McLennan County reacted to the various government programs that influenced and controlled daily life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my parents first, Charles and Brenda Turner, for their love and support. I know I would have never had this opportunity without their prayers, their love, their time, and their patience. I want to thank my father for staying up late to listen to me talk when I know he was tired, for always having a side project for us to do together, and for helping me see life through a Christian man's eyes. I want to thank my mother for her kindness and patience with me, for pushing me toward a better goal when I was comfortable where I was. My mother is a lady and a terrific, loving mother. Words cannot begin to express my gratitude, but I love them very, very much. I only hope I can be like them one day.

I would also like to thank my grandparents. First, my mother's parents, Luther and Nell Lavender, for always being proud of me, loving me, and talking to me when I needed inspiration. I know Nell will read every word of this study and that alone makes me happy. Second, my father's parents, Osa David and Virginia Turner, I will never forget their love for me. I will also never forget how good they made me feel when I knew they were proud of me. I miss them.

I would also like to thank my great-grandmother Dixie Pringle. Dixie was a self-made woman who worked at the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant and was part of the Nurse Corps during the end of World War II. I miss her.

I would also like to thank Tamara Krc, my girlfriend. She has heard me complain at least once a day for several years and I thank her for her patience. Always ready to provide me with a smile and something to eat, she has helped me along the road. She has

always been supportive of whatever I wanted to do in life, and never thought twice about helping me get there.

I also thank my Uncle and Aunt, Steven and Ginger Raney, for being proud of me. I love them both very much, and I hope they realize how proud I am of them as well.

I now want to thank the staff at Baylor University for helping me develop who I am as a historian and a person. Dr. T. Michael Parrish is a true mentor. His sense of humor and view on history make any person enjoy talking with him. Dr. Parrish has helped me learn more about local history than I ever thought I could know, all while making me want to know more. Thank you for teaching me local history can be interesting and thank you for helping me with this thesis.

I want to thank Dr. Thomas Charlton for serving on my thesis committee and for all the words of wisdom in his office. In fact, I do not recall ever leaving his office within one hour of arriving. I want to thank Dr. Kenneth Hafertepe for serving on my committee and offering suggestions. Last, I want to thank Dr. Patricia Wallace, who always had the perfect recommendation for me at the least-perfect time. Thank you, Dr. Wallace.

When I began attending Baylor University in fall 2004, I had no idea how much I would change. Now, I know I have only begun to realize what change means and I could never make anything of any value happen on my own.

For my family, friends,
and anyone who enjoys it

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“We cannot whip the Germans with a forty-hour work week. The Nazis are five years ahead of America on the production front. If the Germans conquer America, you juniors and seniors had just as well cut your throats, for life will have been ended for you!”

—Guy B. Harrison, professor at Baylor University, addressing the Junior-Senior Banquet audience at Crawford High School in Crawford, Texas, 21 March 1942.¹

In 1940, Texas was decidedly a rural state filled with agriculture and ranching.²

When the Second World War began, the country’s demand for industry and better agriculture increased exponentially. Because America was not a battleground with falling bombs and rolling tanks, some historians believe that Americans became complacent about the war.³

In fact, McLennan County was not a sleepy, complacent environment during the first year of the Second World War. It was filled with disorder. The objective of this thesis is to depict 1942 in McLennan County by tracing specific aspects of war life, and to show how McLennan County fit into the picture of war within the state, nation, and the Allied powers. McLennan County was one of thousands of localities touched by the war.

¹“Juniors, Seniors Hold Banquet at Crawford School,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 March 1942.

² Clay Reynolds, “Gearing Up for Total War,” in *1941: Texas Goes to War*, ed. Barnes, Carolyn N., Kent A. Bowman, Laura Crow, James Ward Lee (Denton, Texas: The University of North Texas Press, 1991) 23.

³Michael C.C Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 73.

Beginning on 8 December 1941, McLennan County became gripped in turmoil and fear. Many drastic changes in standard policies and procedures were made in response to new safety needs. Waco City Manager William C. Torrence told local citizens to prepare for a series of blackouts and air raid drills during the remainder of the month.⁴ Nationwide calls for black out drills and civil defense systems were heard.

Other calls came for workers and new educational programs to mobilize a production force. Public School enrollment declined by several hundred students over the winter break of 1941 to 1942. Universities began implementing and designing new curriculum and programs designed to specifically target the war effort.⁵

Many contemporary historians believe the war was a time for new opportunities of economic and social gain by women and racial minorities.⁶ But today historians have begun to take a new approach to this topic, arguing that refugees, blacks, and women proved to be groups of people for whom the American government was not prepared to embrace during the time of conflict.⁷

One fact remains: federally mandated rationing did restrict all people, regardless of class, gender, or race.⁸ Government publications indicate that there had been no plans

⁴Patricia Ward Wallace, *Waco: A Sesquicentennial History* (Virginia Beach, Virginia: The Donning Company Publishers, 1999), 111.

⁵Kevin Brady, "Baylor at War" (M.A. thesis, Baylor University, 2002), 48.

⁶Robert C. Weaver, "Defense Industries and the Negro," *The Annals*, 223 (September 1942): 61.

⁷Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 225.

⁸Richard Polenberg, *One Nation Divisible: Class, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States since 1938* (New York, New York: The Viking Press, 1980), 64.

or ideas on rationing developed prior to 1941.⁹ By January 1943, however, more than ten successful rationing programs were functioning throughout the nation with millions of participants.¹⁰

One of most interesting facts about the rationing program was that distribution, organization, and committees were all strictly voluntary.¹¹ When the war was over, all each rationing board member received was a certificate of appreciation from the Office of Price Administration and the President of the United States.

The legality of rationing resided in a single clause in the Emergency Price Control Act of 1942 under the Second War Powers Act. This gave the President of the United States authority to ration any good or item that he believed was a “scarce material.”¹² It is almost humorous to think how millions of people were affected by one little clause and a vague definition.

This study focuses on several aspects of rationing and numerous others that are closely related over the course of 1942. Each of the chapters two through five cover three months of the year. Inside of each tri-month study are other subchapters that concern a facet of the home front. Each subchapter traces how McLennan County residents dealt with a specific item or topic.

⁹ Harvey C. Mansfield, *A Short History of the O.P.A.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), 143.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 154.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 245.

¹²*Ibid.*, 150.

“Federal Action” is the name given to subchapter one in chapters two through five. This traces the numerous actions taken by the federal government to prevent shortages, induce rationing, adjust tax levels and maintain control during the year 1942.

Each subchapter two in chapters two through five is titled “Local Money and Bonds.” These subchapters trace the evolution of bond sales, bond sale tactics and local donation drives throughout the war. As the year evolved, so did the campaigns to sell bonds and the idea of financially investing in a war. These subchapters focus on quotas and goals established by the federal government as well as activities of local social clubs. Bonds proved important to the war effort because they promoted the values of Americanism.

Each subchapter three focuses on one of the first items rationed—rubber. Rubber was vital to tire market, though it also concerned garden hoses, shoes, boots, and similar items. Rubber also underscored the value of the voucher-system of rationing.

Each subchapter four focuses on the closely-related item of automobiles in 1942, although its importance dwindled as the war continued. This item was mainly controversial during the first quarter of the year, but it remains in this study to demonstrate the scarcity and importance of automobiles to the general public. The subchapters concern the process of vehicle registration, vehicle scarcity, and a growing fear of federal confiscation of automobiles if the market of used cars became too small.

Each subchapter five addresses the popular Texas subject of gasoline and oil. Statewide, gasoline and oil became a great problem during 1942. The legal reason given for gas rationing was not because of a gas shortage, but to promote driving less. The topic was more of an irritation in McLennan County than a painful blow to the local

economy. There were not any refineries located nearby, though several residents attempted drilling for oil. It is included in this study because gasoline served as the bloodline to transportation and agricultural cultivation for the majority of McLennan County residents. Gas became more important during the last half of 1942 when it became formally rationed.

Each subchapter six addresses farm life and agricultural production of McLennan County during 1942. This topic focuses mainly on labor shortages experienced in McLennan County. Such labor shortages were experienced nationwide during the Second World War. Other controversial concerns to farmers included rubber, gasoline, and farm implements.

Each subchapter seven pertains to civil defense systems established across McLennan County. These subchapters vary on subjects as a reflection of changes in training and programs. McLennan County residents were concerned about the possibility of an enemy invasion or attack. Air raid wardens, civil defense sirens, and countless other organizations contributed to civil defense.

Each subchapter eight focuses on “Victory Campaigns” organized each quarter. These campaigns included grease drives, food conservation, victory gardens, food substitutions, donations, salvage drives (other than scrap iron) and other campaigns implemented by the government during 1942.

Each subchapter nine directly addresses the controversial topic of sugar rationing and the implementation of the Ration Book One in May 1942. The subchapters discuss shortages of sugar experienced nationwide. They then moves to the implementation of

rationing and how it differed from tire and car rationing because it was based on a point, or coupon, kind of rationing system.

Each subchapter ten discusses other miscellaneous items that were rationed during 1942. These include all kitchen appliances, typewriters, bicycles (at first), clothing, gum, and other similar items. The final chapters, four and five, include the development of the new 'universal' Rationing Book Two. Rationing Book Two was designed to provide ration stamps for items that had not been rationed as of July 1942. Consumer shortages were apparent, and so the government wanted a system in place if other items needed to be rationed in a form similar to sugar. Eventually it was used for meat by the end of 1942.

Each subchapter eleven discusses the popular subject of war work in McLennan County during 1942. War work includes the topic of "War Housing." Each chapter concerns life in McLennan County and how McLennan County responded to the call for a local ordinance plant and flying schools. Special emphasis is placed in this study on the Bluebonnet Ordinance Plant in McGregor, Texas, which opened in July 1942. This study places considerable importance on women and minorities as solutions to the need for labor in defense work. The conclusion of this study challenges the justification for the labor problem and the government's views on the problem.

Each subchapter twelve discusses scrap iron and its importance to the war effort in McLennan County. This study traces the evolving methods and tactics used by the government to emphasize the ways in which scrap iron was crucial to the war effort. Special emphasis is placed on the actions of social clubs to gather scrap iron and community reactions to the government's request.

In fact, the title of this study: *Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?* was taken from a scrap iron drive's advertisement issued in early October 1942.

¹³ This advertisement is directly addressed in the conclusion of this study.

Each subchapter thirteen is titled "Meat Rationing" because it directly addresses meat rationing and the implementation of Ration Book Two. This topic is introduced in chapter four and discussed more completely in chapter five, focusing on meat shortages across the nation including McLennan County and describing what the government did to solve the problem. It also illuminates the local campaign drives conducted to try to find substitution foods.

The final subchapter is titled "Coffee" and is found only in chapter five. Coffee became rationed largely in 1943, but its roots as a rationed item appeared in October 1942. Coffee was included in the Ration Book Two stamps and became a controversial item before the war ended. It is included in this study because McLennan County experienced several coffee shortages before its official rationing began in late 1942.

In summary, this thesis is designed to paint a picture of life in a Texas county remote in time, but not remote in the memories of the "greatest generation" of Americans.

¹³"Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?" *The Waco News Tribune*, 4 October 1942.

CHAPTER TWO

Man Your Battle Stations!

Federal Action

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor the United States was a nation in chaos and confusion. The attack had come as such a surprise to the American public that it caused a kaleidoscope of reactions. The federal government's leaders knew that they needed to organize the American war machine quickly.

December 1941 was marked as the month of federal organization. A rationing program was needed to safeguard all public supplies and prevent a volatile economy market. Rationing programs were set to begin by January 1942.

These programs were not designed to be implemented all at once. Instead, the goal was to implement programs as needed—before markets shifted too quickly on specific items. The government needed supplies for war along with the public's support, but it would be difficult to produce both.

Clearly, the government had to decrease federal spending on the private sector and increase spending on the military.¹ Problems might erupt if the government pulled its funding out of the private sector, causing a vacuum and forcing the economy downward.

¹Seymour E. Harris, *The Economics of American Defense* (New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1941), 155.

A popular idea arose that big corporations and industries could support the military while smaller businesses could support the general public.² This idea meant to insure that would be available as they always had been in McLennan County, although there would probably not be as many goods. Specifically, item availability and delivery time might fluctuate.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt began to organize federal committees to deal with this dilemma of supply and demand. The cost of the war would make the market fragile. Economic security was the ultimate goal of the government in the wake of the Great Depression.

The total amount that Roosevelt budgeted for 1942 was \$54 billion. A tax bill had to be approved by Congress that would increase all current taxes as much as fifteen percent.³ Federal estimates projected that feeding the military alone would cost \$250 million in 1942.⁴

Roosevelt stood by his \$54 billion budget. Roosevelt called for support of the budget during the 1942 State of the Union address, while morale was high.⁵ The budget passed a few days later and formally established the 1942 War Budget.⁶

²Jim Heath, "American War Mobilization and the Use of Small Manufacturers, 1939-1943," *Business History Review* 46, no. 3 (Autumn 1972): 300.

³"Roosevelt to Lay Huge Cost of War before Congress," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 January 1942.

⁴"War Notes," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 January 1942.

⁵"Roosevelt to Lay Huge Cost," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 January 1942.

⁶"Nine Billions in Tax Increases Will Help Pay for War," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942

This budget was considered a record-breaker because of its dramatic increase in necessary taxes.⁷ Federal programs were also slashed to contribute to the military spending. Examples included farmer relief funds, the Bureau of Animal Industries, Bureau of Plant Industries, Forest Service, and Soil Conservation Service.⁸

Roosevelt decided that committees took too much time, so he proposed to consolidate all power into several people who would run the programs. The Senate Farm Bloc opposed the recommendation because it believed there was a chance an appointee could harm the market further. The Senate Farm Bloc wanted to establish a veto from a cabinet member prior to any price ceilings or market quotas.⁹

Nationwide, prominent businessmen believed Roosevelt's idea was good and would serve the demands of the wartime economy best. Soon the Senate compromised, and Donald Nelson was appointed as head of national armament production.¹⁰

Roosevelt's appointments meant directly nothing for residents of McLennan County. The trains still ran on time, bread was still available at the corner market, and cars were still driving on Austin Avenue. However, shortages slowly began to appear, increasing steadily.

The federal government declared that all able-bodied people would have a job soon. These new jobs would pay \$24 a week and would be considered temporary war

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸"FD Asks for Cut in Farm Cash in War," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

⁹"Roosevelt Wants Price Control in the Hand of One Man," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

¹⁰"War Output Board Seen as Big Step Forward for U.S.," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 January 1942.

jobs, solely for the purpose of war production.¹¹ The production of all of the arms, gear, and goods used by the military had to be managed by the government. Production was easiest when it was not done with contracted labor.

Roosevelt began asking for more money in mid-January 1942. Roosevelt requested an additional \$28 billion for production. Roosevelt said the additional funds would support the Air Corps and increase production.¹² The money was actually spent, however, on the entire military during February 1942.¹³

While Roosevelt was asking for increased spending, he also asked for a national spending cap on all defense contracts. This policy would place a ceiling on all contract charges for the national government. The policy included an elastic clause that stated how these ceilings were adjustable depending on the market and the demand of the item.¹⁴

Roosevelt urged other departments and branches of the government to budget spending. The Department of the Treasury proposed a method to eliminate four loop holes in taxing policies. First, it would establish new community property laws. Next, it would mandate all tax filers to file independently, allowing no filing by married couples. Then, it would revoke all tax-exempt securities, allowing for them to be taxed. Finally, it would remove the percentage depletion clause of the tax filing process. These four

¹¹“Relief Problem Discussed by FD,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*. 18 September 1942.

¹²“28 Billions More for War Asked,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 January 1942.

¹³“26 Billions More to Carry on War Requested by FD,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 February 1942.

¹⁴“Committee Bars Big Profits Made by Defense Firms,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 January 1942.

policies removed several tax breaks from the filing system. These suggestions were approved by Roosevelt (Fig. 1).¹⁵



Fig. 1. Another Kitty to Feed¹⁶

In McLennan County all of these new recommendations meant tough news for the working classes. The government imposed contracting costs and ceilings to limit inflation. Prices were predicted to inflate in the private sector from a decrease in federal spending.

Congress believed that inflation was growing. Hundreds of price and salary ceilings were passed into law to prevent the rise of inflation beyond certain levels. One

¹⁵"Shut Loopholes in Federal Taxation; Morgenthau Asks," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

¹⁶"Another Kitty to Feed," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 January 1942.

problem was a dispute regarding whether or not farmers should be paid the same as industrial workers. Some members of Congress believed each job was too diverse to be considered on the same pay scale.¹⁷

The new legislation pleased Roosevelt, but he worried that it required too much time to pass. A solution Roosevelt proposed was to appoint one man in charge of price ceilings and measures. The assumption at the time was that the price measures would be set by Leon Henderson. Henderson would be responsible to Roosevelt and could adjust prices and rent levels at all locations involving defense housing and price ceilings.¹⁸ Eventually the idea to appoint a one-man-head was approved, and so the Office of Price Management (OPM) was established with Leon Henderson as executive director.

One of Congress' concerns about approving a single director was that it neglected small businesses needed in the private sector. Estimates demonstrated that there was a sharp change in the funding policies nationwide and that the only industries reaping the benefits were big businesses. The concern in Congress was that as the war went on, more businesses would be harmed by the new legislation.¹⁹

In late February, Great Britain told the United States to expect all Lend-Lease payments to be tardy. Great Britain was in debt far more than the United States, but Americans needed money as well. The defunct payments were unpopular in the United

¹⁷“Quick Enactment of Price Control Bill is Foreseen,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 January 1942.

¹⁸“Price Measure is Passed by House,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 January 1942.

¹⁹“OPM Ruthless to Small Business, Senators Charge,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 February 1942.

States but reluctantly accepted. Local Americans needed the money created by the Lend-Lease program for the economy to expand.²⁰

Donald Nelson, executive director of the War Production Bureau (WPB), proposed implementing a 24-hour workday in arms manufacturing. The new process would provide larger amounts of goods but would affect all of defense contractors by forcing a dramatic change in scheduling and labor (Fig. 2).²¹

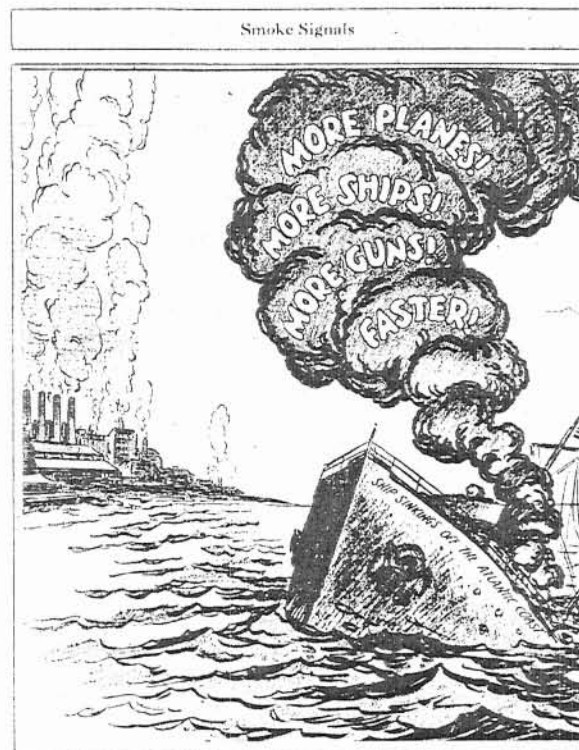


Fig. 2. Smoke Signals²²

Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the Secretary of the Treasury, saw several points of concern as a result of these new ideas and policies. First, the government needed a

²⁰"British Payment for Lend-Lease Goods Postponed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 February 1942.

²¹"WPB Orders New Campaign to Push Arms Production," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

²²"Smoke Signals," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 January 1942.

spending cap of \$125 billion to keep the federal deficit from growing beyond control.²³

Next, funding that the government spent on defense contracts would flow into the hands of the workers. The workers would then be able to buy bonds and pay higher taxes.

These circular policies would send fair portions of the money back to the government for further defense work.²⁴

The government was clearly not well organized during the first quarter of 1942. Any substantial contribution to the war effort would have to be found at the local level. The federal government needed better leadership and cooperation. The chaotic conditions of 1942 were evident and serious.

Local Money and Bonds

War bonds and stamps were the most effective aspect of the war effort in McLennan County during 1942. War bonds and stamps were bought and sold at high rates throughout the year.

A war stamp cost ten cents and was similar to a postage stamp. Purchasers collected all of their war stamps in a booklet that was redeemable for a war bond when several of the books were filled.

War bonds were issued three basic series: E, F, and G. Series E war bonds held 2.9% interest over a period of ten years. Series F war bonds held 2.53% interest over a dozen years. For example, \$74 in 1942 grew to \$100 in 1953. Series G war bonds grew at 2.5% interest for every year they were held over a dozen years. Walter Lacy, Jr.,

²³“Committee Okehs 125 Billion Debt Ceiling for U.S.,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 March 1942.

²⁴“113 Billion Income for Nation is Seen as Result of War,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 March 1942.

president of the Waco Banking Systems, asserted that the Series G war bond was the best investment for McLennan County residents.²⁵

Bonds were available to both private people and local governments. The county spent its revenue surplus from 1941 to buy war bonds instead of private bonds (Fig. 3). The interest was better and it “was helping the war effort.”²⁶



Fig. 3. Joe Public and A. Schicklgruber²⁷

²⁵“County Purchase of War Bonds to Aid War Bounds High,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 January 1942.

²⁶*Ibid.* 4

²⁷“Joe Public and A. Schicklgruber,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 February 1942.

In January 1942, local grocers and merchants organized defense stamp sales for all hours of operation. Special promotions were held on the weekends when most county wide shopping occurred.²⁸

The annual McLennan County quota for bond sales during 1942 was set at \$5,722,500. McLennan County established a local bond board to organize sales to obtain this large goal.²⁹

The first targets approached by the McLennan County Bond Board were large companies. One method was to provide for a salary deduction plan. The deduction plan was promoted primarily at companies that employed more than ten people.³⁰

The nationwide goal of the bond sales was set at 2% of the national retail income during 1941.³¹ This statistic meant that for every five dollars a person spent, he or she should purchase a ten cent stamp.

Retail businesses that participated were asked to sign a Stamp Pledge to ensure the proper promotion of sales in McLennan County. The pledge had five primary principles. First, a retailer was asked to participate in selling war stamps. Next, the retailer should always have plenty of stamps on hand for the sales and display a sign in a place of clear visibility that stated: WE SELL STAMPS! Then, the retailer was urged to participate by purchasing bonds and stamps as well. Finally, the retailer should

²⁸“Retail Merchants Organize to Sell Defense Stamps,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

²⁹“M'Lennan Leaders Preparing to Push Bonds and Stamps,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 January 1942.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹“Retail Merchants Discuss Plans to Hike Bond Sales,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 January 1942.

encourage public sales by offering special sales times, having stamps available for sale by store clerks, and holding sales drives.³²

The War Stamp Pledge proved a popular method among local retailers. Many local retailers and other businesses signed the pledge by mid-January.³³ The Crawford-Austin Company placed a stamp window adjacent to the paymaster and reported that sales increased nearly \$3,000.³⁴

Stamp selling pledge participants joined in waves. Many of the retailers waited until the last day of a drive to sign-up as a stamp seller. Retailers wanted to be on the first list of locations participating in the stamp drive, asserting that the pledge boosted business.³⁵

Local Merrill Lynch investor Chester A. Johnston introduced a new plan of investment for McLennan County residents during the third week of January 1942. The new plan involved heavy investments in war bonds. Johnston justified this plan because the government provided a stable and secure investment.³⁶

The McLennan County Tax Office reported an increase in revenue after a drive to collect fines and fees that formally had been viewed as trivial. Among these fees was the controversial poll tax.

³²“Merchants Speed Efforts to Raise Sales of Stamps,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 January 1942.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴“Two Large Firms Boost Employers’ Stamp Purchases,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 January 1942.

³⁵“Concerns Swamp Defense Saving Lists,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 January 1942.

³⁶“Investment Firm Backs Defense Bond Campaign,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 January 1942.

The county promoted the idea of paying poll taxes early in 1942 to provide a more accurate reading of the budget. When citizens paid taxes early it provided the government the chance to gauge the new tax rates. The county would decrease rates if fees and minor taxes were paid early because the authorities would then know exactly how much revenue was available.³⁷ It was estimated that over 650 people had paid poll taxes over the average amounts by February 1942. Ironically, the local authorities claimed the amount was still under the 1940 election amounts.³⁸

The *Texas Tax Journal* reported that despite all of the local tax increases, McLennan County was still the thirty-seventh lowest of all the counties in Texas. The rates were fifty-nine cents on the hundred.³⁹

The majority of people in McLennan County paid their taxes early in 1942. Early payments were considered patriotic. The results were similar nationwide with reports of large numbers of people paying taxes early.⁴⁰

Walter Lacy, Jr., expanded the Waco bond committee to the McLennan Defense Bond Committee during the second week of February 1942. The new committee requested every resident in the county to sign a war bond pledge. The pledge was similar to the commercial pledges pushed by industry the previous month.⁴¹

³⁷“Tax Office Ready Today for Rush to Pay Poll Taxes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 January 1942.

³⁸“16,000 Pay Poll Tax in McLennan County,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

³⁹“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 February 1942.

⁴⁰“Income Tax ‘Take’ thus far Doubles Last Year Figure,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 February 1942.

⁴¹“Pledges for War Bonds are Sought,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 February 1942.

Two days later the community response was still low. The Bond Board suggested that flyers be sent home with each child in the public school system. Parents would read the letters and be apt to participate in the pledge drive. Local companies participating in the bond sales program would also ask employees to participate in the pledge drive.⁴²

Newspapers reported a dramatic increase in stamp and bond sales. Thirty-eight newspapers in Texas reported selling \$2.5 million in stamps and bonds since 1 January 1942.⁴³ Newspapers were the only businesses that went door-to-door everyday. Newspaper sales therefore made a large contribution to the report in high sales.

Lacy adopted a part of this philosophy and appointed pledge drive leaders to each local area of McLennan County. The pledge leaders were responsible for reaching each citizen living in a designated area.⁴⁴

The McLennan Defense Bond Committee also argued that advertising promotions increased stamp sales. A piece of war-affiliated equipment was used to promote an advertising campaign. Any person who purchased a stamp or a bond was allowed to use or view the item.

One of these advertising campaigns brought a large bomb replica to Waco. Lacy wanted the bomb placed in the center of the 6th Street and Austin Avenue intersection.

⁴²“Plan for Pledge from Citizens is Studied,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 February 1942.

⁴³“Paper Carrier Boys over U.S. Sold 108,635,997 10-Cent Defense Stamps in Last Five Months to Help Win War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 February 1942.

⁴⁴“Bond Committees will Handle New Pledge Campaign,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 February 1942.

Local police decline the request because it would increase the probability of an accident.⁴⁵

The United States Treasury reported a \$2 billion increase in funding from bond and stamp sales by the end of February 1942.⁴⁶ Tax collections were also record breakers during the first months of 1942 but Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, was still not pleased with funding levels.⁴⁷ Instead, Morgenthau asked citizens to aid the war effort by paying double taxes. The low and middle income tax brackets were hit hardest.⁴⁸

In March 1942, the government granted Morgenthau's request for an increase in taxpayer qualifications. Any single person earning \$750 a month or any couple earning over \$1,500 a month would now be taxed under the new measures.⁴⁹ It was estimated that in Texas during March of 1942, 200,000 people would be filing taxes for the first time.⁵⁰

Bond sales began to decline during March 1942, because of tax collections, and bond drives became old news. Local clubwomen in McLennan County countered the decline in sales by sponsoring local stamp and bond drives. The various clubs took turns selling stamps and bonds at booths across the county and in the downtown Waco area.

⁴⁵“Wacoans Get an Idea of What Japs Have Coming by Viewing a Bomb in the Square; \$300 in Bonds Will Buy One,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 February 1942.

⁴⁶“\$703,200,000 in Bonds Sold,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 March 1942.

⁴⁷“Record Breaking Income Tax Collection Expected,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 February 1942.

⁴⁸“Doubled Income Taxes are Asked,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 March 1942.

⁴⁹“Income Tax,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 March 1942.

⁵⁰“Texans Dig Deep into Pockets to Pay Income Levy,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 March 1942.

The clubwomen hoped to reach the national quota assigned to McLennan County by being persistent.⁵¹

A total of nine hundred women volunteered to work the booths. Each woman was urged to be prepared for quick answers to customer questions. Finally, each woman was urged to sell an “adequate” amount of stamps.⁵²

McLennan County became an expensive place to live during the first few months of the war. Apparently, the government wanted every spare dime that a person possessed. Either from taxes or from bond sales, if a man, woman, or child owned a dime, the government wanted it exchanged for a stamp.

Rubber

On the first day of 1942, Coke Stevenson, Governor of Texas, sent out a proclamation asking for all the district judges and county seat governments to nominate citizens for a rationing board.⁵³ The next day, the rationing board members were announced by local mayors and county officials. The chairman of the McLennan County Tire Rationing Board was Mr. W.V. Dunnam of Waco. The other two members were Stanton Brown, of Waco, and John Gorham, of Bosqueville.⁵⁴

The Tire Rationing Board announced that the government had allocated one tire for every seven registered commercial vehicles. The board told county residents no

⁵¹“Waco Clubwomen to Boost Stamps Sales in Stores,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 March 1942.

⁵²“Federation Clubs to Help Sales of Defense Stickers,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 March 1942.

⁵³“McLennan to Get 219 Passenger Car Tires in January,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 January 1942.

⁵⁴“McLennan’s Tire Rationing Board Named by Mayors,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 January 1942.

amounts of protesting would alter the supply. Board members were not responsible for the amount or the times of availability. Levels of available tires were mandated by the federal government.⁵⁵

Several professions in McLennan County automatically qualified a man or woman for a tire. A tire was automatically granted if there was one in stock for a doctor, an ambulance, a public service vehicle (police car or fire truck), public and school transportation, a farm vehicle, or construction equipment.⁵⁶ Grocers were not included in this list. Instead, the Tire Rationing Board asked grocers to wait to make deliveries until there were several stops for one neighborhood.

Receiving a new tire was a complicated manner. All tire purchases required a voucher from the board. The process began with the completion of the application form, available at the post office. An applicant studied the back of the form to determine if he or she qualified for a new tire. If a person did not meet the requirements, it was impossible to obtain a new tire.⁵⁷

When a person did meet the requirements, the rationing board asked the applicant to see an authorized tire dealer to conduct an examination on his or her tire. The applicant then took the application to the Liberty building in downtown Waco. The rationing board then determined who received a tire. An applicant then returned to the tire shop and received a new tire if he or she was approved.⁵⁸

⁵⁵“McLennan to get 219 Passenger Car Tires,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 January 1942.

⁵⁶“McLennan’s Tire Board gets First Data on Rations,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

⁵⁷“How to Get a New Tire—if You are Eligible—Told by Board, Ready for Work,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

Four receipts were created for every rationed tire. One receipt was printed for the applicant, another for the Office of Price Administration (OPA), one for the mechanic, and a final copy for the rationing board.⁵⁹

Prices had begun to skyrocket around Texas for used tires, and crime rates were on the rise. One Houston man was sentenced to eight months in jail for stealing tires.⁶⁰ McLennan County authorities reported tires and tubes were stolen from a gas station at 5th Street and Webster Avenue.⁶¹ A total of twenty-five tires were reported stolen in Waco during the month of January 1942.⁶²

Price gouging was another illegal activity reported during January 1942. Service stations developed a reputation for over-charging prices on rationed tires to offset decreased sales. The rationing board and local officials urged tire recipients not to participate in price gouging.⁶³ Texas officials decided to fight price gouging on used tires by implementing price ceilings on all used tires. Tire prices ranged from \$1.50 for bad tires to \$8.10 for good tires. All new tires were set at \$14.75 each.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ "Tire Theft Sentenced," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

⁶¹ "It Happened Yesterday," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 January 1942.

⁶² "Fewer Car Tires Reported Stolen," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

⁶³ "Strict Rules to Control the Sale of Car Tires, Tubes," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 January 1942.

⁶⁴ "Price Ceilings on Used Tires, Tubes Set by Government," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 March 1942.

The official first week of tire rationing began in mid-January 1942. McLennan County was allocated eighty-five tires for all of its citizens.⁶⁵ In the next month the amount of available tires increased over twenty percent to over 100.⁶⁶

Farmers were allowed tires for trailers and farming equipment, but the situation was unique.⁶⁷ Farmers could receive tires for trailers but not for the vehicle that hauled the trailer. Any farmer who was caught replacing a car tire with a tire designated for farm use was subject to lose his or her qualifications for new equipment tires.⁶⁸

On 19 February 1942 tire retreading was introduced as a solution to the rationing problem. Retreading formally began during the first week of March. A retreaded tire placed a new type of tread on a bald tire to provide traction.⁶⁹ Retreaded tires were considered a safe alternative to new tires but needed to be driven at slow speeds.⁷⁰

Guayule became a popular topic of discussion across the state and the nation during the first quarter of 1942. Guayule is the name of a South American rubber tree found in the Amazon. A problem with guayule as an effective rubber replacement; however, stemmed from the way it was processed. The rubber is found throughout the

⁶⁵“85 Tires Out for McLennan in Five Days of Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 March 1942.

⁶⁶“County Gets 275 Tires, 378 Tubes during February,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

⁶⁷“Farmers to Get Tires,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 January 1942.

⁶⁸“Farmers Can’t Get Tires for Autos, Local Board Told,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 February 1942.

⁶⁹“Retread Ration Opens this Week,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

⁷⁰“Retread Rationing to Start Feb. 19,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 February 1942.

plant. The only precise way to retrieve the rubber was to chop it into small particles and extract the rubber from the bark and stalk.⁷¹

Another problem with guayule was that it was still in the research and development stages of the program and was not dependable.⁷² Texas bankers were still eager to invest in the guayule program, but it did not develop as a viable rubber replacement at any time during the war.

The private economy was hurt by the tire rationing policies. Rationing prevented people from moving about the community as they had. But local people accepted this sacrifice as a new way of life during the war, whether or not their hearts supported the idea.

Automobiles

All new cars were banned from sale beginning in 1942. Optimists remained hopeful sales would resume a month later, but that looked doubtful. A 1942 model car was classified as any vehicle that had less than 1,000 miles. Car factories were being converted into war production centers across the nation and new cars were only going to become more difficult to obtain.⁷³

McLennan County car dealers stated publicly that they were stocking up on car parts and accessories to insure that all motorists would not be stranded if car sales were

⁷¹Poage, William Robert "Bob," Oral History, Institute for Oral History, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 615.

⁷²*Ibid.*

⁷³"Rationing of New Automobiles will Begin on January 15," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 January 1942.

halted.⁷⁴ The national Office of Price Management (OPM) stated it would not ration sparkplugs, batteries, and other basic supplies so parts would remain easy to obtain.⁷⁵

All McLennan County car dealers were required to inventory all new and used vehicles for the local rationing board.⁷⁶ Clearly, cars were to remain in short supply until after the war, and there was no way around the shortages.

Some McLennan County residents reasoned that it was time to bring back the horse and buggy. Local newspapers ran articles addressing the topic. A good horse began at about \$300, and a buggy was simply “expensive.”⁷⁷

By the end of January 1942, all motorists in McLennan County were required to register his or her automobiles. The government needed a correct count of automobiles to provide accurate amounts of tires for each county. Waco registered 28,660 automobiles for private use.⁷⁸

The registration fee was considered a “Federal Automobile Tax.” Each fee was \$2.00 and lasted until July 1942. A tag that lasted until January 1943 cost \$5.00. Any motorist who failed to register his or her car by the deadline in late January 1942 would be subject to a fine.⁷⁹ Many auto tags were stolen in Waco. Local authorities recommended that each person write his or her license plate number on the sticker to

⁷⁴“Waco Auto Dealers Will Concentrate on Repairs,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 January 1942.

⁷⁵“OPM Doesn’t Plan to Stop Battery, Spark Plug Sales,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

⁷⁶“Dealers Have One Day to File List of Autos, Trucks,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 February 1942.

⁷⁷“Long Road for Horse and Buggy,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 January 1942.

⁷⁸“28,660 Auto Tag Receipts Arrive for County Rush,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 January 1942.

⁷⁹“Federal Tax for Autos due Soon,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 January 1942.

prevent theft.⁸⁰ McLennan County received ninety-six new cars to be sold during March 1942. The cars were available for public service, farmers, defense workers, taxi drivers, and essential salesmen.⁸¹

Gasoline and Oil

Oil production was considered an important aspect of production for the war effort. Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, stated there was no need to ration gasoline though it was just as important as rubber.⁸² Texas began to help the war effort by asking local oil companies to increase production and find new wells. The Texas Railroad Commission reported an increase in over 150 barrels a day as a result of the request.⁸³

The federal government became interested in developing a pipeline running from Texas to Illinois, Florida, and New Jersey.⁸⁴ One key motivator for a pipeline might also have been to transport petroleum from the sixty-two oil fields in Texas that were allotted for military and aviation fuel.⁸⁵

But chaos began to emerge across the nation when oil prices began to rise. The federal government decided to enact price ceilings to prevent further inflation.⁸⁶ Levels

⁸⁰“Stealing of Car Tag Stickers Is to Net Big Fine,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

⁸¹“County to Get 96 New Automobiles,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 February 1942.

⁸²“No Necessity Now for Gas Rations, Sec. Ickes Says,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

⁸³“Wildcat Drillers to be Given More Money for Wells,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 February 1942.

⁸⁴“Ickes Warns Oil Supply for East is Serious Again,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 January 1942.

⁸⁵“62 Oil Fields in Texas Set Aside for Military Fuel,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

⁸⁶“Price-fixing for Gasoline Planned,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

were set to equal October 1941 rates.⁸⁷ At this same time, the federal government began to study the idea of gasoline rationing during the middle of February 1942.⁸⁸ Ickes assured the nation that rationing would only be implemented if it was seen as completely essential.⁸⁹

During the middle of March locations in the Northeast began to experience shortages of gasoline. Federal officials began to suggest alternatives to fight the shortage problem.⁹⁰

In McLennan County these shortages in the North began to incite nervousness motorists. Cars and tires were already difficult to manage but gasoline shortages would cripple the economy. Soon the gasoline panic was spreading nationwide.⁹¹

The official solution was to change the hours of operation for gas stations. This absurd idea would limit the amount of gasoline that could be sold or bought.⁹² The only differences in motorists' schedules would be a fill-up during a different part of the day. When the plan to limit the sale of gasoline failed miserably, the federal government decided it was time for rationing in the shortage areas.⁹³ Soon a domino effect would occur, and the entire nation would be subject to rationing.

⁸⁷"Government Fixes Petroleum Prices," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 February 1942.

⁸⁸"Plan Studied to Ration Gasoline," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 February 1942.

⁸⁹"U.S. Seeking to Avert Rations on Gas, Ickes States," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 February 1942.

⁹⁰"Gasoline Rations in East Suggested by Oil Industry," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 March 1942.

⁹¹"Gasoline Rations for All of Nation Seen in Few Days," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 March 1942.

⁹²"Gasoline Supplies for Motorists in East Cut by Fifth," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 March 1942.

⁹³"Gasoline Rations for East, Pacific Northwest Slated," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 March 1942.

Perhaps some of the most interesting aspects of the gasoline shortages were the frequent mandates from the federal government for Texas to decrease oil production. Local newspapers reported that many wells and rigs went under-serviced and were not drained or cleared on a regular basis, largely because of the federal government's policy.⁹⁴

All of the pieces were now in place. It would only be a matter of time before nationwide gasoline rationing was in full force.

Farm and Agriculture Production

McLennan County agriculture experienced several problems during the first quarter of 1942. Most of the problems were attributed to inflation, obligation, or shortages.

Beef became a defense product by the second day of 1942.⁹⁵ Texas farmers were told by numerous government officials that they were responsible for feeding the United States and the British, civilians and military alike.⁹⁶

McLennan County farmers were urged to contact the county offices and hear suggestions about maximizing farm production.⁹⁷ Farm equipment was becoming hard to obtain. Rationing rates would set new equipment at eighty percent of new implements

⁹⁴“Drastic Slash in Texas Oil Output Ordered for April,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 March 1942.

⁹⁵“Agriculture Heads Warn Texas Ranchers Against Hoarding of Beef Cattle,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 January 1942.

⁹⁶“Texas Farmers to Feed a Million Britons for coming 12 Months’ War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 January 1942.

⁹⁷“Farmers Join in Defense,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 January 1942.

purchased in 1940.⁹⁸ Local advisers recommended pooling implements together and starting neighbor sharing programs.⁹⁹

The primary shortage in farm production in McLennan County was seen in farm labor.¹⁰⁰ Many former farm laborers were either joining the military or being drafted. The federal government had implemented the draft, and many of the local boys were sent to war. The government began to see declining agricultural production by the middle of February 1942. As a direct response, draft deferments were requested for all laborers to keep production levels high. The federal government decided the decision would be left to the local draft boards of each region.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, the state of Texas became concerned with the rapid decrease in farm laborers across the state. Officials conducted a survey to trace why so many young men left to join the military. The reported reasons were money, eagerness, and boredom.¹⁰²

The Department of Labor issued a policy that prevented the hiring of children as full-time farm hands near the end of February 1942. The policy acknowledged that there was a need to hire child labor, but it could not be abused.¹⁰³ Schools held more holidays

⁹⁸Erling Hole, *Farm Machinery and Equipment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), 3.

⁹⁹"Farm Tools Pooled for War Effort," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 January 1942.

¹⁰⁰"Shortage of Farm Labor," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 January 1942.

¹⁰¹"Farm Deferments with Local Board," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 February 1942.

¹⁰²"Why do Farm Boys Leave Home? State Seeks Answer in Texas Survey," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 February 1942.

¹⁰³"Children Working on Farms to Get U.S. Safeguards," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 February 1942.

nationwide to provide a chance, as well as opportunities, for children to counteract the labor shortages.¹⁰⁴

Reports in 1942 indicated a decrease in cotton growth.¹⁰⁵ More food crops were grown in their place. Profits rose for farmers when the war began and prices of food began to increase.¹⁰⁶ Congress passed ceilings during late January 1942 to prevent the spread of inflation.¹⁰⁷ The U.S. House of Representatives approved a plan for several million dollars to relieve cotton farmers. The government believed the plan would promote food crops in the place of cotton.¹⁰⁸

Farmers in McLennan County received seed loans as supplements for changing crops. Cotton production declined during the early 1940s, and local agriculture advisors recommended growing food crops if the situation became drastic. A local government was repaid the debt by a cut in production.¹⁰⁹

Texas A&M conducted numerous local experiments in the McLennan County area and determined a list of crops that should flourish in the native soil. Soil

¹⁰⁴Beatrice McConnell, "Child Labor in Agriculture," *The Annals* 236 (November 1944): 95.

¹⁰⁵"Farm Experts Gather to Discuss Texas'—Part in Meeting War Food Need," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 January 1942.

¹⁰⁶"Farmers, Ranchers Gear Their Land for Higher Production; Profits Up," *The Sunday Waco Tribune-Herald*, 11 January 1942.

¹⁰⁷"Ceiling is Asked for Farm Prices," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 January 1942.

¹⁰⁸"House Committee Okeh is Put on Multi-millions for Relief of Cotton Farmers," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 January 1942.

¹⁰⁹"Seed Loans to Help Farms Win War are Available Again during his Year; Applications due Now," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 February 1942.

conservation programs, begun in 1941, were beginning to contribute to serious developments in local agricultural changes.¹¹⁰

The oat crops of Bell and McLennan Counties were diminished drastically during the winter of 1942. A terrible freeze was responsible for a high percentage of losses.¹¹¹ The remaining oats were consumed by bugs during the month of February 1942. The harvest rate was expected to be one of the lowest on record.¹¹²

Livestock remained an attractive investment for local farmers and ranchers in 1942. The market on hogs looked good that year. In the first week of January, owners were urged to feed their hogs well, breed all available sows, provide good equipment, and feed all pregnant sows well.¹¹³ Experts at Texas A&M maintained that a family of five could be supported for one year by a 500 pound calf and two 240 pound hogs.¹¹⁴ The quota for Texas' hog production was set at 2,672,694 hogs during 1942.¹¹⁵ In March 1942, Chicago markets began reporting record high prices in the hog market.¹¹⁶ The federal government quickly placed a ceiling on all pork costs before prices rose any higher.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰“Conservation is Help to Win-the-War Food Effort in Texas, Declares Chief,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 January 1942.

¹¹¹“Freeze Has Cut Growth,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 February 1942.

¹¹²“Half of Oats in Central Texas are Ruined by Insects,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 March 1942.

¹¹³“Pig Outlook for Year Is Called Good,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 January 1942.

¹¹⁴“More and Better Beef Advised for Use by Farmers,” *The Sunday Waco Tribune-Herald*, 15 February 1942.

¹¹⁵“Texans Quick To Answer Call For Country's Needs,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 March 1942.

¹¹⁶“Hog Prices Soar to 16-Year High,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 March 1942.

¹¹⁷“Wholesale Price Ceilings are Set on Pork Products,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 March 1942.

McLennan County began to embrace poultry along with beef and pork. The Waco newspaper boasted, "Texas Hens Are Doing Their Part In Winning War." The article stated that over two million eggs had recently been dehydrated to provide food for overseas soldiers.¹¹⁸ One way local people were encouraged to help production was to own several birds. Chickens and turkeys were targeted by local campaigns to be grown in town as well as in the country.¹¹⁹

Local agriculture was considered one of the great contributions to the war effort. Farmers and ranchers held the key to fighting inflation though many did not believe that to be true. As less cotton was grown in the county, food crops increased.

Civil Defense

The attack on Pearl Harbor, left many local people in fear. The attack prompted most to believe that an attack could come at any moment. In reality, there were many other targets between McLennan County and the Gulf Coast that could draw Axis attention quicker. However, practicality was never the issue.

The Civil Defense System, as defined by the *American Handbook*, was established to: provide coordination between federal, state, county, city, and local areas; allow citizens to stay informed on local problems; assist in the establishment of local defense councils; and promote activities that enhanced the war effort.¹²⁰ McLennan County would succeed at this set of goals before the year was over.

¹¹⁸"Texas Hens are Doing Their Part in Winning War; 1,990,000 lbs. Eggs Dried, are Purchased from Plants," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 February 1942.

¹¹⁹Tom Harper, "Poultry Raisers Planning Bigger 1942 Production," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 March 1942.

¹²⁰Office of War Information, *The American Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Government Publishing Office, 1945), 118.

The first week of January 1942; however, proved to be a total failure for Waco's civil defense system. The reasons were numerous but results were the same. A system had to be established to prevent catastrophe in the event of an enemy attack.¹²¹

Within a few days McLennan County had received postcards from over two thousand residents who wanted to participate in the civil defense system.¹²² Forty people volunteered to participate in the McLennan County Civil Air Patrol.¹²³ Most of these pilots were women across the state. A majority of the men had already been drafted into the military.¹²⁴

The people in charge of the civil defense network were referred to as air raid wardens. Each air raid warden presided over a designated portion of the county known as a zone. Each zone was organized to have between 50 and 75 men to aid the efforts. The warden hierarchy began with the chief warden who was responsible to the local police force. The chief warden sat over ten precinct wardens. A precinct warden was in charge of ten city wards. Five senior wardens monitored a city ward, and ten regular air raid wardens answered to each senior warden. The civil defense system consisted of other members who were doctors, nurses, and hundreds of random volunteers. Between 750

¹²¹“Wacoans Learned Valuable Lesson during Blackout,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 January 1942.

¹²²“Drastic Blackout Ordinance Passed By City Fathers,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

¹²³“Pilots of Central Texas Sign Up In Civil Air Patrol,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 January 1942.

¹²⁴“Women Pilots to Join Civil Patrol,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 January 1942.

and 1,000 people volunteered to be fire-fighters. The proper number of firefighters was set at 50-75 in each ward.¹²⁵

Bomb shelters were another priority in McLennan County during the month of January 1942. County-approved shelters cost between \$200-\$300. All were small and provided limited accommodations. Candles were recommended over electricity during an air raid because they were believed to be more dependable.¹²⁶

The Waco News-Tribune reported various levels of relative danger during an air raid in McLennan County. A person standing up outside was in 100% danger, while lying down outside cut the danger to 50%. Standing in a wood-frame house gave a person a 30% chance of danger. A brick-home, covered in sand bags provided a 12% chance. A reinforced basement or an earthen shelter meant between a 2-5% chance of danger. But local authorities stated that an underground, concrete shelter provided a 0% chance of danger during an air raid. Danger levels varied depending on a person's physical position (lying down, sitting, or standing), wall thickness, and wall structure.¹²⁷

West, Moody, and McGregor had completed all requirements for a proper civil defense system by the end of January 1942.¹²⁸ Rieser's civil defense measures were

¹²⁵"Waco's Setup on Civilian Defense to Call Hundreds," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 January 1942.

¹²⁶"Designs for Raid Shelters will be Offered Wacoans," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 January 1942.

¹²⁷"Relative Danger during an Air Raid," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 January 1942.

¹²⁸"West, Moody, McGregor Warden Systems Complete," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 January 1942.

organized by the beginning of February 1942.¹²⁹ These included sirens, alarm signals, warnings, and air raid systems.¹³⁰

Special training was required of all Wacoans who wanted to be wardens. Training cycles ran about twenty-six hours and included classes on first-aid, fire defense, blacking out houses, and dealing with incendiary bombs.¹³¹ All members of the defense guard were encouraged to take rifle courses taught at North Junior High School.¹³² Wardens were also required to attend meetings called by the chief warden to discuss and maintain progress as needed.¹³³ Local authorities estimated that the civil defense system would be completely organized and prepared by April 1942.¹³⁴ Some air raid wardens were assigned to stand watch and guard schools during the day to respond to an unexpected bombing.¹³⁵

The U.S. Army; however, believed Texas was still lagging behind in civil defense procedures.¹³⁶ The Federal Bureau of Investigation “hinted” that McLennan County was

¹²⁹“Riesel Defense Organized,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

¹³⁰“West, Moody, McGregor,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 January 1942.

¹³¹“Instructions are Issued by Warden for Waco Citizens,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

¹³²“Defense Guard to Use Rifles Today,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

¹³³“Air Raid Workers to Confer Tuesday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 January 1942.

¹³⁴“Active Duty for Air Raid Wardens within Six Weeks,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 February 1942.

¹³⁵“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

¹³⁶“Stevenson Denies Civilian Defense in State Lagging,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 February 1942.

not safe from Axis attacks. The county contained many key targets in the form of bridges and factories.¹³⁷

Local wardens attempted to increase organization levels by organizing neighborhoods and establishing local networks among neighbors.¹³⁸ Along with networking, air raid wardens were encouraged to begin training programs. Some 800 wardens were taught first aid during this same time.¹³⁹ Local authorities and civil defense leaders also provided 25 ambulances at various locations in the city and county.¹⁴⁰

At the end of February 1942, the Women's Auxiliary Air Warden Organization was created. This organization was designed to allow females a similar opportunity to participate in local community defense programs.¹⁴¹ Training courses were offered that were similar to those offered for male air raid wardens. Three classes were given on decontamination, gas attacks, gassing, and general organization principles.¹⁴²

By March the price of bomb shelters had increased.¹⁴³ Each family in the area was still encouraged to purchase candles and first-aid kits.¹⁴⁴ Local authorities joined in

¹³⁷“McLennan County Not Immune to Axis Planes,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

¹³⁸“Neighbors are to Coordinate Their Air Warden Tasks,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 February 1942.

¹³⁹“800 Wardens Drilled,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 February 1942.

¹⁴⁰“Emergency Medico Organization Set Up in Event of Enemy Attack,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 February 1942.

¹⁴¹“Women to Aid in Air Warden Plan,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 February 1942.

¹⁴²“Air Raid Wardens will study Sunday,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 February 1942.

¹⁴³“Air Raid Shelter Costs are High,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

¹⁴⁴“First Aid Discussed at Highland Meeting,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

and lectured many of the city's Parent Teacher Association members. The lectures were designed to discuss gardening, air raid shelters, safety, nutrition, and home nursing. The objective was to keep McLennan County informed on proper defense measures.¹⁴⁵

A public film on gas attacks and gassing effects was shown in Waco Hall on the Baylor University campus for both air raid wardens and citizens.¹⁴⁶ By this time, wardens were required to have as many as forty-nine hours of training. Films were included in the training programs.¹⁴⁷ Estimates put the audience at about 2,000 people for both nights the film was shown.¹⁴⁸

The Women's Wardens began training with rifles, plane spotting, first aid, and basic motor work.¹⁴⁹ Thirty-three girls also joined the first series of classes.¹⁵⁰ Nationwide, the amount of male wardens to female wardens was set around three to one.¹⁵¹

At Baylor University women contributed to civil defense by attending nursing classes.¹⁵² The government had requested Baylor University to convert into an

¹⁴⁵"Local Authorities Will Lecture on Home Defense before City's P.T.A. Groups; Course Is to Start Monday," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

¹⁴⁶"Wacoans Learn to Battle Gas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 March 1942.

¹⁴⁷"Wardens Will See Movies Today on Air War Horrors," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 March 1942.

¹⁴⁸"Wacoans Learn," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 March 1942.

¹⁴⁹"Waco's Business Girls Will Start Defense Training," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 March 1942.

¹⁵⁰"33 Girls Have Signed up for Defense Corps," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 March 1942.

¹⁵¹Susan B. Anthony II, *Out of the Kitchen--Into the War: Woman's Winning Role in the Nation's Drama* (New York, New York: Stephen Daye, Inc, 1943), 45.

¹⁵²Brady, "Baylor at War," 50.

evacuation hospital in the event of a bombing. Arrangements were made, and the request was granted.¹⁵³

By the first day of April 1942, the McLennan County Civil Defense Network was in full-force.¹⁵⁴ Now all the people could do was to be prepared to man their battle stations and look out.

Victory Campaigns

McLennan County residents soon began a book donation drive to send used books to soldiers overseas. The drive was named the "Victory Book Campaign." Magazines could also be included in the donations, but all books and magazines had to be intact and bound.¹⁵⁵ The goal of the project was to provide ten million books and magazines nationwide.¹⁵⁶ Books were arranged into categories of fiction, non-fiction, and technical. All of the books were collected at county libraries.¹⁵⁷ Over 500 volumes were received by the McLennan County libraries by the end of February 1942, but this amount was far under what organizers had hoped would be donated.¹⁵⁸ Donations had increased by only

¹⁵³*Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁵⁴"Air Raid Warden Chart Completed," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 March 1942.

¹⁵⁵"Victory Books Go to Service Camps," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 January 1942.

¹⁵⁶"Books for Soldiers are Received by Library Here," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

¹⁵⁷"County Donating Books to Troops," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 January 1942.

¹⁵⁸"County Response to Giver Soldiers Books is Lacking," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 February 1942.

several hundred by March, and the library system became discouraged its drive would not succeed.¹⁵⁹

Another popular victory campaign in McLennan County during the first quarter of 1942 was the Victory Garden. A Victory Garden was often a small garden for growing vegetables or fruits for families or individuals. Most Victory Gardens were cultivated in the city, while country gardens were often substantially larger because of the open land. The main purpose for a Victory Garden was to provide adequate food for a family. The food that was not purchased would then be used for the military.

The federal government began to push the idea of a Victory Garden heavily during the month of January 1942.¹⁶⁰ Coryell County, McLennan County's western neighbor, began a drive that turned some public lands into gardens. The produce was then to be sold to local people.¹⁶¹ *The Waco News-Tribune* urged citizens not to become hysterical about county Victory Gardens. The paper urged public opinion to not till flowerbeds and city parks to grow squash. Instead, the paper asked people who did not know how to garden to refrain from participation.¹⁶²

The advice made no difference. The State of Texas reported that during the end of March 1942 more than a quarter-million children statewide were helping tend Victory Gardens at public schools.¹⁶³ An area equal to eighty square feet was said to feed one

¹⁵⁹“Victory Books to Servicemen, and More are Needed,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

¹⁶⁰“Ceilings Placed on Retread Jobs,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 January 1942.

¹⁶¹“Coryell Now Setting Out Its Gardens,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

¹⁶² Nea Service, “If You Can’t Do It Right, Don’t Start a Garden, Say Experts; It Wastes Effort,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 February 1942.

¹⁶³“Victory Gardens Will Yield Much Greater Harvest,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 March 1942.

person for almost an entire season.¹⁶⁴ The Negro County Home Demonstrations and Agriculture Councils in McLennan County endorsed the idea of a Victory Garden by sponsoring a vegetable show during March 1942.¹⁶⁵ Victory Gardens were on the minds of all McLennan County residents during the early victory campaign drives of 1942.

Sugar

In January 1942 Claude Wickard, the Secretary of Agriculture, warned that the year would be plagued with shortages of sugar, fats, and oils.¹⁶⁶ Within a week of Wickard's comment, sugar rationing was scheduled to begin.¹⁶⁷

Sugar rationing would be different than tire rationing and the voucher system. Sugar would instead be rationed by a coupon system. The government granted books to participants. Each book was filled with stamps. Each stamp was numbered and represented a certain portion of sugar. For example sugar stamp seven might be worth five pounds of sugar between month A and month B. This system allowed for a truly fair distribution system among rich and poor, black and white. The process was repeated throughout the war, but with different books.

War Ration Book One contained twenty-eight stamps and was designed to last about six months. Each person was supposed to register for a War Ration Book One. If a

¹⁶⁴“Tiny Garden Will Yield Vegetable for U.S. Families,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 March 1942.

¹⁶⁵“Negroes to Have Meat, Vegetable Show this Week,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 March 1942.

¹⁶⁶“Nation is Facing a Sugar Shortage, Wickard Avers,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 January 1942.

¹⁶⁷“Sugar Rationing for U.S. Due in Early February,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 January 1942.

person was a minor then a guardian would register for him or her. Sugar rationing often became delayed when the books were not published on time.¹⁶⁸

Prior to registration, each applicant was required to report how much sugar he or she possessed. If the total was too high, the applicant was rejected for the first stages of rationing.¹⁶⁹ Each applicant was allowed about one pound of sugar per week during the first stages of rationing.¹⁷⁰ The books were ready to be issued during the first week of March 1942 (Fig. 4).

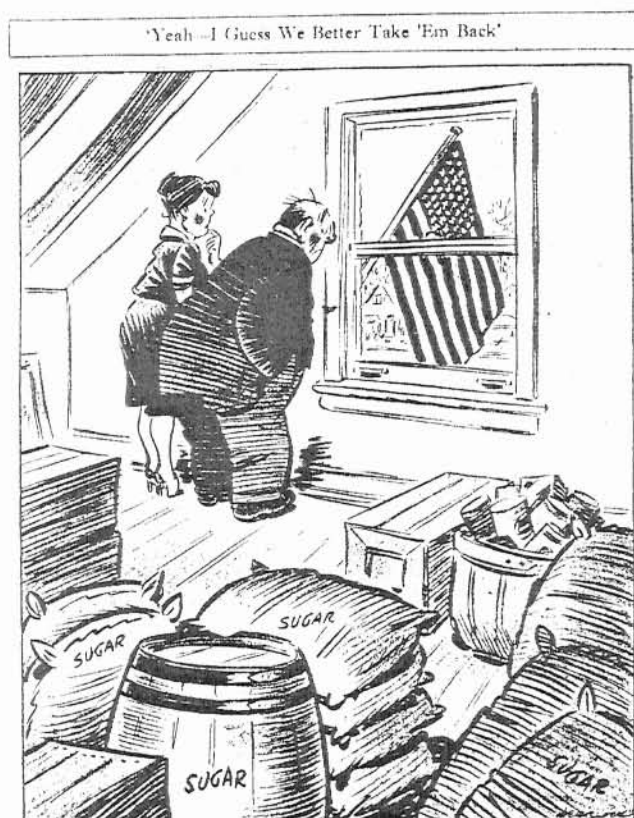


Fig. 4. 'Yeah—I Guess We Better Take 'Em Back',¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸"Sugar Rationing Delayed as Stamp Booklets Printed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

¹⁶⁹"Sugar Rationing Rules Disclosed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 February 1942.

¹⁷⁰"Sugar Rationing Delayed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

¹⁷¹"Yeah—I Guess We Better Take 'Em Back," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

War Ration Book One was issued at local schools by public school teachers. Children were released from school over the course of a few days to prevent distribution chaos.¹⁷² Prior to distribution, teachers were required to take an oath to be fair and honest. The oath was similar to those taken by rationing board members and air raid wardens.¹⁷³ Rationing books were predominantly designed for private sugar users, but commercial users were told they would also have to register.¹⁷⁴

War Ration Book One was to be distributed on 18-21 March 1942. More than 140,000 books were expected to be issued in McLennan County.¹⁷⁵ The book was not completely filled out until each applicant presented proper identification and marked name, address, height, weight, eye color, hair color, age, and gender. The books were not transferable, and were good for only one person.¹⁷⁶

Sugar rationing was postponed again until April or May, following the issuance of War Ration Book One in late March. There was still a nationwide belief that sugar was being hoarded during the preparation time, but by now there was not much sugar available to hoard.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷²“Sugar Rationing Rules,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 February 1942.

¹⁷³“Dates Postponed, But Same People Will Work Later,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 March 1942.

¹⁷⁴“Two Registrations for Sugar Curbs Being Scheduled,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 February 1942.

¹⁷⁵“Citizens will Get 28 Stamps with Ration Booklets,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 March 1942.

¹⁷⁶“Registration for Rationing Books Not an Idle Step,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 March 1942.

¹⁷⁷J. H. Kultgen, Oral History, Institute for Oral History, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 59.

Miscellaneous Rationing

There were many other common items removed from shelves during 1942. Price ceilings were placed on hundreds of everyday items across the country in hopes of preventing runaway inflation. McLennan County experienced these shortages and headaches in abundance.

In January 1942 the government began a campaign to salvage waste paper. Federal reports indicated 1941 as a year of a 15-20% increase in prices of paper products, and officials did not want 1942 to be the same.¹⁷⁸ Other items were targeted to be conserved for future availability. Burlap bags were commonly imported from India and were in short supply.¹⁷⁹ Bottles and hangers were collected by local Y.M.C.A. members in McLennan County and sold for bond money as a fundraiser.¹⁸⁰

Price ceilings were placed on many common items throughout the first quarter of 1942. Tea, nylon hosiery, and flashlights were set at October 1941 levels.¹⁸¹ Washing machines soon followed with a price ceiling and threats of rationing.¹⁸² The price of radios had already been set a few weeks earlier because they provided the primary means of communication and obtaining news during 1942.¹⁸³ Washing machines, typewriters,

¹⁷⁸“Salvaged Paper Protects Most Lend-Lease Goods,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 January 1942.

¹⁷⁹“Asked to Save Materials,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 January 1942.

¹⁸⁰“Bottles and Coat Hangers to Help National Defense,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

¹⁸¹“Maximum Prices on Tea and Nylon Hosiery Set,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

¹⁸²“Price Ceiling on Washing Machines,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 February 1942.

¹⁸³“Price Ceilings on Radios Fixed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 January 1942.

and vacuums were all items set for production halts in April 1942.¹⁸⁴ Even juke boxes and pinball machines were flagged for halts on 1 May 1942.¹⁸⁵

During March 1942, coffee grounds began being shipped in glass containers instead of tin.¹⁸⁶ The change in coffee containers forced coffee companies to alter amounts of coffee that were shipped.¹⁸⁷

Clothing styles were marked for changes because of excessive fabric that had been wasted on fashions in previous years. The government promoted the new fashions by explaining that they did not waste cotton and wool. More styles become common that omitted pleats, frills, or cuffs.¹⁸⁸

Local War Work and Local War Housing

In February 1942, the U.S. government began to consider a mandatory war work registration for all women, because labor shortages were beginning to appear in war work as well as agriculture.¹⁸⁹

In the middle of February 1942, an official announcement stated an ordnance plant would be coming to McLennan County. The plant would be built in McGregor

¹⁸⁴“Three Industries Ordered to Turn to Work for War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 March 1942.

¹⁸⁵“Manufacturing of Juke Boxes Halted,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 March 1942.

¹⁸⁶Caroline F. Ware, *The Consumer Goes to War: A Victory Guide on the Home Front* (New York, New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1942), 5.

¹⁸⁷“Effect of War on Restaurants Topic of State Meeting,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 March 1942.

¹⁸⁸“War’s Effect on Women’s Clothes Won’t Kill Style,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 March 1942.

¹⁸⁹“Registration of Women for War Work is Planned,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 February 1942.

within a few months. Officials estimated that the plant would bring 3,500 new jobs to McLennan County.¹⁹⁰

War industries required several criteria for a good location. First, the factory was placed a minimum of ten to twenty miles away from a primary target or military base. Second, the plant was placed in a location where it could avoid being a cluster target. Third, it had to be served by several modes of transportation. Fourth, it had to be placed securely upon the utility grids.¹⁹¹

Local construction teams began building houses for the new workers. A basic house in 1942 consisted of two bedrooms, one bath, dining, living, and kitchen areas, and perhaps a garage. The houses were being built with “first-grade materials,” on 28 year notes at 4.8% interest. Five houses were erected simultaneously at Oak Grove Park near Brook Avenue. However, these “first-grade” houses were not being built fast enough.¹⁹²

By the end of February 1942, two hundred houses were planned for construction in Waco for the sole purpose of providing adequate defense worker housing.¹⁹³ But when hordes of new workers began moving to McLennan County early, officials began looking for ways to build houses cheaper and faster.¹⁹⁴ By the middle of March more than

¹⁹⁰“Ordnance Plant Due at McGregor,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 February 1942.

¹⁹¹Jules Backman et al., *War and Defense Economics: Contains Text of Defense Production Act Incorporating 1951 Amendments* (New York, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1952), 82.

¹⁹²“New Housing Project is Begun at Oak Grove Park,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 February 1942.

¹⁹³“New Homes in Waco Due to Care for New Families,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 February 1942.

¹⁹⁴Eleanor Ragsdale, “Experts Try to Find Ways of Making ‘Quickie’ Defense Houses Easier to Furnish; Expenses Principle Bar,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 March 1942.

seventy families had been placed in rental and government housing, but more were on the way, and local housing resources were dwindling.¹⁹⁵

War work was becoming a crucial part of life in McLennan County during the first quarter of 1942. Pat Neff, president of Baylor University, realized that if Baylor University wanted to weather the war years it needed to offer more classes on war production and work while embracing new aspects of business. Many female students took advantage of the training courses, enrolling in classes to promote their educations about war work.¹⁹⁶ Other war work was available at the neighboring air bases Blackland Flight School and James Connally.¹⁹⁷

The federal government was beginning to develop a need to push what it called “alternative labor.”¹⁹⁸ The government advocated that women and minorities fill the back draft of labor shortages the war had created.¹⁹⁹

McLennan County was on its way to becoming a model war city during 1942. Although disorder might result from every mandate issued by the federal government, local organizations developed a good structure and kept order for the most part.

It was clear that McLennan County residents were told to man their battle stations! To some people manning their battle stations meant being at home monitoring a news report on a radio, standing in a rationing line waiting for War Ration Book One,

¹⁹⁵“Suitable Homes Found 69 Defense Families,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 March 1942.

¹⁹⁶Robert L. Henderson, “The Baylor Administration of Pat M. Neff” (M.A. thesis, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1960), 95.

¹⁹⁷Poage, *A History of McLennan County*, 240.

¹⁹⁸Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York, New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1984), 235

¹⁹⁹Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 275.

selling bonds in a booth downtown, feeding the hog extra, tilling a garden filled with squash, or registering one's car for the Federal Automobile Tax. Participation was viewed as being relative to the race, gender, and economic standing.

CHAPTER THREE

Plant Your Dimes and Grow Defense Stamps

Federal Action

The second quarter of the year reflected more organization than did the previous quarter. Local rationing boards had been set in place and were generally functioning well. But the federal government was still struggling to pay for all of its new war expenditures.

War spending had reached an all-time high in March 1942. More than \$3 billion was collected in taxes during March 1942.¹ On the first of April, the federal government began considering the implementation of a 5% sales tax on goods in order to raise revenue.² Opponents of the bill stated that the tax would hurt the poor unfairly.³ Eventually the bill died and the decision was made not to alter the original tax plan of 1942.⁴

Another way the government acted to increase production in war factories was to mandate a new 48 hour work-week.⁵ War jobs were in the process of being renegotiated

¹"Income Tax, War Spending Set New Record in March," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 April 1942.

²"5 Per Cent Sales Tax Is Urged to Raise War Cash," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 April 1942.

³"New Protests on Sales Tax Heard in House Hearing," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 April 1942.

⁴"Tax Program Will Stand Unchanged until FDR Moves," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 April 1942.

⁵"Vinson Announces Draft of Bill to Set 48-Hour Work Week," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

by the federal government, to set all profits made by defense companies at six percent.⁶ Congress argued that if a company was making six percent profits off the war, the company should produce more items. President Roosevelt opposed to the 48 hour work-week.⁷ By the first week of May it was formally rejected.⁸

Creeping inflation remained the nation's primary concern during 1942. Roosevelt began asking experts for ideas to combat the problem.⁹ The most popular idea called for a "blanket freeze" on all goods at March 1942 levels.¹⁰ The Office of Price Administration suggested the continuation of ceilings on goods and salaries. Prices could not exceed the amount established several months earlier.¹¹ The government remained confident these programs were the best way to maintain control of the economy.

The United States Treasury Department soon recognized that more money had to be raised quickly. It vowed to ring "all doorbells" throughout the nation to try to push the idea of buying war bonds.¹² But, the Treasury Department did not explain why bonds would sell better during this quarter than the one prior. Facing reality, the Treasury

⁶"Renegotiation of War Jobs Okehed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 April 1942.

⁷"FDR is to Restate his Opposition to Work Week Change," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 26 April 1942.

⁸"Bill to Increase Work Week, Limit War Profit Killed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 May 1942.

⁹"FDR Will Present Program Against Inflation Shortly," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 April 1942.

¹⁰"Blanket Freezing of Prices Ready," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 April 1942.

¹¹"OPA Chief Urges Forced Savings, Salary Freezing," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 May 1942.

¹²"Treasury to Ring 'All Doorbells' in Bond Sale Drive," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 April 1942.

Department decided instead to borrow \$4 billion in May and June 1942, insuring that the needed funds would be available.¹³

However, funding remained low, so taxes began to be implemented across the board. Big businesses experienced increases in taxes on all profits.¹⁴ Meanwhile, a new tax affected any person making over \$11.60 a week.¹⁵ Fortunately, average incomes were higher in May 1942 than at any time in history.¹⁶ Yet inflation was continuing to rise despite the government's efforts to prevent it.

As a result, federal law was passed that granted government control over prices changed by almost every manufacturer and wholesaler during early May 1942.¹⁷ All price ceilings were set to equal the highest prices charged for goods during March 1942.¹⁸ These new ceilings included items ranging from tobacco to lawn cutters.¹⁹ The government's objective was to control inflation by limiting the price of everything a consumer might purchase.

¹³“U.S. Treasury to Borrow 4 Billions during May, June,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 April 1942.

¹⁴“30 Per Cent Tax on Profits Okeh,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 May 1942.

¹⁵“Morgenthau Asks Lower Exemption on Income Taxes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 May 1942.

¹⁶“National Income Sets New Record,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 May 1942.

¹⁷“Federal Control on Prices Takes Effect Monday,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

¹⁸“One and Half Pct. Drop in HCL Seen on Price Ceilings,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 May 1942.

¹⁹“Price Ceiling,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 17 May 1942.

The government also formulated a national savings plan for all U.S. government workers. The rates of savings would vary depending upon the employee. The plan was proposed by Congressmen Albert Gore of Tennessee.²⁰

The government believed that many of the price ceilings were ignored by the general public. Officials were probably not far from the truth in their concerns. In McLennan County most people wanted goods and services the way it had been. It was not uncommon for a man or woman to pay what he or she believed to be a reasonable price for a desired product.²¹ Acceptable price gouging created concern for the government.

Imposing ceilings on prices became difficult without total compliance. The government decided it would escalate the registration of goods during the summertime.²² Two legislative loopholes allowed the price ceilings to be neglected. First, goods cost more if they were delivered to a customer's home in March. Store owners could claim that the goods were delivered in March justifying the high cost because the law required that all prices be set the March 1942 levels. Second, the loophole allowed a customer to pay less for an item if he or she had received a discount during March. Other new items that had not been available during March 1942 were to be set at the price of the nearest similar product.²³

²⁰"Enforced Savings Plan is Proposed for U.S. Workers," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 May 1942.

²¹"Most Buyers Pay Little Attention to Price Ceiling," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 May 1942.

²²"More Regulations Issued on Goods Sold in Summer," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 May 1942.

²³"How to Set Price Ceiling for Items New in Store Told," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 May 1942.

The government attempted to enforce ceilings by requiring all retail stores to record their prices for regulated items.²⁴ Another rule stated that all ceiling prices had to be placed in clear view of the public at every store.²⁵ Papers reported that the government was positioning to take control of all food sales to guarantee proper sales prices.²⁶

By early June 1942, Morgenthau became irritated at the American public. He claimed that some Americans were dodging the “tax ball” and not honoring their country.²⁷ Bond sales were lagging in June 1942, and he did not expect the government to reach its quota.²⁸ Roosevelt decided that the government needed a new tax plan, and he called for revisions.

Historian Alan Brinkley has argued that Roosevelt and his administration favored policies that benefited large corporations over small businesses.²⁹ This assertion may be true, but whoever got rich from war industry certainly had to pay dearly for it because of the proliferation of new taxes.

Local Money and Bonds

The second quarter of 1942 emerged more stable than the previous one. The idea of a bond quota became popularized because it appeared to be the only effective way to

²⁴“Record of Prices is Required with Ceiling Program,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 May 1942.

²⁵“Ceilings Must Be Posted in Public View, OPA Rules,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 May 1942.

²⁶“U.S. Takes Over Wartime Control of Food Supplies,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 June 1942.

²⁷“Morgenthau Says Tax Dodgers are Hurting Program,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 May 1942.

²⁸“Treasury May Not Reach June Goal on War Bond Sale,” *The Waco Sunday-Tribune Herald*, 21 June 1942.

²⁹Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 177.

generate steady sales. The Waco clubwomen organization continued their bond drive efforts with great vigor.

Each week the Waco Clubwomen adopted a new phrase to promote bond-buying. (The title of this chapter, “Plant Your Dimes and Grow Defense Stamps” is named after one of these drives.)³⁰ Another phrase adopted a few weeks later was “give generously for gallant people.”³¹

Morgenthau had stated at the beginning of the war that he did not want quotas assigned to bond sales. Instead, Morgenthau believed people should participate as they saw fit. But it was not long until quotas were assigned to overcome poor response from the public.³²

A standard quota for McLennan County varied between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Most collections would lag before the deadline and the local bond board feared it would fall short of its goal. Usually, however, the quotas were met throughout the first half of 1942. One example is evident in April 1942. The bond board needed \$50,000 a day for four days to meet the ambitious quota.³³ The goal seemed impossible, but final totals showed an increase of nearly \$100,000 over the projected goal.³⁴

³⁰“Plant Your Dimes and Grow Stamps, Waco Women Urge,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 April 1942.

³¹“Downtown Booths Set Up as China Drive is Boosted,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 April 1942.

³²John Morton Blum, *V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture during World War II* (New York, New York: Barcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1962), 19.

³³“\$50,000 Per Day Needed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 April 1942.

³⁴“Waco Surpasses Goal on Bomber,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 May 1942.

Defense Stamps became formally changed to War Stamps during the first part of April 1942, along with Defense Bonds and War Bonds.³⁵ School children began buying bonds across the state to alleviate public debt with the goal of eliminating the debt within a decade.³⁶ Other public institutions would soon follow this example.

Local newspapers devoted many pages to tales of people supporting bond sales. The people highlighted most in the papers were newsboys, clubwomen, and school children. The situation was always portrayed as a success, even when meeting the quota was severely in doubt.

One plan endorsed by the federal government involved workers spending 10% of their incomes on war bonds.³⁷ This program proved to be one of the most successful in McLennan County. Local companies with 90% of all employees participating in the 10% Plan were granted an Honor Card, an award for supporting the program, as a token of appreciation from the government.³⁸

The perfect Mother's Day gift in 1942 was a "War Stamp Bouquet." Flowers would die, but this bouquet would grow. People were urged to act quickly because over fourteen had already been ordered, and they took time to arrange (Fig. 5).³⁹

³⁵"Defense' Bonds Now 'War' Bonds," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 April 1942.

³⁶"Schools Buy Bonds," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 April 1942.

³⁷"10 Per Cent from Income for Bonds Urged by Solons," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 May 1942.

³⁸"Honor Cards for Bond Buying Ordered to Firms," *The Sunday Waco Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

³⁹"Bouquet of War Stamps Mother's Day Offer Here," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 May 1942.



Fig. 5. Something We CAN Grasp⁴⁰

Radio pleas were made on WACO, encouraging local people to buy war bonds. Quotas had begun to prove difficult again and taxes were on the rise. Walter Lacy, Jr., chairman of the local bond board, D.Y. McDaniel, county judge, and Clarence C. Burnett, chairman of the salary allotment division of the program, all participated in the fifteen minute broadcast.⁴¹

The government's opinion on bond buying became increasingly clear. Bond buying kept taxes low because the government could project accurately the amount of money it had to budget. A pledge to buy bonds was also considered acceptable grounds for the government to issue tax breaks.⁴²

⁴⁰"Something We CAN Grasp," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 November 1942.

⁴¹"Radio Appeal for Bond Buying Due," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 May 1942.

⁴²"Buy Bonds Now or Face Heavier Tax, Scofield's Warning," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 May 1942.

The federal government began encouraging the 10% Plan even more strongly by the end of May 1942.⁴³ By late June, more than twenty local companies were proudly participating in the 10% Plan.⁴⁴ The local gypsum company boasted that it was the first in the county to have 100% of its employees supporting the 10% Plan.⁴⁵

Bond and stamp sales varied from month to month. There were so many quotas for each organization and each level of government that it is difficult to trace which goal benefited a specific branch of the government. McLennan County typically met most of these goals. Quotas or not, people seemed eager to buy bonds, which were essentially a refundable tax.

Rubber

The government estimated that 500,000 tons of rubber was being used on private automobiles.⁴⁶ Petroleum companies began promising the government and the public that they would be able to provide higher amounts of petroleum for rubber production. The new amounts were expected to meet the demands for both the military and the private sectors.⁴⁷ However, the probability of this claim was slim. If the government would have authorized increased production of synthetic rubber as the companies had requested, the perception that there were shortages would have been undermined.

⁴³“Tax Deduction of 10 Per Cent From Payrolls is Asked,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 May 1942.

⁴⁴“More Workers are Investing Weekly in War Bonds Here,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 June 1942.

⁴⁵“Gypsum Company Employees Pledged to Buy War Bonds,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 June 1942.

⁴⁶“Vanishing Rubber Stockpile,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 April 1942.

⁴⁷“Synthetic Rubber Program is Urged for Civilian Need,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 April 1942.

The second quarter also marked new changes in the tire rationing program of McLennan County. Any truck driver who experienced a blowout because his truck was overloaded was refused a new tire. Recipients of new tires, new tubes, or retreaded tires signed a receipt to verify identity. In late April a clause was added requiring recipients not to overload the new tires.⁴⁸

Costs of tires had increased by 15% between April 1942 and January 1942. Price gouging and rationing were largely to blame, but prices continued to rise regardless of ceilings.⁴⁹

Despite tire rationing, however, parking meters received record amounts of money during April.⁵⁰ Yet many springtime graduation ceremonies were cancelled because long-distance driving was discouraged by tire rationing.⁵¹ Local school buses were allowed to obtain tires only for daily bus routes, not extracurricular activities.⁵²

Meanwhile, the government anticipated a shortage of scrap rubber until 1944.⁵³ Gasoline rationing was also viewed as a solution to rubber usage. By necessity, the public would drive less if they did not have enough gasoline. But many congressmen

⁴⁸“No Tires Will Be Given to Overloaded Trucks in County,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 April 1942.

⁴⁹“16% Hike in Retail Prices on New Tires Set,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 April 1942.

⁵⁰“Waco Parking Meters Take in More Cash in Spite of Rationing,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

⁵¹“War to Postpone Mass Graduation of County Units,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

⁵²“Restrictions on School Bus Tires,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

⁵³“Acute Shortage Till '44, Rubber Tycoons Assert,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 24 May 1942.

objected to the plan to ration gasoline. Several even believed that the rubber shortage was bogus from the outset.⁵⁴

Roosevelt decided to have a nationwide scrap drive for salvaged rubber.⁵⁵ McLennan County began participating in the drive several days after the announcement.⁵⁶ Air raid wardens went from door to door in neighborhoods telling people about the drive asking for help. A hundred trucks were sent across the county to collect piles of scrap rubber.⁵⁷ Newspapers told the public that no item was too small for donation.⁵⁸ As proof, one child donated her rubber toys and rubber shoe heels to the drive.⁵⁹ The citizens of McLennan County ultimately contributed a total of 500,000 pounds of scrap rubber.⁶⁰

The federal government soon proclaimed the nationwide scrap rubber campaign a complete success. Grateful officials said the drive would ease the rubber shortage until synthetic rubber could be produced.⁶¹ The rubber salvage drive was considered so successful it was continued into the third quarter of the year (Fig. 6).⁶²

⁵⁴“Shortage of Rubber ‘Fake,’ Solons Told,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 May 1942.

⁵⁵“Nation-Wide Drive for Scrap Rubber Announced by FD,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 June 1942.

⁵⁶“Instructions for Rubber Salvaging Sent to McDaniel,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 14 June 1942.

⁵⁷“100 Trucks Asked to Help Collect Rubber Thursday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 June 1942.

⁵⁸“Whirlwind Scrap Rubber and Iron Collection Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 June 1942.

⁵⁹“Waco Tot Gives up Rubber Toys and Shoe Heels,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 June 1942.

⁶⁰“Wacoans Build Huge Scrap Pile,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 June 1942.

⁶¹“Over 200 Millions Pounds of Scrap Rubber Collected,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 June 1942.

⁶²“Rubber Collection Too Small, Drive Extended 10 Days,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 June 1942.



Fig. 6. This Salvage Campaign Starts Thursday⁶³

There are, however, several questions the government did not address during the scrap rubber drive. First, where did all of the scrap rubber go? Second, how were tires made from pencil erasers? Third, who was going to convert it? Last, why were tires still in short supply?

Automobiles

New automobiles gradually became impossible to obtain during the second quarter of 1942. Applicants had to receive a voucher from the tire rationing board prior to purchasing. The system of purchasing a new car was similar to purchasing a new tire. Car dealers were usually compensated by the U.S. government as a response for decreased sales.⁶⁴

⁶³“The Salvage Campaign Starts Thursday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 June 1942.

⁶⁴“Financial Aid to Auto Dealers is Okehed by Solons,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 June 1942.

Beginning in April, price ceilings were placed on all used cars.⁶⁵ Each car was required to register for the Federal Auto Tax. Ironically, 500 more cars were registered in 1942 than during the same period of time in 1941.⁶⁶ The county government announced that the total amount of money raised in McLennan County from the Federal Auto Tax during the first quarter of 1942 was \$250,000.⁶⁷

Even McLennan County crews had a small chance of receiving permission to purchase new vehicles, although their work was considered essential to the war effort. County officials ordered extra motors and parts for county service trucks as a preventative measure.⁶⁸ However, Pat Neff, president of Baylor University, was authorized to purchase a new car because "Baylor University is training national defense workers."⁶⁹

By June 1942, emphasis had returned to the Federal Auto Tax and the renewal of the stickers that were purchased for the six month period. Early sales of the stickers began on 10 June.⁷⁰ Stamps were available at the post office, as before, and were required to be placed on cars prior to 1 July 1942.⁷¹

⁶⁵ "Price Ceiling on Used Automobiles Expected Soon," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 April 1942.

⁶⁶ "Auto Licenses in McLennan Ahead," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 April 1942.

⁶⁷ "Over \$250,000 is Car License Toll in M'Lennan Tab," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

⁶⁸ "Spare Parts and Motors Ordered for County Cars," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 April 1942.

⁶⁹ "It Happened Yesterday," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 April 1942.

⁷⁰ "Federal Auto Tax Stamps to Go on Sale on June 10," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 7 June 1942.

⁷¹ "Motorists Cautioned to Get Automobile Sticker," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 21 June 1942.

Gasoline and Oil

The gasoline situation did not improve during the second quarter. Gasoline supplies in the East had begun to prove sporadic. The government stated that rationing was almost inevitable.⁷² Northeastern homeowners were urged to change the type of heating systems in their homes to wood or electric because of unstable fossil fuel conditions.⁷³

To combat the fuel shortage, Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior and Federal Oil Coordinator, instructed Texas to cut production of oil 200,000 barrels daily to a new level of 960,000 per day because of inadequate storage.⁷⁴ For weeks after the order, Ickes continued to criticize Texas when it produced more oil in an attempt to compensate for shortages.⁷⁵ Then, Ickes instructed the government and the people to cut all unnecessary use of gasoline.⁷⁶

Gasoline prices were frozen at March 1942 levels.⁷⁷ Gasoline rationing was gradually becoming a much more acceptable idea across the nation. The government stated that the gasoline rationing books and cards would resemble the sugar rationing

⁷²“Lower Deliveries of Gas May Avert Rationing in the East,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 April 1942.

⁷³“New Cuts in Oil Consumption for East Might Come,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 April 1942.

⁷⁴“Further Slash in Texas Oil Output is Asked by Ickes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 April 1942.

⁷⁵“Ickes Turns Down Texas’ Request for Upping Output,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

⁷⁶“Unnecessary Use of Oil to Be Cut Out, Ickes States,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 May 1942.

⁷⁷“Gasoline Prices Frozen at March Levels All Over U.S.,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 April 1942.

books with stamps and detailed descriptions.⁷⁸ Each stamp or sticker would represent two and a half or five gallons of gasoline.⁷⁹

Gas rationing was being established along the East coast by the middle of May. The rationing system followed various levels that qualified people for specific amounts of gasoline. Each level reflected a person's vocation and location. Jobs seen as crucial to the war effort were accorded more gasoline.⁸⁰ It was only be a matter of time before gas rationing stretched across the nation to McLennan County.

Refineries in the East remained at levels of low production.⁸¹ The Texas Railroad Commission once again decided to increase oil production during May. Ickes responded with anger, and threatened to penalize the Commission if it failed to follow orders because of a shortage in storage facilities for the oil.⁸² Several days later, Texas defied Ickes in order to try to help ease shortages in the Northeast.⁸³ Ickes responded, once again, with anger at the Commission and called the production "a serious blow to the war effort."⁸⁴

At the same time, the government began making announcements about enforcing nationwide gasoline rationing. Officials insisted that an efficient system should be in

⁷⁸"Gas Ration," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 April 1942.

⁷⁹"Ickes Denies Gas Rations to Be as Short as Reported," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 April 1942.

⁸⁰"Three Gallons of Gas a Week is the Official Rule," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

⁸¹"Prosecution for Gas Chiselers in East is Promised," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 May 1942.

⁸²"Ickes Threatens Penalty on Texas Oil Commission," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 May 1942.

⁸³"Rail Commission Defies Ickes, Ups Texas Oil Output," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 May 1942.

⁸⁴"Ickes Raps Texas Out Output Boost as 'Serious Blow,'" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 May 1942.

place by July 1942.⁸⁵ The major justification for the rationing was not to conserve gasoline but to conserve rubber.⁸⁶

In Texas, Governor Coke Stevenson was strongly opposed to gasoline rationing. Stevenson refused to see why Texas should not produce unlimited amounts for its citizens as well as other states' gasoline needs.⁸⁷ His primary justification for the increase in production was the tax money generated by gasoline sales. In Texas, the gasoline tax provided a large portion of education funding. Rationing gasoline would hurt education dramatically.⁸⁸ Stevenson remained adamant that gasoline rationing would only harm schools not save rubber.⁸⁹

McLennan County officials agreed with Governor Stevenson in his belief that people did not need to ration gasoline. A group of McLennan County officials and surrounding counties' officials gathered at the Raleigh Hotel in Waco, to organize a formal protest. At the meeting, Frank Baldwin, chief editor of *The Waco News-Tribune* and *The Waco Times-Herald*, said: "the inevitable defeat of Hitler will occupy only a few pages in the history to be written in the future. The story of the world conflict in which we are now living will be the story."⁹⁰

⁸⁵"Nationwide Gas Rationing Near," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 May 1942.

⁸⁶"Gasoline Rations Elicit Outcry in Senatorial Ranks," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 May 1942.

⁸⁷"Stevenson Sharply Protests Gasoline Ration for Texas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 May 1942.

⁸⁸"Governor Asserts Gas Rationing a Threat to Schools," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 May 1942.

⁸⁹"Stevenson Makes New Protest Over Rationing of Gas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 June 1942.

⁹⁰"County Officials Oppose Rationing of Gas for Texas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 May 1942.

Farm and Agriculture

In the agricultural real, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt stated that it was now time for women to begin laboring in crop harvests.⁹¹ However, many farmers in South Texas looked to Mexico for a source of labor.⁹² By now, labor shortages were said to surpass gasoline shortages and rubber as the primary source of Texas's problems.⁹³

Paradoxically, Texas wheat production was on the rise in 1942, although hough reports indicated that less acreage was being used than ever.⁹⁴ Texas wheat production increased 39% during 1942.

Wheat quotas in McLennan County were controversial, primarily because of alleged labor shortages.⁹⁵ Hired hands were difficult to obtain locally. For that reason, a good crop harvest had become much more difficult to achieve. The only solution was to pay more for hired help or not plant wheat.⁹⁶ Modern economists blame this condition for higher inflation. In 1942, it was a way of life.

The State of Texas continued fighting the labor shortage. The primary solution the state developed was to force all farm workers to register with the U.S Employment

⁹¹"Women Must Help Work Farm Crops, First Lady Says," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 April 1942.

⁹²"South Texas Farm Group Asks Bring in Mexican Labor," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 May 1942.

⁹³"Shortage of Farm Labor May Be Big Problem in State," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 May 1942.

⁹⁴"Texas Wheat Crop to Be Larger, Say U.S. Farm Experts," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 April 1942.

⁹⁵"County Farmers Vote in May on Wheat Program," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 April 1942.

⁹⁶"Labor Shortages on Farms Felt in Central Texas," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 17 May 1942.

Office.⁹⁷ People who claimed to be farm workers in order to avoid the draft now had to prove they were working.

The federal government clearly emphasized agriculture, comparing productivity to industrial production levels.⁹⁸ Meanwhile, however, reports of labor shortages continued, swarms of bugs in Central Texas were eating crops, and farm implement production was cut to 80% of 1940 levels.

McLennan County cotton farmers also began to discover cases of the cotton bug in local crops. The damage levels were not mentioned specifically, as in the case of oat crops during the first quarter, but the bug was believed to pose a dire threat.⁹⁹

The federal government responded by publishing several books on farming and agricultural production. One encouraged farmers to take action by using four methods. The first method was to lure more workers from the city. These workers could be found among minorities, children, the elderly, and women. The second method advised farmers to be more rational and to use effective time-management skills. The third method encouraged farmers to maintain and check their implements and equipment. The fourth method asked rural neighbors to help, as well as to be helped by one another.¹⁰⁰

The year 1942 was a banner year for all agricultural production across the country. Nationwide, the output was almost double what it had been in 1941.¹⁰¹ In

⁹⁷“Plans Drafted to Meet Shortage of Labor for Farms,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

⁹⁸“Agriculture is Keeping Step in War Production,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 May 1942.

⁹⁹“Cotton Insects Plague M’Lennan County Farmers,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 June 1942.

¹⁰⁰William Fielding Ogburn, *American Society in Wartime* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1943), 91-93.

¹⁰¹“Banner Year for Texas Farmer is Seen by Bucchel,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 April 1942.

McLennan County, however, there were many setbacks. These setbacks were a combination of labor shortages, old equipment, bad freezes, and insects.

Civil Defense

During 1942 the air raid system generated one of the largest projects in McLennan County. By April 1942, all of the pieces were in place for the completion of the civil defense system. One drill began with the testing of the air raid sirens. Three of the seven sirens were run, and the hospital blacked-out its curtains.¹⁰² Local wardens stated the purpose of the drill was to prevent panic and perfect details.¹⁰³

Updated civil defense training involved watching a film depicting how the English dealt with air raids and how their siren systems functioned.¹⁰⁴ Wardens were told to be prepared for future drills, which would be more realistic.¹⁰⁵ Other films were offered in Waco Hall on various topics about civil defense.¹⁰⁶

Air raid wardens were assigned a new drill during April. Each member of a ward was supposed to speak with his or her local air raid warden and address several questions pertaining to his or her family. The air raid warden was supposed to begin by speaking to every member of a neighborhood family. Next, residents were supposed to tell the warden where he or she could usually be found in the event of an emergency. Another

¹⁰²“Sirens Blowing at 6 P.M. Will Start Air-Raid Workout,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 April 1942.

¹⁰³“Confusion Marks First Test Raid Staged for Waco,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 April 1942.

¹⁰⁴“County War Film Will be Screened,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

¹⁰⁵“Future Air-Raid Practice to Have Realistic Punch,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

¹⁰⁶“Civilian Defense Film on Air Raid to Be Shown Here,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 April 1942.

question concerned any illness being experienced by a family member. Residents were then supposed to show the warden where the refuge room was located in the event of an attack. Wardens were supposed to clarify any types of signals a resident might need to know in the event of an attack and show the resident where the neighborhood spots were located. Next, residents showed the warden where electrical and gas shut-offs were located. All citizens were encouraged to be honest with his or her warden because all wardens were “sworn officials.”¹⁰⁷

Most of the civil defense drills only involved air raid wardens. Most of the problems that occurred during previous trials were at the top levels of the defense system.¹⁰⁸ By the end of June many problems had been corrected and more than 1,000 wardens were ready in the event of an enemy attack.¹⁰⁹

McLennan County authorities were also not hesitant about their loyalties to the flag. In June 1942, a merchant who owned a business on Columbus Avenue forgot to take his flag down one evening before going home for the night. The police instead removed the flag and returned it to the merchant the following day. The merchant apologized and was told not to do it again.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷“Air-Raid Defense System Polished; Rules on Circular,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 April 1942.

¹⁰⁸“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 May 1942.

¹⁰⁹“1000 Wardens are Ready if Waco is Blasted from Air,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 28 June 1942.

¹¹⁰“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 June 1942.

Victory Campaigns

Many local children and young adults were responsible for the Victory Campaigns in the second quarter of 1942. Local members of the 4-H Club, an agricultural educational organization, organized classes and meetings to teach residents proper ways to feed livestock during National 4-H Week. Other 4-H lessons were offered on gardening and basic food production during the same week.¹¹¹ A total of 811 children and young people participated in some way, involving every 4-H member in the county (Fig. 7).¹¹²



Fig. 7. Way Ahead of Them¹¹³

¹¹¹"National 4-H Week is to Be Observed Here in McLennan," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 5 April 1942.

¹¹²"811 Boys, Girls in McLennan Join in 4-H Week Affairs," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 April 1942.

¹¹³"Way Ahead of Them," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 19 April 1942.

There were not many random Victory Drives scheduled during the second quarter of 1942. The few that took place targeted rags, metal, and rubber, all at the same time.¹¹⁴ The primary focus of most Victory Campaigns focused on rubber during this period.

Sugar Rationing

Sugar rationing was finally set to truly begin soon following the constant delays and problems that had plagued the system during the first quarter.¹¹⁵ Local school leaders began to meet to discuss plans for sugar rationing and to overcome distribution dilemmas (Fig. 8).¹¹⁶



Fig. 8. New Sugar Daddy¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴“Salvage Work to Wind Up, Clean-Up Drive Here Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 May 1942.

¹¹⁵“Sugar Rationing to Proceed Soon,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 5 April 1942.

¹¹⁶“School Chiefs to Talk Sugar Work,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 April 1942.

¹¹⁷“New Sugar Daddy,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 April 1942.

The Waco Chamber of Commerce asked the government for an increase of sugar quotas that mirrored consumption levels of 1941.¹¹⁸ But the request was quickly denied. The mandate stated that any person who possessed more than two pounds over the allowance would not be issued a War Ration Book One.¹¹⁹ The government encouraged all people who fell into this category to consume all excess sugar or give it to a neighbor.¹²⁰

Rationing books were issued on 4-7 May 1942.¹²¹ Rationing books were issued through local schools.¹²² All teachers assisting in the distribution were required to attend a training seminar to clarify requirements and registration processes.¹²³ Just as in the first quarter, rationing book registration remained complicated. Applicants were required to provide personal information on eye color, hair color, gender, address, weight, race, age, and height.¹²⁴ County officials estimated that 100,000 applicants would participate in “R-Day.”¹²⁵

¹¹⁸“Increased Sugar Quota for Waco Section Is Asked,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 April 1942.

¹¹⁹“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 April 1942.

¹²⁰“Give It Away or Eat It, Is Advice on Excess Sugar,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 May 1942.

¹²¹*Ibid.*

¹²²“School and Ration Chiefs Meet Today on Sugar Program,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 April 1942.

¹²³“Schools is Due for those Aiding Sugar Registrants,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 19 April 1942.

¹²⁴“What Your Rationing Application Will Look Like,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 26 April 1942.

¹²⁵“R-Day on Rations Is Here; Consumer Must Have Book,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 May 1942.

Local authorities estimated that several thousand McLennan County residents had not registered for War Ration Book One.¹²⁶ Applicants were now required to go before the rationing board to apply for one. All late applicants were instructed to “have a valid excuse.”¹²⁷

The initial amount of sugar allowed each person was eight ounces a week.¹²⁸ A popular way to obtain extra sugar from the rationing board was to claim a need for canning purposes. The government recommended drying fruits as an alternative to sugar canning, but most people chose to continue canning.¹²⁹ An extra five pounds of sugar was allowed per year for each War Ration Book One. Many people decided to obtain their rations during May, before the government changed its policy. Local authorities told residents that there was no need to rush for their sugar bonuses immediately.¹³⁰ But the plea appeared to have no effect

Substitute preservatives were publicized by the county in hopes that some residents would use them in place of sugar.¹³¹ The local newspaper noted that candy companies had begun using yams, molasses, and honey as a sugar base in candy.¹³² The

¹²⁶“Several Thousand in McLennan Fail to Obtain Cards,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 May 1942.

¹²⁷“May 21 Day Set for Sugar Books by Tardy Signers,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 17 May 1942.

¹²⁸“Ration,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 May 1942.

¹²⁹“Sugar Saved if Drying Process Used on Fruits,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 17 May 1942.

¹³⁰“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 May 1942.

¹³¹“Substitutes for Preserving Sugar Listed by County,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 May 1942.

¹³²“Yams, Molasses Replace Sugar as Candy Base,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 7 June 1942.

three items also proved to be useful at home as a good substitutes for sugar in baking and sweetening (Fig. 9)..



Fig. 9. 'Watch Closely',¹³³

However, people generally remained loyal to sugar as a sweetener. Sugar stamps 5 and 6 were available for two pounds each during the summer months.¹³⁴ Most people just hoped that rationing would be over soon so they could return to baking without government interference.

In McLennan County, sugar rationing soon prevailed in full-force. More than 100,000 volunteers had helped nationwide to distribute War Ration Book One.¹³⁵ One McLennan County table registered 12,000 books in one day.¹³⁶ In effect, the entire

¹³³"Watch Closely," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 April 1942.

¹³⁴"Sugar Stamps 5 and 6 are Worth Two Pounds Each, But Cover Four Weeks," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 June 1942.

¹³⁵Mansfield, *A Short History of the O.P.A.*, 245.

¹³⁶Alice Youree McConnell, *Time of Upheaval: Excerpts from a Couple's World War II Letters Reveal Life in Military Service and War-Time Texas* (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1989), 5.

county established rationing completely free of charge. McLennan County residents had accepted the program, organized it, administered it, and successfully participated in it. In a few short months the county's citizens had come a long way from confusion and resistance.

Miscellaneous Rationing

More odd items were rationed or halted during the second quarter of 1942 (Fig. 10). *The Waco News-Tribune* reported that many new toothpaste purchases required an old toothpaste tube in exchange. Shaving cream was another toiletry item that required the old case prior to purchasing a replacement.¹³⁷

The production of golf clubs was halted beginning 1 May 1942.¹³⁸ All sewing machine manufacturing was set to be terminated by the WPB in June 1942.¹³⁹ Electric ranges were no longer made for the public after 1 June 1942.¹⁴⁰ Baseballs even became hard to find in Texas during the second quarter of 1942 because of scarce materials needed for production.¹⁴¹ All public typewriter availability terminated by fall 1942.¹⁴²

¹³⁷“Purchasers Must Bring Empty Tube to Get Toothpaste,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 April 1942.

¹³⁸“Production of All Gold Clubs Ended Effective May 1,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 April 1942.

¹³⁹“Sewing Machine Production Will End on June 15,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 26 April 1942.

¹⁴⁰“WPB Halts Sales of All Domestic Electric Ranges,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

¹⁴¹“Texas Loop Must Hoard Baseballs Due to Shortage,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 May 1942.

¹⁴²“WPB Says Output of Typewriters to Be Ended in Fall,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 June 1942.

Fig. 10.¹⁴³

Clothing was also heavily sanctioned. The government estimated that each soldier would require 250 pounds of cotton for his gear and clothing.¹⁴⁴ New clothes fashions for women were to be simple, “but not scanty.”¹⁴⁵ Even lingerie was affected by government mandates, allowing for basic functions but no “unnecessary frills.”¹⁴⁶

Paper shortages remained a heavy concern to most government officials during 1942. The government stated that there were no official paper shortages, but it did not stop people from acting.¹⁴⁷ The McLennan County Judge decided that two copies of legal documents would suffice instead of four in order to prevent a shortage of paper.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³“Remember Bread too, Is a Weapon,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 April 1942.

¹⁴⁴“250 Lbs. of Cotton Needed for Each Soldier in Army,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 28 June 1942.

¹⁴⁵“Simple Style but Not Scanty under New Clothes Rule,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

¹⁴⁶“Lingerie Lengths Are Fixed by WPB to Save Material,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 May 1942.

¹⁴⁷“No Shortage on Paper Is Claim,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 May 1942.

¹⁴⁸“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 May 1942.

Other items under close watch by the government were rough rice, fish, and honey.¹⁴⁹ By the end of the second quarter the government was beginning to study the rationing of substitute goods until it was announced that no new items would be rationed until August 1942.¹⁵⁰ There seemed to be enough rationed items for the time being.

Local War Work and Local War Housing

There was a noticeable change in store for McLennan County when the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant (BOP) was constructed. McGregor suddenly would become a busy place, with ample jobs available.¹⁵¹ At the same time, Roosevelt encouraged the nationwide hiring of people over 40 to fill government jobs because he believed the new hiring process might help prevent further labor shortages.¹⁵² BOP estimated that it would employ up to 8,000 people.¹⁵³ Each new employee was required to take safety courses prior to working.¹⁵⁴

However, for the McLennan County woman who did not like the idea of a full-time job, plenty of volunteer opportunities remained available.¹⁵⁵ One of the primary reasons women were thought to have been so reluctant to apply for jobs was because

¹⁴⁹“Processing Places Raw Commodities Under OPA Rules,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 31 May 1942.

¹⁵⁰“No More Rationed Goods Till August,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 June 1942.

¹⁵¹“McGregor Beehive of Activity with Job Offices Open,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 April 1942.

¹⁵²“Employment Week for Workers Over 40 Named by FDR,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 April 1942.

¹⁵³“Peak Construction Due for McGregor Plant in 2 Weeks,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 June 1942.

¹⁵⁴“Plan of Safety Slated at Bluebonnet Plant,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 June 1942.

¹⁵⁵“Wacoans Shirking their War Duties in Civilian Work,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 26 April 1942.

prevailing social norms frowned on full-time women workers. Many people in McLennan County did not want to challenge traditional family roles, despite the drastic labor shortage.¹⁵⁶ But at the same time, thousands of women found new war jobs irresistible because of the high wages offered by defense businesses.

Several modifications had to occur prior to hiring female employees. First, separate bathrooms for men and women had to be installed. Second, new protective clothing had to be designed specifically for women. Third, new machinery that prevented heavy lifting had to be installed. Last, certain hygienic measures were necessary to prevent women from getting lead poisoning.¹⁵⁷

At the same time, around the state various kinds of alternative labor were also contributing to the war effort, even convicts in the state prison.¹⁵⁸ The convicts were responsible for making helmets and sewing tents. This supplemented labor system proved highly effective.¹⁵⁹

Other industries new to McLennan County included the Owens-Illinois Glass Company. Officials stated that it was the largest factory of its kind in the world.¹⁶⁰ The company specialized in making many of the glass containers used to transport military

¹⁵⁶McConnell, *Time of Upheaval*, 10.

¹⁵⁷Frances Perkins, "Labor Standards and War Production," *The Annals* 224 (September 1942): 54.

¹⁵⁸"Convict Labor on War Work Planned," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

¹⁵⁹"State Prisons to Produce Helmets, Army Tents Soon," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 May 1942.

¹⁶⁰"Glass Containers to Be Made Here by Owens-Illinois," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 28 June 1942.

goods.¹⁶¹ The head basketball coach for Baylor University left to become a manager for the Owens-Illinois Glass Company.¹⁶²

Housing remained an irritating problem for many new workers in McLennan County. The local rent board stated it was ready to address all local housing problems, and the federal government vowed publicly that it intended to erect plenty of homes for defense families.¹⁶³ Local people were encouraged to continue remodeling homes in cooperation with the reconditioning part of the War Housing Program (Fig. 11).¹⁶⁴



Fig. 11. Get Tough—I Can Take It!¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹“Glass Factory is Gearing Machines for War Material,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

¹⁶²Brady, “Baylor at War,” 53.

¹⁶³“Duration Houses for War Workers Washington Plan,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 May 1942.

¹⁶⁴“Wacoans Urged to Remodel and Help Housing Shortage,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 31 May 1942.

¹⁶⁵“Get Tough—I Can Take It!” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 April 1942.

By June 1942, the federal government reluctantly acknowledged that McLennan County had a housing problem.¹⁶⁶ New companies and military installations, including Owens-Illinois, James Connally, and Blackland air bases were causing exponential housing shortages. Meanwhile, federally imposed rent ceilings were placed on McLennan County to fight inflation. All rents were set to equal 1 March 1942 levels.¹⁶⁷

Several historians have argued that the social status of women changed dramatically during the war because women became crucial to the economy.¹⁶⁸ In McLennan County at this point in the war, however, the war's impact on the status of women workers remained to be seen.

Scrap Iron

Waco officials pledged to open a scrap iron drive in early May for McLennan County.¹⁶⁹ Scrap iron would become one of the most popular salvage drives before the end of 1942. The McLennan County Defense Council began discussions about collecting scrap iron in local neighborhoods.¹⁷⁰ A county salvage committee was soon appointed by Judge Douthit Y. McDaniel in order to centralize all local efforts with scrap iron collections.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶“Housing Building O.K.” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 7 June 1942.

¹⁶⁷“Rent Rule for Waco Are Listed,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 21 June 1942.

¹⁶⁸ Leila Rupp, *Mobilizing Women for War* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 55.

¹⁶⁹“Waco Pledges to Salvage Material for Use in Fight,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 3 May 1942.

¹⁷⁰“Defense Council to Talk Plan of Collecting Scrap,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 May 1942.

¹⁷¹“Salvage Group in County Set Up to Push Scrap Drive,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 17 May 1942.

Wacoans began donating to the scrap collections in late May 1942. Within two days more than 10,000 pounds of scrap had been collected throughout McLennan County (Fig. 12).¹⁷² The Waco newspapers boasted: “Backyards and Cow Pastures of Central Texas will Feed Hungry Munitions Factories.”¹⁷³

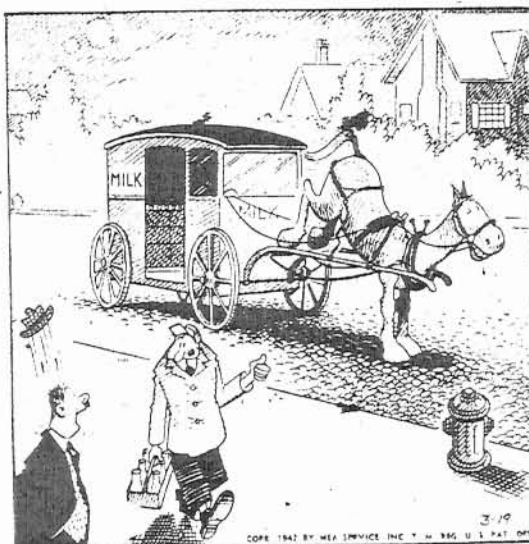


Fig. 12. “He’s saving his hoofs—he gave his rear shoes to the scrap metal collection!”¹⁷⁴

Scrap iron drives began simultaneously across the state of Texas. Texas Department of Highway’s trucks went to rural areas and hauled scrap iron into town to throw on salvage piles.¹⁷⁵ This concerted plan effectively limited rubber use, limited gasoline use, centralized scrap piles, and gave state employees new tasks.

¹⁷²“Salvaging Scrap Is Important as War Plants Push,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 24 May 1942.

¹⁷³“Tons of Scrap to Help Whip Hitler Will Be Gathered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 May 1942.

¹⁷⁴“He’s Saving His Hoofs,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 March 1942.

¹⁷⁵“Coordinated Plan for Scrap Drive Ready for Texas,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 7 June 1942.

Many local organizations joined the scrap iron drives by the middle of June 1942. The WPA was approved to do local scrap and salvage work in McLennan County.¹⁷⁶ The Waco Chamber of Commerce began to help find sponsors and help with scrap iron drives.¹⁷⁷ The Working Boys Club even began a scrap drive in East Waco.¹⁷⁸ It would prove to be the beginning of a new campaign to keep the American home front united, and another campaign to keep people focused on supporting the war.

The second quarter of 1942 reflected a nationwide effort in a year that has been dubbed by historians as the “Crucial Year.” Widespread rationing and the successful scrap drive proved this claim.

¹⁷⁶“Steel Salvage is Sponsored Here,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 28 June 1942.

¹⁷⁷“Scrap Collection Committee of C-C Hears WPB Man,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 June 1942.

¹⁷⁸“Working Boys to Help Scrap Drive,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 June 1942.

CHAPTER FOUR

A River of Grease to Fry Hitler

Federal Action

Historians agree that July, August, and September comprised the most crucial quarter of 1942. At this point the United States seemed to be losing the war. Military defeats were obvious, production levels were still low, and Americans were growing weary of supporting the Allies without repayment.¹ In Washington, funding for all government departments was inadequate. Programs were struggling, and so were political leaders.

Now federal officials considered succumbing to a national debt. Though unpopular, the national debt would grant tax relief to the people.² The war was expected to cost at least \$67 billion 0 during 1942, a gigantic strain on the federal budget.³

In Congress, the Lend-Lease Program remained popular because it advocated helping Allied nations resist the Axis Powers. But only three of the eight were self-supporting.⁴

¹David Hinshaw, *The Home Front* (New York, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1943), 115.

²"Debt Moratorium Is Hinted to Ease Heavy Tax Load," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 July 1942.

³"War Spending Will Pass 67 Billions in America this Year," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July .

⁴"U.S. Lend-Lease Pacts Help Eight Nations in Fight," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 July 1942.

The Office of Price Administration (OPA) began asking for additional funds in Congress, but the bill was not fully supported.⁵ Funding was low, even for primary war projects. The bill did eventually pass after heated debate, but funding was not as much as the OPA had requested.⁶ By July 1942, the war was costing an estimated \$1,790 per second (more than \$1 billion a week).⁷

The OPA needed direction and organization. In particular, the OPA needed more analysts to help increase and enforce production levels. The analysts needed to be able to mandate where funding should go and which companies should be watched more closely. Local McLennan County citizens were encouraged to apply for these positions.⁸

The Texas legislature was also attempting to help centralize production and readjust price ceilings. The new federal laws were extremely complicated and required more involvement from local merchants and officials.⁹ New price ceilings allowed only a 1 to 2% increase in prices.¹⁰ The new ceilings and tax levels caused many local people to criticize the government. U.S. Senator W. Lee O'Daniel from Texas encouraged people to be more understanding towards the system. The government was in a state of emergency, he explained, and Texans needed to understand it was not an easy fight.

⁵“Debate over OPA Funds Continues; Voting Due Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 July 1942.

⁶“House Completes Debate on Record War Tax Measure,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 July 1942.

⁷“War Cost \$1790 Second in July,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 August 1942.

⁸“OPA Is in Need of Industry Analysts,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 31 August 1942.

⁹“Ceilings on Stock Prices would Need Complicated New Laws,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 August 1942.

¹⁰“Wide Adjustments in Food Ceilings in Increase Cost,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 August 1942.

O'Daniel conceded, however, that Texans were not being critical of the need for sacrifices, just government bureaucracy and policies.¹¹

Directly after O'Daniel's statements, a "Victory Levy" was introduced. The Victory Levy imposed federal taxes on all people making \$624 a year.¹² This Victory Levy was endorsed because salaries had increased since the war began and the government was eager to include new taxpayers.¹³ The huge, new, tax bill was passed within a week of being proposed.¹⁴ Governor Coke Stevenson requested that no new federal taxes should be slapped on Texans, but his request was ignored.¹⁵

Soon, all speed limits were reduced to at 30 miles per hour, forcing commercial traffic to slow down.¹⁶ The U.S. government required all drivers to slow down to conserve rubber and to drive only when necessary (Fig. 13).

¹¹"W. Lee Says Texas Is Critical of U.S. Domestic Policies," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 September 1942.

¹²"5 Per Cent Tax on Income over \$624 Year O.K.," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 September 1942.

¹³"Wage Earnings Increase," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

¹⁴"Huge War Tax Bill Ready for Action in Senate," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 September 1942.

¹⁵"Stevenson Hopes No New Taxes in Texas are Needed," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

¹⁶"Authority Granted," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 September 1942.



Fig. 13. Remember—¹⁷

In effect, the government demanded that Americans pay more taxes, buy more bonds, and conserve goods, but not to criticize. Government policies during the third quarter of 1942 reflected that fact that the Allies were losing the war. For the government, as many citizens as possible should work in a defense plant, and every person should support the war effort from the time he or she rose in the morning until the time he or she went to sleep at night. Only if Americans could do that, the United States might win the war.

Local Money and Bonds

Bond sales in McLennan County during the third quarter continued to focus upon a quota. Various new activities were planned to increase sales. Other sales relied on the traditional methods that had been used for the past several months.

¹⁷“Remember-,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 July 1942.

Several of the new methods involved designating specific times during weekends for bond and stamp sales.¹⁸ Retailer Goldstien-Migel sold \$30,000 in bonds during an Independence Day bond drive.¹⁹ Other bond drives focused on raising enough money to buy a specific war item. The goal in July 1942 was for McLennan County citizens to buy two planes for the Army Air Corps.²⁰

Procrastination was certainly typical of quota drives in the third quarter. Totals were always low prior to due dates. The figures were usually several hundred thousand dollars behind until a few days before the deadline. Money rolled in just prior to a deadline, and the county usually exceeded target amounts.²¹

Already, more than \$2,500,000 in war bonds had been bought in McLennan County during the first half of 1942. Each month averaged about \$435,000. Private investors and businesses were the chief buyers.²²

Another new method of bond sales in the third quarter was conducted on 17 July 1942—a day known as “American Heroes Day.” Local people were urged to celebrate by buying war bonds.²³ Several carnival events included plane fly-overs, ringing a fire

¹⁸“Waco Firms Will Sell War Stamps 15 Minutes Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 July 1942.

¹⁹“Waco Retailers Participants in War Bond Sales,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

²⁰“\$201,488 Needed in Two Days to Buy Two Planes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

²¹“2-Bomber Bond Drive in County Far Beyond Goal,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 July 1942.

²²“\$2,541,200 Bonds Purchased during First Six Months,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 July 1942.

²³“Bond Buying will Honor U.S. Heroes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 July 1942.

truck's bell, riding in a Jeep or on an elephant, or pushing a pretty girl in a wheel barrow.²⁴ The events raised \$170,000 in bonds and stamps.²⁵

However, McLennan County residents became disgruntled about the constant increase in county taxes during 1942.²⁶ Financial woes were emerging all over the county in every form. Officials asked the federal government to give bond buyers a tax break because they were already contributing to the war effort, and because bond buyers would invest in the war if given the opportunity.²⁷

During the latter part of August 1942, many business firms pledged to spend several tens of thousands of dollars on the war effort. *The Waco News-Tribune* reported that six local firms purchased \$60,000 in bonds.²⁸ The City of Waco and the Water Board also invested profits in war bonds. The Water Board received a \$13,000 premium on its bond purchase and was set to make an \$8,000 dividend from the purchase by 1954.²⁹

The public held a bond drive titled "Salute Our Heroes" during the month of September 1942. Air raid sirens went off to signify the beginning of "Salute our Heroes" month.³⁰ A detailed radio program followed the sirens, urging people to remember

²⁴"Buy Bond, Stamps Today to Tribute America's Heroes," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 July 1942.

²⁵"\$170,000 is Bond Total for Friday," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 19 July 1942.

²⁶"McLennan Budget Due for Hearing Aug. 24, Is Slate," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 9 August 1942.

²⁷"Relief on Taxes for Bond Buyers Asked by Solons," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 August 1942.

²⁸"It Happened Yesterday...", *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 August 1942.

²⁹"Water Board Gets \$13,889 Premium in Sale of Bonds," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 August 1942.

³⁰"Everybody Yell as Sirens Blow," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 September 1942.

soldiers and buy bonds.³¹ A military glider arrived in to McLennan County later in September, to raise money as a demonstration. The admission to see the glider required the purchase of a war stamp.³²

The Shriners (the service oriented group of Freemasons) adopted a particularly creative method for fund raising. Any person walking on Austin Avenue who did not purchase a stamp or bond was placed in “jail.”³³ The following week several other civic clubs joined the fundraiser.³⁴

Another bond fundraiser included a parade with marching bands and local public officials.³⁵ Mothers and wives of soldiers were allowed to march in the parade to raise support for bond purchases.³⁶ The parade was also used to signify the beginning of National Retailer’s Day on 24 September 1942.³⁷ Retailer’s Day contributed to sales of \$75,000 in bonds in McLennan County.³⁸

³¹“Radio Appeals on Bonds Due Tonight with Big Program,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 August 1942.

³²“Stamp of Bond Buyers can See a Glider in Waco,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 September 1942.

³³“‘Jail’ for those who Fail to Take Stamps, Bonds,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 September 1942.

³⁴“Civic Clubs Join Bond Efforts as Shrine Train Due,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 September 1942.

³⁵“Three Bands Are Billed as Music for Bond Parade,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

³⁶“War Mothers and Wives to Parade Here on Sept. 24,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 September 1942.

³⁷“Big Parade will Boost War Bonds on Retailer Day,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 September 1942.

³⁸“\$75,000 in Bonds Sold as Retailers Day Staged Here,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 September 1942.

Another idea for raising war bond revenue was directed at farmers. A farmer was encouraged to take one animal and raise it for bonds. For example, of a litter of five piglets, one would be designated a “Bond Pig.” After the hog matured and was sold, the proceeds were used for a bond purchase.³⁹

An interesting news story reported in *The Waco News-Tribune* stated that Waco public schools raised \$54,598. The paper was quick to designate all the school totals. Whites-only schools donated \$54,379.80 while “Negro” schools donated \$218.45. This was a clear statement about the perceived support for of bond buying by black residents.

Nevertheless, the pursuit of unity was the main goal of bond drives, all in an attempt to reach out to every citizen and appeal to a person’s sense of patriotism.

Rubber

The third quarter of 1942 began with the culmination of a massive rubber scrap drive. Already, 334,000 tons of scrap had been retrieved across the nation.⁴⁰ By mid-July nearly a half-million tons had been collected.⁴¹ But tires still remained in short supply.

McLennan County residents were asked by the Tire Rationing Board to report any drivers they saw traveling in excess of 40 miles per hour. Any citizen who was guilty would not be allowed to receive a new tire.⁴²

³⁹“War Bonds to Be ‘Raised’ by Local Farmers in Club,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 September 1942.

⁴⁰“334,293 Tons of Scrap Rubber Are Collected so Far,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 July 1942.

⁴¹“454,155 Tons is Total on Rubber,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 July 1942.

⁴²“Speed Limits must be Observed when New Tires Sought,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 19 July 1942.

Across the nation new alternatives for rubber were being developed. Federal reports indicated that synthetic rubber should not be as expensive as many had previously feared.⁴³ The Army also developed a prototype wheel made of steel springs. Two circles were connected by a set of springs that revolved around the axel.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, around Waco several interesting examples of rationing dilemmas were reported in *The Waco News-Tribune*. One man discovered that his tires had been stolen during the night. The man demanded that his insurance company pay for his car because it was useless without tires.⁴⁵ In another case a garden hose was stolen from a front yard near downtown Waco. Since hoses were rationed, a new one was impossible to obtain.⁴⁶

Cyclists had trouble obtaining new tires in McLennan County during the middle of July. The Tire Rationing Board believed that the situation would improve soon, but it really was not sure. Cyclists had to stand in the same line as car tire applicants to obtain a new tire (Fig. 14).⁴⁷

⁴³“Synthetic Rubber Not as Expensive as First Thought,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 July 1942.

⁴⁴“Army Testing Springs for Tire Substitute,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 July 1942.

⁴⁵“Tires Stolen, Car No Good, Policy Owner Demands Full-Pay,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 July 1942.

⁴⁶“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 July 1942.

⁴⁷“Cyclists Can Now Get Wheels; Board Had Needed Forms,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 19 July 1942.

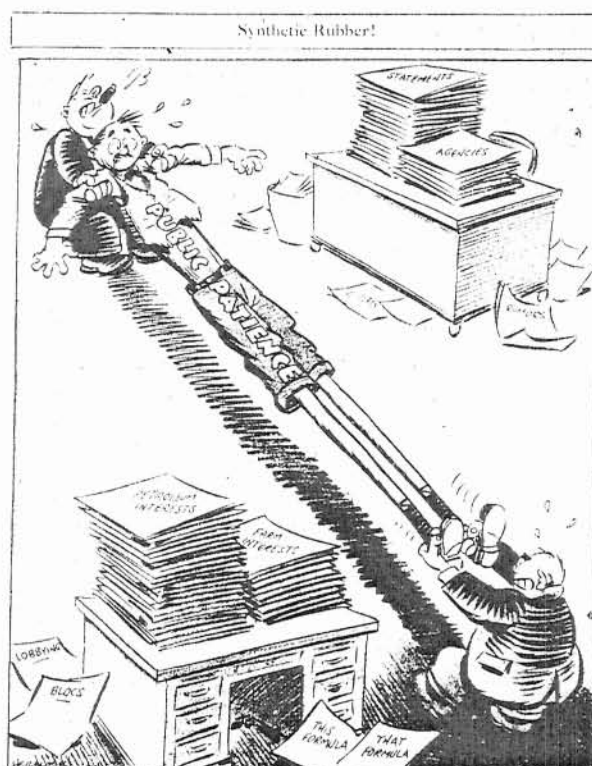


Fig. 14. Synthetic Rubber!⁴⁸

Beer and soda delivery trucks were told by the OPA that they were no longer eligible for new tires. For McLennan County this made no difference. Local beer and soda delivery trucks, had not made a request for a tire during the first half of 1942.⁴⁹

All local tire dealers were required to inventory tire supplies. The final day for registration was originally set for late July. But the McLennan County Tire Rationing Board granted an extension when it learned of a sharp decline in September's quotas.⁵⁰ Similar decreases in quotas were seen around the state.⁵¹ The McLennan County Tire

⁴⁸"Synthetic Rubber!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 August 1942.

⁴⁹"It Happened Yesterday..." *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 July 1942.

⁵⁰"Tire Dealers Get More Time to File Inventory Report," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 July 1942.

⁵¹"Tire, Tube Quota for Texas during September Is Cut," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 August 1942.

Rationing Board told the public that many residents would be upset when he or she no longer qualified for a tire.⁵²

Necessity remained the key factor for tire applicants across the nation.⁵³ Experts predicted that by October 1942 more new tires would be available for the private sector, but there would be fewer recaps available.⁵⁴ By November 1942, the speed limit would be lowered again to 35 miles per hour.⁵⁵ Mark McGee, director of the Texas Rationing Programs, stated that many people in Texas were tire-wasters and that tire shortages were only going to get worse.⁵⁶

Rubber boots became another rationed item during late September 1942. All new purchases required a coupon.⁵⁷ Rubber boots were not as big an issue as tires because farmers mainly needed boots. Farmers got most of what they needed from the McLennan County Tire Rationing Board.

Although the federal government claimed that the rubber situation was improving, in McLennan County it was dark. All available products were on the decline, and the

⁵²“Closer Ruling on Tire Eligibilities Due as Quota Cut,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 August 1942.

⁵³“Necessity to Be Deciding Factor in Rubber Factory,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

⁵⁴“More New Tires, but less Recaps Set for October,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 September 1942.

⁵⁵“35-MPH Limit Is Ordered; Rationing Due by Nov. 22,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

⁵⁶“McGee Blames Us, as Tire Wasters, for Gas Rations,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 September 1942.

⁵⁷“Rubber Boots to Be Rationed; Are Frozen Tuesday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 September 1942.

only way for the average citizen to obtain a new tire was to purchase a new one on the black market or steal one.

Automobiles

By July 1942, local authorities estimated 3,000 Wacoans had failed to obtain a car stamp, a far cry from the high levels of applications during in the first quarter.⁵⁸ As a result, the cost of a Federal Auto Tax stamp doubled for all procrastinators.⁵⁹

All McLennan County motorists were urged by state and local governments to join a nationwide pledge to conserve cars. The pledge required a driver to drive slow, drive less, and make use of public transportation.⁶⁰ McLennan County organized the “Waco War Transportation Committee” to aid all local transportation issues. The program was intended to make better use of the public transportation system.⁶¹

Some cars simply remained impossible to purchase. Nationwide, 28,000 vehicles were claimed by the government. Only 10,000 available, new cars were available for private use.⁶² Cars clearly became a luxury in 1942—a luxury even the rich could not afford.

⁵⁸“3000 Wacoans Fail to Get Car Stamp,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 July 1942.

⁵⁹“Auto Stamps Cost Double Now, Late Motorists Learn,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 August 1942.

⁶⁰“Car Owners Asked to Join Pledge for Conservation,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 July 1942.

⁶¹“Waco War Transportation Committee,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 August 1942.

⁶²“Even with Ration Card, Wacoans Are Barred from Cars,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 30 August 1942.

Gasoline and Oil

Gasoline supplies began to plummet nationwide during the early weeks of the third quarter of 1942 and continued to decline.⁶³ The prospect of constructing Texas oil pipelines cross country became a large topic of discussion in Washington D.C. But the pipelines would require enormous amounts of steel and iron yet hold minimal amounts of oil and gasoline.⁶⁴

A total of seven oil firms banded together to construct a pipeline. The investment cost millions but would save money over time.⁶⁵ Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, believed the primary line needed to be placed en route to New Jersey. The pipeline could serve as a good source of heating fuel for the Northeast during the winter.⁶⁶

In September 1942 President Roosevelt, approved nationwide gas rationing policies. Speed limits were fixed at 35 miles per hour on all highways.⁶⁷

Governor Coke Stevenson remained stubbornly opposed to gasoline rationing in Texas. Stevenson insisted that the United States would lose revenue and that it was a pointless program in Texas.⁶⁸ Texans agreed with Stevenson and decided to protest

⁶³“1,236,000 Drop in Gasoline Stocks Over U.S.,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

⁶⁴“Two Pipelines Canal to Move Oil to East Approved,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

⁶⁵“Seven Firms Will Join to Build Oil Lines from Texas,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 July 1942.

⁶⁶“Ickes Favors Oil Pipes from Texas to Jersey Sector,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 July 1942.

⁶⁷“Nation-wide Gas Rationing Gets Approval of FDR,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 September 1942.

⁶⁸“Texas Governor Is Bluntly Opposing Gasoline Rations,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 September 1942.

gasoline rationing in Texas. Rationing, Texans argued, would hurt state finances, especially education programs.⁶⁹

During the end of September 1942, rationing was imposed in the East and the Midwest.⁷⁰ Then restrictions were placed on all fuel across the nation.⁷¹ Nationwide gasoline rationing was inevitable.

Farms and Agriculture

Agricultural costs had begun to grow rapidly during the first half of 1942. Declines in numbers of farm laborers, increases in pests, and rising costs of supplies had contributed to the steady rise in costs for agriculture.

Ceilings had been placed on all mill feeds used for livestock during the beginning of 1942.⁷² Texas hog production reached an all time high during July 1942. The high levels prompted the government to worrying that inflation was starting to loom.⁷³ Ceilings were placed by the OPA on all hog prices by the end of August 1942.⁷⁴

Future Farmers of America (FFA) members from Abbott, Texas, held classes on hog butchering for residents in northern McLennan County.⁷⁵ A local hog butchering

⁶⁹“Texas Will Fight Rationing; State’s Finances Menaced,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 September 1942.

⁷⁰“Rationing of Fuel Oil Is Ordered in East, Middle West,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 September 1942.

⁷¹“New Restrictions on Fuel Oil Set,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

⁷²“Ceiling Price on Wheat Millfeeds,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 July 1942.

⁷³“Texas’ Pig Crop at Record Size,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

⁷⁴“Definite Ceiling on Hog Prices Is Planned by OPA,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 August 1942.

⁷⁵“Community Hog Improvement Plan Is begun in Abbott,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 August 1942.

was a popular method for fighting meat shortages in the city. Many local communities and neighbors took part in killings of either hogs or cattle.⁷⁶

Price ceilings were not limited to livestock during the third quarter of 1942. All agricultural production was restricted for limiting prices and wages. Early in July the government placed ceilings on all items, allowing for a 15% increase in most farm items. Inflation would still exist under the new plan but it would be controlled, monitored, and planned.⁷⁷

Cotton was ready to be harvested in McLennan County in early July 1942, but few laborers were available to pick cotton. Other local areas had reported boll weevils infesting as much as 50% of a crop. The exact amount could not be determined until the harvest.⁷⁸

Nationwide, the government boasted it was time to harvest the great cotton “Victory Crop” of 1942.⁷⁹ The problem was that the “Victory Crop” was going to be harvested with fewer workers.⁸⁰ Texas did not experience a banner year similar to the rest of the nation. Cotton production in Texas was down nearly 200,000 bales.⁸¹

⁷⁶Sandra Denise Harvey, "Charging up Bell's Hill: A Social History of a Diverse, Waco, Texas, Community in the Industrial New South" (M.A. thesis, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1995), 43.

⁷⁷"Ceilings on 1942 Farm Crop Items will Be Advanced," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 July 1942.

⁷⁸"Central and East Texas Fields Are Reporting Weevil," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 July 1942.

⁷⁹"Cotton Farmers to Pick Largest Crop in 5 Years," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 August 1942.

⁸⁰"Farm Workers to Harvest 'Victory Crop' Are Needed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 August 1942.

⁸¹"1942 Cotton Crop 200,000 Bales Off Average in Texas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 September 1942.

Bankers, teachers, and clerks were asked to help pick cotton on the weekends to ease labor shortages.⁸² Labor estimates reported that 5,000 Mexican migratory workers helped pick cotton in Central Texas.⁸³ Central Texas radio programs endorsed Mexican labor as the best solution to the local labor shortages.⁸⁴

The U.S. government estimated that 50,000 laborers were needed to harvest crops all across the Southwest.⁸⁵ The federal government imposed a minimum wage law on all migratory labor in August 1942, although it acknowledged that the extra wages might cause inflation.⁸⁶ Child labor offered another solution to the labor shortage in some areas. The minimum age established for a child laborer was 14 and a child laborer was supposed to work a limited number of hours.⁸⁷

The federal government also announced that all farm machinery production would be cut significantly.⁸⁸ Implement rationing officially began on 17 September 1942.⁸⁹ All farm machinery sales were frozen during preparation for rationing details.⁹⁰ Local

⁸²“Bankers, Clerks, Teachers to Help Pick Cotton Crop,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 August 1942.

⁸³“5000 Mexicans to Help Pick Cotton in Central Texas,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 September 1942.

⁸⁴“Radio Program on Farmers Due,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 September 1942.

⁸⁵“50,000 Laborers Needed to Gather Southwest Crops,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 July 1942.

⁸⁶“Minimum Pay for Migratory Labor on Farms Is Set,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 August 1942.

⁸⁷McConnell, “Child Labor,” 96-97.

⁸⁸“Reduction Slated in Farm Machine Production Soon,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 September 1942.

⁸⁹“Rationing of New Farm Machinery will begin Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 September 1942.

⁹⁰“Farm Machinery Frozen as Ration Details Prepared,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 September 1942.

county boards were required to know how many machines a farmer owned, all the purchases made in the period between 1940 and 1941, and the minimum needs for 1942.⁹¹ However, the less farm equipment purchased during the last several years, the more the county's farmers would need.

The year 1942 would prove to be a hard year for McLennan County farmers. Each farmer had to fight inflation, labor shortages, price ceilings, limited profits, implement reduction, and insects.

Civil Defense

Civil defense had gradually become old news in McLennan County by the third quarter of 1942. Rationing and salvage drives reflected the real enthusiasm in people's hearts. The community of West, Texas, won a rating of superior to very satisfactory for its civil defense systems from government officials.⁹² West was also one of the leading towns in McLennan County in bond sales.

County officials requested gas masks from Governor Coke Stevenson in July 1942 for local training seminars.⁹³ Stevenson agreed, and the masks were sent. The Chief Warden of McLennan County told local people if bombs began to fall, the best place to stay was in one's home.⁹⁴ The Working Boys Club painted signs and placed

⁹¹Hole, *Farm Machinery*, 2.

⁹²"West Unit Passes Inspection with Flying Colors," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 July 1942.

⁹³"Gas Masks Assured McLennan County for War Training," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 July 1942.

⁹⁴"Stay at Home if Bombs Fall, Says Air Raid Leader," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 September 1942.

them in neighborhoods to indicate where air raid wardens lived in case of an emergency.⁹⁵

Civil Defense systems were all in place and active. The only work needed in the civil defense was basic maintenance and classes to maintain fresh plans.

Victory Campaigns

The third quarter victory campaigns included several new salvage drives. These included the binocular drive, the model store of price regulation, the bandage quota, and most popular, the grease drive.

The binocular drive was organized around August 1942. McLennan County did not respond to this drive as fully as organizers had hoped. Floyd Casey donated a good pair of binoculars, but few other McLennan county citizens did. Only two donations were received by the middle of September 1942.⁹⁶ The binocular drive gained some support as the month ended, but it did not appeal to locals with the same enthusiasm of other drives.⁹⁷ The reason for the weak response was probably that binoculars were expensive, and few people could afford a pair.

A model store was also established by the Waco Chamber of Commerce during the third quarter in downtown Waco.⁹⁸ The model store represented prices local stores

⁹⁵“Working Boys Will Provide Signs for Air Warden Homes,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 September 1942.

⁹⁶“Binocular Drive Bogs Down; 2 Are Donated in Waco,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

⁹⁷“Binocular Drive Picking Up, Says Waco Collector,” *The Waco Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

⁹⁸“Waco C-C Office is Flooded with Wartime Duties,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 September 1942.

were supposed for goods and services.⁹⁹ A display was setup in the Roosevelt Hotel in downtown Waco.¹⁰⁰ *The Waco News-Tribune* reported that the “price regulation” clinic drew a big crowd, including 175 local businessmen.¹⁰¹

Another Victory Campaign focused on the bandage quota for the American Red Cross. The War Department asked McLennan County to provide 600 women volunteers to help meet the bandage quota.¹⁰² The quota had not been met by the end of September 1942, so Red Cross members began looking for more volunteers to help meet the quota. The Red Cross noted that forty of their usual volunteers had “shied” away from the program, and the organization was hurting.¹⁰³

The major Victory Campaign of the third quarter was the grease drive.¹⁰⁴ Animal fat was an essential part of making explosives.¹⁰⁵ Texas anticipated an extraordinary amount of donated fats at the beginning of the “River of Grease to Fry Hitler” campaign.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹“Model Store Will be Set Up by OPA to Display Prices,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 September 1942.

¹⁰⁰“Model Store for Ceiling Price to Attract Wacoans,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 August 1942.

¹⁰¹“Price Regulation Clinic Draws Big Audience in Waco,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 August 1942.

¹⁰²“600 Women Asked to Meet Bandage Quotas for Waco,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 16 August 1942.

¹⁰³“Red Cross Calls on More Helpers as Workers Shy,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

¹⁰⁴“Kitchen Fats and Drippings Will be Gathered for War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 July 1942.

¹⁰⁵“Wacoans Turning in Waste Fats as Campaign Started,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 July 1942.

¹⁰⁶“River of Grease to Fry Hitler is Campaign Goal,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 July 1942.

McLennan County was supported to donate 20,000 pounds of grease and fat each month once the program began.¹⁰⁷ The Waco Chamber of Commerce was excited and eager to help with the new campaign (Fig. 15)¹⁰⁸.



Fig. 15. 'Is That You Sweetheart?'¹⁰⁹

Residents were encouraged to take all excess fat and grease in an open-mouth container to the nearest market. An average coffee container held about two pounds of grease. Local markets reported that each pound of bacon grease was worth one nickel, an incentive to bring in grease.¹¹⁰ One farmer brought in 200 pounds of bacon grease.¹¹¹ Stunningly, Waco donations reached two and a half tons of bacon grease during the first

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸"Waco C-C Responds to Waste Fat Drive," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 12 July 1942.

¹⁰⁹"Is That You, Sweetheart?" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 August 1942.

¹¹⁰"Waste Fats Worth Nickel per Pound Starting Monday," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 July 1942.

¹¹¹"Old Lard Turned in to Help Slick Skids for Hitler," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 August 1942.

week of August 1942.¹¹² Every communal pig slaughter (discussed in Farm and Agriculture subsection of this chapter) was also considered important because the leftover fat could be donated.

The final Victory Campaign was not mentioned as much as grease or bandages. It concerned venereal disease. In McLennan County statistics showed that 870 of 10,000 draftable men suffered from syphilis. People were urged to be careful because at its present rate of spreading, 10% of Wacoans would have the disease in a decade.¹¹³

Sugar Rationing

Sugar rationing began during the third quarter in full force, but it was hardly a model of perfection. The sugar rationing program was strictly voluntary, so it worked about as well as expected.

Beginning in July the Office of Price Administration (OPA) announced two pound sugar bonuses for each book holder between 10 July and 22 August 1942.¹¹⁴ The Number 5 stamp in War Ration Book One was good for two pounds of sugar between 28 June and 25 July. The Number 6 stamp in War Ration Book One was also good for two pounds of sugar between 26 July and 22 August.¹¹⁵ Industrial users of sugar were granted 75% of normal sugar usage.¹¹⁶

¹¹²“Grease Collected in Drive Here Is at Two-Ton Mark,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 August 1942.

¹¹³“Venereal Disease Increase in Waco Told to Rotarians,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 August 1942.

¹¹⁴“Two-Pound Sugar ‘Bonus’ for Each Person Announced,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 July 1942.

¹¹⁵“Values of Sugar Stamps Relisted to End Confusion,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 July 1942.

¹¹⁶“Industrial Sugar Users to Receive ‘Bonus’ Allotment,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 July 1942.

The McLennan County Rationing Board, however, had not been notified about the two pound bonuses by the OPA. So all sales of the extra two pounds were withheld until formal contact.¹¹⁷ The OPA clarified the rules to the local board, and the extra two pounds was finally granted. The bonus was to last until the beginning of October 1942 for McLennan County residents, because of the late start.¹¹⁸

The government soon began to suspect that sugar supplies were not as high as previously estimated.¹¹⁹ Houston sugar refineries, however, reported that they had not seen a decrease in sugar cane amounts since the war began.¹²⁰

War Stamp Number 8 was good for five pounds of sugar during 23 August to 31 October 1942. The amount seemed to be higher than before, but it not. The only difference was that the stamp lasted longer.¹²¹

In early August 1942, a new universal rationing book was published.¹²² The purpose of this new book was to allow for rationing of new, undesignated items. These would eventually become meat and coffee, two items, the government claimed at the time, it did not plan to ration.

¹¹⁷“Rationing Board Here Not Advised of Sugar ‘Bonus’,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 July 1942.

¹¹⁸“Increased Allotments of Sugar Extended,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 9 August 1942.

¹¹⁹“Outlook on Sugar from Caribbean Is Worse, OPA Warns,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 July 1942.

¹²⁰“Sugar Rate Stationary,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 August 1942.

¹²¹“Sugar Stamp Eight Worth Five Pounds in 10-Week Period,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 August 1942.

¹²²“Universal Book for Rationing is Sent to Printer,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 August 1942.

Miscellaneous Rationing

Hundreds of items were under the control of the OPA by how. Most items needed by the civilian market had been decreased or cut all together. Prices and price controls slowly began to drift out of control. One example was fruit. The government's ceilings varied on fruit type and weight, causing some to be set at correct prices and others too high or low.¹²³

Bicycles continued to be rationed during the third quarter of 1942. The official date the rationing began was 9 July 1942.¹²⁴ The state of Texas was allowed 6,000 new bicycles between 9 July and 31 August 1942.¹²⁵ The process for receiving a new rationed bicycle was delayed in McLennan County because the forms had not arrived from Dallas on schedule.¹²⁶ The criteria for receiving a bicycle were tightened during the first part of August 1942.¹²⁷ Bicycle applicants were quickly forced to stand in line like car and tire applicants did in McLennan County.¹²⁸

¹²³“OPA Boss Appeals to Public After Solons Cut Funds,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

¹²⁴“General Rationing of Bicycles Ready,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

¹²⁵“Bicycle Rationing Begins Thursday; Texas Quota Fixed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 July 1942.

¹²⁶“Bicycle Ration Delayed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 July 1942.

¹²⁷“Bicycle Ration Rules Tightened,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 August 1942.

¹²⁸“Bicyclists Have to Stand in Line to Get Rubber,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.

Fashions were again addressed by the OPA. Men's wholesale prices were capped by the federal government at levels of March 1942.¹²⁹ Zoot Suits and Juke Coats were soon banned because of excess fabrics.¹³⁰

Nightshirts were recommended to women as an alternative to lingerie. Lingerie was considered wasteful because of excess frills and ruffles.¹³¹ Rayon hosiery was another product that was difficult for women to obtain during the war. A suggested alternative was "leg makeup" that came in a bottle.¹³² The sales were high, but real popularity remains dubious.

The War Production Board (WPB) ordered a halt on the production of a large number of kitchen appliances.¹³³ Every quarter more appliances were added to the list of rationed items. A growing trend in late August was to have old kitchen appliances repaired so they would "work like new."¹³⁴

Typewriters remained a controversial item. The general orders and policies regarding typewriters were arduous to remain familiar with because of frequent changes. Typewriter production for the general public remained banned until at least 31 October 1942.¹³⁵ The ban was extended because the government had placed an order for almost a

¹²⁹"Wholesale Prices Cut on Men's and Boy's Clothing," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 July 1942.

¹³⁰"Zoot Suits and Juke Coats due WPB Trimming," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 September 1942.

¹³¹"Nightshirts Are News," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 September 1942.

¹³²"Now! The New Leg Makeup!" *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 16 August 1942.

¹³³"WPB Orders Halt Flow of Hundreds of Common Items," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 18 July 1942.

¹³⁴"I've Had Them All Repaired...Now They Work Like New Now..." *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 August 1942.

¹³⁵"Typewriters Put on WPB Band with Oct. 31 Deadline," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 August 1942.

half million typewriters for the military, and the order had not been filled.¹³⁶ Used typewriter rentals and purchases remained heavily restricted.¹³⁷

Coffee and tea were more items in McLennan County that remained in short supply. The main reason for the shortage was the increase in population, and not a declining supply.¹³⁸ However, coffee would become a rationed item in the final quarter of 1942.

Local authorities insisted that the black market was not big in Central Texas. Despite numerous, documented tire rings and stamp-swapping, law enforcement maintained the façade that rationing was going smoothly. Robert Poage, congressman representing McLennan County during 1942, later recalled that he believed the black market was not a serious problem in McLennan County.¹³⁹ Perhaps so, but Congressman Poage could not have legally been in the county much in 1942 because of a mandate that members of Congress were not allowed to take holidays for the duration of the war.¹⁴⁰

Local War Work and Local War Housing

The Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant (BOP) had barely been open a full month, but it was already an active operation. Local papers reported on softball and bowling teams of

¹³⁶“WPB Asks 460,000 Used Typewriters for Armed Forces,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 August 1942.

¹³⁷“Rent Typewriters Must Be Returned by September 15,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 September 1942.

¹³⁸“Tea, Coffee Hike for this Region Topic of Survey,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 August 1942.

¹³⁹“Poage, Oral History, 633.

¹⁴⁰“Congress is Told No Holidays for Duration of War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 February 1942.

BOP worker leagues.¹⁴¹ BOP stated that it needed hundreds even thousands of skilled workers as soon as possible.¹⁴²

One story of interest that only made a small section of *The Waco News-Tribune* noted that electrical workers at BOP staged a walk-out on the job. Plant managers told the press nothing about the incident, and workers declined comment. All were back at work shortly after the event. Speculation about the incident involved a disagreement on a number of crew members working on a project. The actual reason remains unknown.¹⁴³

Shop class became more accepted in Texas schools for females and older adults.¹⁴⁴ Waco High School also began offering a course on sheet metal and riveting. The course was five weeks long and open to members of the community, free of charge.¹⁴⁵ Waco schools reported that twenty-four people graduated from the class (Fig. 16).¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹“Ordnance Plant Softball League Ends First-Half,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 July 1942.

¹⁴²“Aircraft Workers Are Needed, Avers Employment Man,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 August 1942.

¹⁴³“Electric Workers Stage Walkout at Bluebonnet Plant,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 July 1942.

¹⁴⁴“Co-Eds Take Over College Shop for Sheet Metal Work,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 August 1942.

¹⁴⁵“Sheet Metal Work, Riveting Will Be Topics in School,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 9 August 1942.

¹⁴⁶“24 Metal Workers to Get Diplomas Here Next Friday,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 30 August 1942.



Fig. 16. Fall In!¹⁴⁷

One of the problems with war work was that it cut into student attendance at public schools. War work was blamed for 600 school drop-outs in McLennan County during 1942.¹⁴⁸ The chief motive for dropping out was probably to supplement income.

Housing remained a huge problem in McLennan County during the third quarter of 1942. The McLennan County Rent Board estimated that about 200 families were still looking for housing.¹⁴⁹ The best temporary solution was to use trailer parks until permanent housing could be built.¹⁵⁰ BOP placed many of its workers in trailers until houses could be built.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷“Fall In!” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 September 1942.

¹⁴⁸“Work Cuts Enrollment Lists for High School,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 September 1942.

¹⁴⁹“Need for Housing in Waco Stressed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 July 1942.

¹⁵⁰“Trailer Parks in City Are Needed, Health Top Says,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 26 July 1942.

¹⁵¹“Life in a Trailer at BOP,” *Bluebonnet News*, 15 August 1942.

All rent levels were frozen in McLennan County at March 1942 levels.¹⁵² Several local tenants still complained that some landlords were gouging them.¹⁵³ All renters were required to register at the Waco Chamber of Commerce by the middle of August 1942.¹⁵⁴ The Chamber held sessions for renters, discussing their situation and providing choices for housing in McLennan County.¹⁵⁵

All rental property was also supposed to be registered to provide information on housing for the new tenants. Thousands of landlords and defense workers arrived for registration on the final day.¹⁵⁶ The local Housing Board hoped that this registration process would bring closure to the housing dilemma.

One question remains unanswered—why were more African-Americans in McLennan County not hired for defense jobs? They did not face a housing problem, and defense dollars could have trained them to learn a skill. Instead, the influx of thousands of white workers and their families caused shortages of food and housing.

Scrap Iron

Scrap Iron remained a popular target for reclamation into the third quarter of the year. Some participants might have continued collecting scrap because it was patriotic,

¹⁵²“March 1 Dwelling Charges Are Made August’s Ceiling,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 August 1942.

¹⁵³“Tenants Complain of Overcharging Rents Are Sliced,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 9 August 1942

¹⁵⁴“Rent Registration Forms Due Soon,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 August 1942.

¹⁵⁵“Rent Session to Be Held in 54th Court, Not at C-C,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 August 1942.

¹⁵⁶“1500 Register on Eve of Deadline at Rent Offices,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 September 1942.

or maybe it helped clean up a person's property. Whatever the reason, McLennan County was still filled with scrap iron.

Local people were instructed by county officials and the government rationing board to continue dumping old tin cans and scrap iron in a vacant lot at 6th Street and Mary.¹⁵⁷ The Working Boys Club volunteered to help with the scrap drives.¹⁵⁸ The Army also volunteered to assist with both manpower and trucks.¹⁵⁹

The response in McLennan County to the scrap iron and tin can drive was extremely strong.¹⁶⁰ The American Legion scrapped its flagpole as a token of patriotism.¹⁶¹ Various clubs and social organizations joined the scrap iron campaigns by ransoming an important item. The Lion's Club would typically "ransom" its club bell. The group set a goal, and if the goal was met they were allowed to keep the bell. But if the goal was not met, the bell went into the scrap pile (Fig. 17).¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷"Dump Tin Cans at 6th and Mary for War Salvage Pile," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 2 August 1942.

¹⁵⁸"Working Boys Club to Aid Salvage Campaign," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 9 August 1942.

¹⁵⁹"Army Assistance Pledged in Scrap Collection Drive," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 August 1942.

¹⁶⁰"Waco Responding Strong to Appeal to Save Tin Cans," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 August 1942.

¹⁶¹"Scrap Metal Is Club's Flagpole for Local Boys," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 23 August 1942.

¹⁶²"Trucks Will Pick Up Metal; Bell to Be Ransomed Out," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 September 1942.



Fig. 17. If We Really Mean Business¹⁶³

The newspaper was riddled with stories of huge amounts of scrap metal being found. Most scrap collection trucks averaged between one and two tons a day during September 1942.

Children in local schools continually went out to find scrap metal. Some were commissioned as “Junior Rangers.”¹⁶⁴ The children around the state were designated to begin bringing scrap metal to school on 5 October 1942.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³“If We Really Mean Business,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 September 1942.

¹⁶⁴“Million Students in Texas to Join Scrap Metal Push,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

¹⁶⁵“School Children Will Help Gather Vital Scrap Iron,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 September 1942.

The Waco newspaper urged people to “bring in scrap so your boy can have weapons for battle.”¹⁶⁶ When finding items to scrap, one pressing iron would allegedly equal three hand grenades, an ice box would equal twelve Thompsons, a pail would equal three bayonets, a trash can would equal two M1 rifles, and a stove or electric range would equal ten artillery shells.¹⁶⁷

Meat

Meat shortages began to occur on the East Coast during late July.¹⁶⁸ Soon, other areas of the country began to report the same problem.¹⁶⁹ The federal government believed meat production was at an all-time record, but officials began preparing for rationing just in case the situation changed.¹⁷⁰ Meat rationing was suddenly announced for the nation on the first day of September (Fig. 18).¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶“Bring in Scrap so Your Boy Can Have Weapons for Battle,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1942.

¹⁶⁷“Here’s what Your Scrap Metal Can Do,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 September 1942.

¹⁶⁸“Housewives Face Acute Shortages of Meat in the East,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 July 1942.

¹⁶⁹“Shortage of Meat in Several Cities—in U.S. Reported,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 July 1942.

¹⁷⁰“Meat Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 August 1942.

¹⁷¹“Coupon System on Beef, Pork, Etc., in 4 Months Ordered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 September 1942.

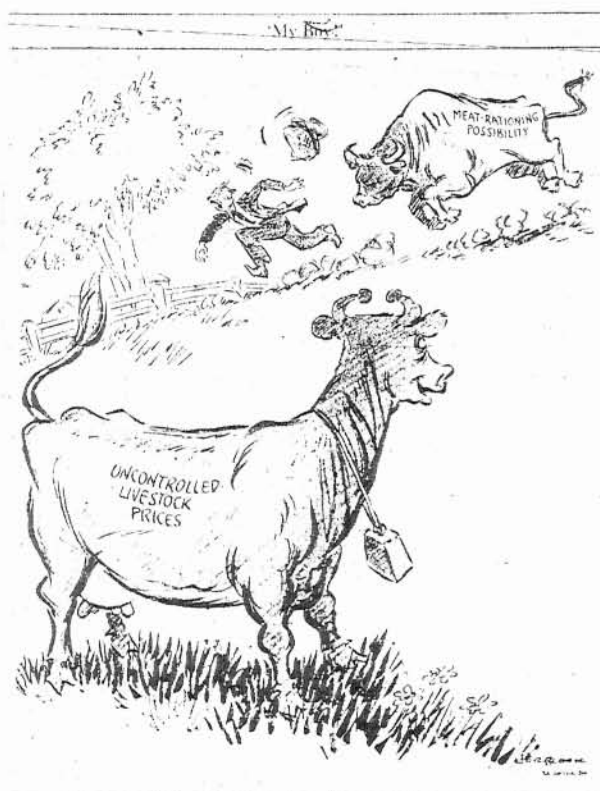


Fig. 18. 'My Boy!' ¹⁷²

Meat rationing was based on a coupon system, similar to sugar. It was scheduled to begin in early 1943.¹⁷³ Fish dealers eagerly claimed that they could easily fill the call for an adequate source of meat to the public.¹⁷⁴ Local cooking contests were held to find good replacement dinners for beef and pork.¹⁷⁵ The government suggested potatoes as a

¹⁷²"My Boy!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 August 1942.

¹⁷³"Coupon System on Beef," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 September 1942.

¹⁷⁴"Fish Dealers can Fill in on Meats," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 September 1942.

¹⁷⁵"Meat Substitute Offered by Mount Calm Woman Wins," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 September 1942.

good substitute for beef.¹⁷⁶ A ceiling on beef would be established on the first day of October 1942, and meat rationing might be imposed early, possibly by November.¹⁷⁷

America and her allies were still losing the war. Government leaders remained convinced that the only way for the American people to avoid despair was to continue sacrificing in a totally patriotic, unified effort.

¹⁷⁶“Falling in Love Substitute for Steak, Potatoes.” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 August 1942.

¹⁷⁷“Meat Rationing Seen in 20 Days,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 September 1942.

CHAPTER FIVE

Rationing Sand in the Sahara

Federal Action

The federal government began the final quarter of the year in another financial dilemma. Americans would have plenty of food for the duration of the war, but there was still much to do elsewhere.¹

President Roosevelt announced another anti-inflation law to fix wages.² A new emergency price ceiling was also passed by Congress during the same period. The new ceiling set fruit prices at the highest levels between 28 September and 2 October 1942.³

A new "Victory Tax" was also enacted during the first half of October 1942. The new tax was set at 5% on any income over \$12 a week, or \$624 a year.⁴ This tax bill was, like many others in 1942, the largest in history.⁵ Two months later in December, Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., warned the American people more taxes and hardships would come during the war.⁶

¹"Nelson Says U.S. Will Have Enough Food During War," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 October 1942.

²"Anti-Inflation Bill Signed; FD Will Act Today," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 October 1942.

³"60-Day Emergency Price Ceiling Set on All Food Items," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

⁴"Record Tax Bill Voted in Senate," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 October 1942.

⁵"Biggest Tax Bill in History Given Conferees' Okeh," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

⁶"Warns Americans Heavier Taxes to Come during the War," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 December 1942.

New ceilings were placed on holiday foods in November and December 1942.

Turkey, onions, and potatoes were some of the foods on the list.⁷ The government informed the general public that the war did not take “holidays.” Employees were encouraged to continue working hard during the holiday months.⁸

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt continued encouraging people to involve themselves in volunteerism in order to help shorten the war because it increased production.⁹ The Senate believed that the working public was not producing at full potential. The government clearly wanted more production at less cost.¹⁰

One year after Pearl Harbor, the national debt reached a staggering \$100 billion.¹¹ The total number of American dead was nearly 60,000.¹² But the American people remained more unified than ever before in history (Fig. 19).

⁷“New Ceiling Fixed on Three Items on Turkey Day Menus,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 November 1942.

⁸“Thanksgiving and Christmas Cannot Delay Army Work,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

⁹“Can Shorten War,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹⁰“Manpower Waste in Government is Charged by Solon,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 November 1942.

¹¹“U.S. Public Debt Now Past 100 Billion Mark,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 December 1942.

¹²“U.S. Casualties Total 58,307 in First War Year,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 December 1942.



Fig. 19. The Jackpot!¹³

The federal government stated openly that industry had fallen short of its wartime goals for 1942.¹⁴ As a result, the federal government wanted an increase in the ranks of the military services and defense work to 65 million people before the end of 1943.¹⁵ The numbers were astounding, considering the economy was on the verge of runaway inflation and experiencing chronic labor shortages.

Historians describe the nationwide war effort during the winter of 1942 as a failure. The government had still not formulated a successful plan for centralizing

¹³"The Jackpot!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 December 1942.

¹⁴"U.S. War Output in 1942 Short of Mammoth Goal," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 December 1942.

¹⁵"65 Million People Needed in Armed Service, War Work in 1943," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 December 1942

production and mobilizing labor.¹⁶ If government leaders wanted its mammoth goals reached, perhaps each bureaucrat should have taken a sheet metal course offered at a local school and volunteered to help the war effort.

Local Money and Bonds

Bond sales in McLennan County retained the three characteristics of previous quarters—quotas, drives, and procrastination. The primary addition was the Community War Chest, which was designed to serve two purposes: local needs and war needs.¹⁷ Bruce Duncan, a local businessman, was named as the head of the Community War Chest.¹⁸ The program initially had difficulty getting started.¹⁹ It was seen at first as another program in an already jumbled environment. The Community War Chest allowed each donor to choose which organization received the funds.²⁰ Women were welcomed to join the War Chest's Women's Board.²¹ The main purpose was to cover the entire county.

Once the War Chest was formally organized, industries, people, and local social clubs all supported it. The public expected donated funds to grow quickly because the

¹⁶Anthony, *Out of the Kitchen*, 46.

¹⁷"Advantages of a 2-Purpose Chest Drive Are Shown," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 October 1942.

¹⁸"Chest Committee Meetings Slated Early this Week," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

¹⁹"Four Meetings on Chest this Week," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 October 1942.

²⁰"Chest Committee Meetings Slated," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

²¹"Members of Chest Women's Central Committee Named," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 October 1942.

programs had already won the confidence of so many businesses and local citizens (Fig. 20).²²

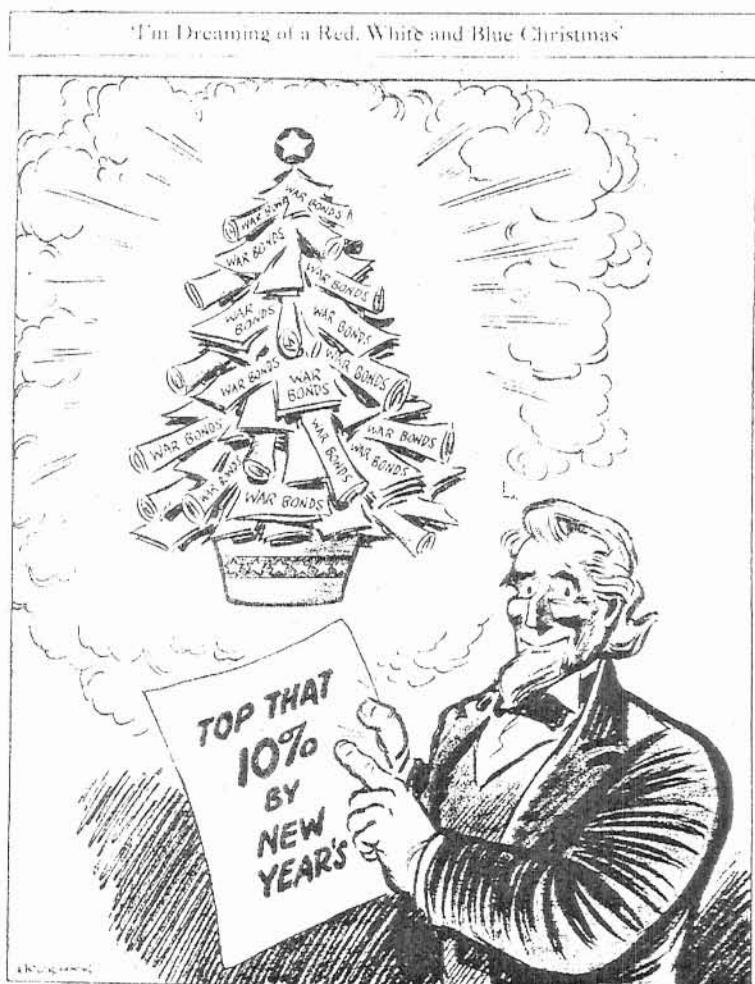


Fig. 20. 'I'm Dreaming of a Red, White and Blue Christmas'²³

The War Chest was soon a complete success, raising nearly \$65,000 by the end of the first week in November 1942.²⁴ Two weeks into the program, it had already hit its

²²"War Chest Will Fill Up Quickly," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 November 1942.

²³"I'm Dreaming of a Red, White, and Blue Christmas," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 December 1942.

²⁴"65,554 Given for War Chest," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 November 1942.

goal for 1 January 1943.²⁵ The ambitious new War Chest responded by setting a new goal of about a half-million dollars by Pearl Harbor Day 1942. The new goal proved too high, however, and the War Chest missed its target by about \$200,000.²⁶ Clearly, McLennan County residents had limited funds to last a month. Most people who had already purchased several hundred dollars in bonds were unlikely to purchase more.

The Shriners held a Shriner's Ball to raise money for bond sales. The price of admission was one \$100 war bond purchase.²⁷ The ball reported that it rose over \$60,000 in bond sales.²⁸

Despite all of the bond purchases and tax increases, the federal government warned people to prepare for even more in taxes during 1943.²⁹ The government's answer on how to save money was, naturally, to buy war bonds.³⁰

Sales of bonds also helped to commemorate Pearl Harbor Day.³¹ Employers were encouraged to use bonds as a Christmas bonus.³² People were encouraged to give bonds

²⁵“War Chest Total Passes \$120,676,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 November 1942.

²⁶“Heavy Bond Sales on Week End Help County Campaign,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 December 1942.

²⁷“\$100 War Bond Is Admission Price for Karem Dance,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 November 1942.

²⁸“Over \$60,000 in Bonds Issued for Shriners' Dance,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 November 1942.

²⁹“Constant Saving to meet increase in Taxes Urged,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 17 December 1942.

³⁰“More Bond Buying to Avert Increased Taxation is Urged,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 31 December 1942.

³¹“Waco Must Answer Dec. 7 Treachery with Bond Buying,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 December 1942.

³²“Change Bonus to War Bonds, Urges County, Chairman,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 December 1942.

to friends and family for Christmas.³³ Despite these bond drives, McLennan County ended 1942 struggling to make its goal and remained \$100,000 short at the last minute.³⁴ Obviously, McLennan County residents had endured a tough financial year in 1942.

Rubber

The final quarter began with all used tires being placed under rationing laws.³⁵ All local tire dealers were required to turn in their inventory sheets by 15 October 1942 so that the local rationing board could have an accurate count of available tires in the county.³⁶

The speed limit in Texas was lowered to 35 miles per hour in October 1942.³⁷ The government endorsed this because tires lasted longer at slower speeds. One Waco man was arrested during the first week of the new speed limit for traveling 70 miles per hour. The man was fined \$10 and became ineligible for a new tire or a gas rationing card (Fig. 21).³⁸

³³“Christmas Gifts of War Bonds to help Hike Total,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 December 1942.

³⁴“120,000 in Bonds Needed Today for December Quota,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 28 December 1942.

³⁵“Used Tired to be Rationed: Stocks now Held Frozen,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 October 1942.

³⁶“Tire Dealers must turn in Inventory Report by Oct. 15,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 October 1942.

³⁷“35 MPH Limit on All Highways in Texas is Ordered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 October 1942.

³⁸“It Happened Yesterday...” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 October 1942.



Fig. 21. 'Thanks for the Lift!'³⁹

The prices of used tires varied from \$1.50 for old, bald tires to \$11.15 for a slightly used tire.⁴⁰ McLennan County Rationing Board members asked local people to buy or donate used tires to help the county shortages. A total of 137 tires were donated or sold in Waco in response.⁴¹

The motivation of county residents to donate or sell their extra tires probably came from a required form applicants had to sign prior to receiving a new tire. Each applicant had to reaffirm that he or she was not in possession of more than one spare tire per vehicle. Every person with an excess supply of tires would also be denied a gas rationing card.⁴² Legislation was passed during early October 1942 that made any private

³⁹"Thanks for the Lift!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 December 1942.

⁴⁰"Prices Range from \$1.50 to \$11.15 for Tires," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 October 1942.

⁴¹"137 Extra Tires Are Surrendered," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 October 1942.

⁴²*Ibid.*

transaction of used tires illegal. The rationing board was now the only place to take used tires.⁴³

The McLennan County Tire Rationing Board stated that there should be an adequate amount of tires for local residents. The tire drive made it possible for more tires to be available for farmers.⁴⁴ An additional part of the new program stipulated that anyone caught with more tires than he or she was allotted would not be eligible for a gasoline card.⁴⁵

Because of the new rationing, alternatives to the traditional tire were soon conjured up around the country. One innovative idea was the tubeless tire.⁴⁶ The Texas Department of Public Safety began testing the new tubeless tires on their patrol cars during late November 1942.⁴⁷

A tire-theft ring was broken up in Central Texas during November 1942. Marlin police arrested a tire ring that had been operating all over Central Texas.⁴⁸ Authorities reported that the ring was responsible for several tire thefts in McLennan County.⁴⁹

⁴³“Sale or Gift of Used Tires since Oct 1. Is Illegal,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 29 October 1942.

⁴⁴“Tire Dealers can Stock Up to Meet Relaxed Rations,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

⁴⁵“No Ration Cards to Autoists who Have Extra Tires,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 10 November 1942.

⁴⁶“Test ‘Tubeless Tire,’” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 November 1942.

⁴⁷“State Police Will Try Out Tubeless Tires on 250 Cars,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 November 1942.

⁴⁸“Six Men Held in Jail after Tire Theft Ring Found,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 November 1942.

⁴⁹“No Complaint Yet Filed on Suspects Theft Ring here,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 November 1942.

Rubber rationing and shortages created many skeptics across the nation. One of the bitterest of all was Coke Stevenson. Governor Stevenson wanted proof of a rubber shortage. He did not believe rationing was necessary because over 310,000 tons of rubber had been shipped out of the country. The rubber, he argued, should have been left in the country to alleviate local shortages.⁵⁰ The state of Texas began inventorying tires in December 1942.⁵¹ The federal government had threatened that it might need to confiscate spare tires from private individuals but the state of Texas saw no reason for such drastic action.⁵²

Meanwhile, the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant (BOP) in McGregor, urged all employees to walk more, make each tire support a passenger, drive more slowly, rotate tires every 2,500 miles, make gradual stops and starts, and have wheels realigned every 2,500 miles.⁵³ BOP was also one of the few industries in McLennan County where an employee might qualify for a tire. The BOP tire conservation campaign demonstrated a sense of responsibility not to take advantage of that benefit.

By now, nearly one year had passed since the beginning of rationing, but the situation was much the same as on the first day. Tires were in short supply in McLennan County. Local people were repeatedly encouraged to limit tire usage by car-pooling, walking more, or using public transportation. Clearly, the federal government had made

⁵⁰“Stevenson Wants Proof of Rubber Shortage in U.S.,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 December 1942.

⁵¹“Tire Inventory Now under Way,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 December 1942.

⁵²“U.S. May Have to Take Spare Tires, Jeffers Declares,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 December 1942.

⁵³“How to Save Rubber,” *Bluebonnet News*, 5 December 1942.

little progress and it remained in a state of disorganization. Fortunately, local boards had learned how to deal fairly well with this great, headless leviathan.

Automobiles

In early October 1942, *The Waco News-Tribune* and *The Waco Times-Herald*, the sister papers of Waco, launched a "Share the Ride" Campaign in McLennan County. Residents were encouraged to place an ad in the papers posting information about where he or she lived and where he or she worked. Readers replied if the advertisement matched his or her destination and origin.⁵⁴ The carpooling idea was pushed by the Waco Junior Chamber of Commerce as an effective local transportation measure.⁵⁵

New automobiles remained difficult to obtain. Damaged cars were usually forced to stay on the roads because there was no way to replace them. The specific justification for another car required a damaged car frame.⁵⁶ Cars were perhaps the most difficult item to obtain during the war, even more than a cup of sugar, a rib eye steak, a gallon of gasoline, or a bald tire.

Gasoline and Oil

By now gas rationing was inevitable. President Roosevelt had vowed in the previous quarter that gas rationing would take effect to prevent increased shortages. The

⁵⁴"Share Your Car," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 October 1942.

⁵⁵"'Share the Ride' Plan is Pushed as Transport Help," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 November 1942.

⁵⁶"ODT Certificate Isn't Issued on Passenger Autos," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 16 November 1942.

federal government also stated, however, that it would also be mindful if some states did not want to participate.⁵⁷

In mid-October, W. E. Terrell was named head of the McLennan County gas rationing board.⁵⁸ Registration for gas rationing was set to begin nationwide on 9 November 1942.⁵⁹ In preparation, local authorities had the traffic lights on Austin Avenue timed for quicker sequence to help conserve gasoline and ease the flow of traffic.⁶⁰

The new members of the McLennan County Gas Rationing Board were sent to Fort Worth to learn about the new rules and details of gas rationing from the Office of Price Administration's Texas directors.⁶¹ Gasoline registration was set for 12-14 November 1942.⁶² Rationing cards were issued at local schools by teachers and staff.⁶³ The only exception was applicants for the T Ration book. Those applicants were sent to the Waco Chamber of Commerce.⁶⁴

⁵⁷“Flexible Gasoline Rations Pledged by Rubber Chief,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 October 1942.

⁵⁸“W.E. Terrell to Head Gas Ration Board in County,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 October 1942.

⁵⁹“Registration for Gas Rationing to Start on Nov. 9,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

⁶⁰“Signal Lights on Quicker Time Experiment Here,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 October 1942.

⁶¹“County Boards to Learn Gas Ration Details from OPA,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 October 1942.

⁶²“Texas Car Owners Register for Gas Cards Nov. 12-14,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 October 1942.

⁶³“Schools Will Close 3 Days Next Week for Gas Sign-Up,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 November 1942.

⁶⁴“Farmers, Rush to Get Help on Gas Application,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 November 1942.

Applicants needed a vehicle ownership certificate, tire serial numbers, and a complete application to receive a gas ration book. Anyone who failed to meet these requirements would be denied his or her gas ration book.⁶⁵

The books were divided into several varieties based upon the needs of the applicants and the relevance of the applicant's job to the war effort. Ration Book A contained 32 coupons. Book A was designed for 240 miles per month and was the most common book for non-war work applicants. Ration Book B contained 16 coupons. Book B was designed for 320 miles per month. Ration Book C contained up to 96 coupons and was designed for people who drove more than 470 miles per month. Additional coupons could be obtained from the local rationing board if not enough were provided. Ration Book D was designed for motorcycles and contained 48 coupons. Book D allowed 240 miles per month. The final option was Ration Book T. Ration Book T was divided into Ration Book T1 and Ration Book T2. Book T1 held 96 coupons and T2 held 384. Book T1 and Book T2 were designed for trucks, buses, taxis, hearses, and tractors.⁶⁶

McLennan County registration dates were set at 19-21 November 1942. All rationing would be delayed until 1 December 1942.⁶⁷ As a result, McLennan County residents were urged to do all their Christmas shopping early.⁶⁸

In mid-November, the head of the Office of Price Administration in Washington, D.C., Leon Henderson, informed Texans that they would have to supply gasoline to the

⁶⁵"Necessary Papers of Obtaining Gas Cards Are Listed," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 November 1942.

⁶⁶"A, B, C's of Mileage Rationing," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 November 1942.

⁶⁷"Start of Gasoline Rations Delayed until December 1," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 November 1942.

⁶⁸"Shop Now before Gas Is Rationed, Wacoans Advised," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 November 1942.

rest of the nation and the Allies. He declared that Texas should not be allowed to hoard gasoline and dodge gasoline rationing.⁶⁹ Texans, however, were still adamant about clarifying why their gasoline had to be rationed, because many did not see the point.⁷⁰ Gas rationing did officially occur on 19 November 1942 but ended two days later.⁷¹

Many local Texans were not pleased with the Ration Book A. Book A allowed four gallons of gasoline for each car during a week. Most McLennan County residents believed that they were entitled to more gasoline than four gallons a week. The McLennan County Gasoline Rationing Board expected 95% of all Ration Book A holders to file for an increase in gasoline amounts.⁷² Tardy applicants automatically received Ration Book A.⁷³

People who owned cars were also required to fill out registration cards for gas-operated machines they owned.⁷⁴ In late November, all gas rationing levels were set to remain the same until the end of 1942 (Fig. 22).⁷⁵

⁶⁹“Driving as Usual or Victory Choice in Gas Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 November 1942.

⁷⁰“Texans Asking More Time for Gas Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 November 1942.

⁷¹“Registration for ‘A’ Cards for Gas Will Begin Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 November 1942.

⁷²“Extra Gas Is Big Headache Now to Rationing Board,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

⁷³“Tardy Motorists Can Get A Cards Starting Friday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942.

⁷⁴“Men to File for Non-Driving Gas,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

⁷⁵“No Change in Fuel Oil Rations over Next Five Weeks,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.



Fig. 22. Back to an Old American Idea⁷⁶

Governor Coke Stevenson stood resolved that Texas did not need gas rationing.⁷⁷

U.S. Senator W. Lee O'Daniel agreed, proclaiming that rationing gasoline in Texas was like "rationing sand in the Sahara."⁷⁸

Hoarders were out in full-force buying gasoline the day before gas rationing took effect. One woman was reported to have been filling up half-gallon mason jars with gasoline. The newspaper warned local people that any house with more than five gallons

⁷⁶"Back to an Old American Idea," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 December 1942.

⁷⁷"Officials of Texas Watch Progress of Gas Ration Fight," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

⁷⁸"O'Daniel Declares Gas Rationing Is 'Bureaucratic Edict,'" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 November 1942.

of gasoline inside was considered a fire hazard and automatically negated home insurance.⁷⁹

Law enforcement officers were tough on violators of gas rationing policies. Anyone caught using gas rationing stamps on the wrong car was subject to a large fine.⁸⁰ A person caught buying gasoline without a stamp was subject to jail and a \$10,000 fine.⁸¹

Fortunately, downtown Waco retailers claimed that gas rationing did not hurt sales during the Christmas season.⁸² Taxis reported a 40% increase in business. Callers were told to be patient because their wait might be long at times.⁸³

Clearly, gasoline quickly became a controversial item in McLennan County and throughout Texas. Although not quite like “rationing sand in the Sahara,” it was a highly dubious policy.⁸⁴

Farm and Agriculture Production

Farm labor remained a big challenge in the final quarter of 1942. Local officials began October 1942 disputing how many additional workers McLennan County needed.

⁷⁹“Motorist Crams Fruit Jars with Precious Liquid,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 December 1942.

⁸⁰“Using Gas Stamps from another Car Subject to Fine,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 December 1942.

⁸¹“Gas Coupons Must Be Removed When Hoarded Gas Used,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 December 1942.

⁸²“Gasoline Curbs Fail to Hinder Yule Customers,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 December 1942.

⁸³“40 Per Cent Hike in Taxi Business since Gas Ration,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 December 1942.

⁸⁴“O’Daniel Declares Gas Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 November 1942.

Some believed the problem had been solved while others argued that farmers needed 500 more workers.⁸⁵

By now, the federal government had promised to establish subsidies to ease the shortage of farm labor nationally.⁸⁶ The federal government also promoted a new slogan: “till soil or fight!” to induce non-drafted men to work.⁸⁷ Senator Wheeler of Montana feared there would be a shortage of food in the upcoming years because of the lack of field hands.⁸⁸ The federal government hoped for an increase in private gardens and vegetable production in case there was a shortage of food.⁸⁹

Locally, production levels were normal but labor and cotton were pressing issues. One interesting case involved a local man, his wife, and their children. The wife reported to police that her husband had kept their children out of school and forced them to pick cotton during the day. He had then taken the cotton, and sold it to purchase whiskey, and returned home intoxicated.⁹⁰

Local officials predicted that a fourth of farms in nineteen Central Texas counties would be unable to produce anything in 1943 because of labor shortages.⁹¹ The federal

⁸⁵“County Agent, Job Office Disagreed on Pickers Needs,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 October 1942.

⁸⁶“Subsidization to Ease Shortage of Farm Laborers,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 October 1942.

⁸⁷“Varied Proposals to Keep Labor on Farms Viewed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 October 1942.

⁸⁸“Wheeler Asking Farm Deferments,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

⁸⁹“Goals for Winter Vegetables Fixed,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

⁹⁰“It Happened Yesterday...,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 October 1942.

⁹¹“Fourth of Farms Will Be Idle for Lack of Workers,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942.

government asserted an opposing opinion. The Department of Welfare, even accused Texas of hoarding most of the Mexican migrant labor and keeping it from other states.⁹²

A 1942 government publication advised farmers to look to several places for more labor. Farmers were encouraged to recruit volunteer townsmen, volunteer housewives, Sunday workers, city boys, or factory workers. The publication urged the hiring of any able person.⁹³

Local farmers were required to report to a Farm Machinery Rationing Board beginning in the final quarter to authorize all new purchases of wheel barrows, stock cutters, and plows.⁹⁴ J. S. Pipkin, owner of Pipkin Drug Store, was named chairman of the McLennan County Farm Machinery Rationing Board. Twenty-six permits were issued during the first week.⁹⁵

McLennan County residents were asked to focus on producing poultry during the 1942 holiday season. Local farmers were urged to produce turkeys for extra money. The federal government had placed a ceiling on turkey, but it was still legal to raise and sell the birds.⁹⁶

⁹²“Charge that Texas is Hoarding Farm Workers is Denied,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 November 1942.

⁹³U.S. Department of Commerce, *Small Town Manual for Community Action* (Washington D.C.,: Government Printing Office, 1942), 3-5.

⁹⁴“Farm Machinery Board is Ready to OK Purchases,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

⁹⁵“Farm Machinery Permits Issued for 26 Citizens,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 October 1942.

⁹⁶Tom Harper, “Money to Farmer in Turkeys when Cared for Right,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

The cotton gin totals for McLennan County in 1942 reached 33,371 bales, compared to 29,413 bales in 1941.⁹⁷ The amounts were apparently unaffected by the alleged labor shortages that had been plaguing the county.

Gasoline remained a large concern for many local farmers. The federal government, assured farmers nationwide that plenty of gas would be available for agriculture.⁹⁸ Two government agencies were formed in late 1942 to monitor agricultural gasoline.⁹⁹

Several conditions had become clear about agriculture in McLennan County during 1942. First, farmers had fewer laborers but had still managed to produce more cotton than when farms had plenty of labor. Second, local farmers needed access to new implements for better production. Finally, farmers did not want or need in any more government misinformation and red-tape.

Civil Defense

The beginning of October 1942 saw additional instruction for raid wardens. The classes taught wardens how to tell a live bomb from a dud.¹⁰⁰ McLennan County air raid wardens also engaged in various other types of training and practice raids to refresh their knowledge.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 December 1942.

⁹⁸“Ample Gas Pledged Again for Farmer, Essential Workers,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

⁹⁹“Temporary Moves to Meet Farmers’ Gas Need Ordered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 December 1942.

¹⁰⁰“Bomb Instruction School Opens for Wacoans Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 October 1942.

¹⁰¹“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 December 1942.

Fire prevention became a big part of the war effort in Central Texas during 1942.¹⁰² Four firemen were added to the Waco Fire Department in October to replace others who had gone to war.¹⁰³ Several forms of training were held for firemen in Waco and neighboring communities.¹⁰⁴

The Junior Chamber of Commerce decided not to place Christmas lights downtown during December 1942. Installing the lights would require labor the Junior Chamber of Commerce believed could be better utilized for the war effort.¹⁰⁵

Texas officials toured the state in late November 1942 testing local civil defense systems.¹⁰⁶ The tests focused on evaluating leaders in the hierarchy of the local civil defense networks.¹⁰⁷ The state officials reported that Waco passed as a total success.¹⁰⁸

Victory Campaigns

As winter approached in 1942, local firewood became hard to obtain because of labor shortages. Firewood drives began as a result.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰²“Fire Prevention Appeals Are Sent Out by Waco C-C,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 October 1942.

¹⁰³“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 October 1942.

¹⁰⁴“Wartime Training for Firemen will Be Given in Waco,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹⁰⁵“No Yule Lights on Waco Streets in War Season,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹⁰⁶“Several Defense Organizations to Test Raid Duties,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.

¹⁰⁷“Air Raid Test Is for Leaders Only, at Control Rooms,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 December 1942.

¹⁰⁸“Air Raid Test in Waco Is Success,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 December 1942.

¹⁰⁹“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 October 1942.

The Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant (BOP) sponsored some of the most ambitious fire wood drives to help the situation.¹¹⁰ The Optimists and Lion's Club helped the shortage by sponsoring a caravan to McGregor to retrieve the wood on a Sunday morning in October.¹¹¹ A total of fifteen trucks were ready to help haul the wood, with more expected.¹¹² The number of trucks grew to twenty-four prior to departure.¹¹³ *The Waco News-Tribune* reported the next day that thirty-three truckloads of firewood "for Waco's poor" arrived "just in time for the norther."¹¹⁴

People were encouraged to chop their own Yule logs in 1942. Labor shortages made it unlikely for a person to purchase one. Cordwood was also reported as scarce in 1942.¹¹⁵

In early October, mail collection times were reduced to once a day to save tires and gasoline used by mail trucks.¹¹⁶ The Waco Post Office reported that 1942 was already a record year for sending air packages.¹¹⁷ Officials urged citizens to mail

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹¹"Wood Caravan to McGregor Slated for Next Sunday," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

¹¹²"15 Trucks Ready to Help Haul in Wood for Needy," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 October 1942.

¹¹³"Wood Caravan to Roll at 7:45 A.M. on Charity Haul," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 25 October 1942.

¹¹⁴"It Happened Yesterday," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 October 1942.

¹¹⁵"Chop your Own Yule Logs this Christmas Time," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 December 1942.

¹¹⁶"Mail Collection Reduced to Save Tires on Trucks," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

¹¹⁷"Waco's Air Mail Receipts Add up to Record Total," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

Christmas cards by the first day of December to provide plenty of time for delivery.¹¹⁸

Christmas shoppers were also encouraged to mail packages early and do all their shopping early (Fig. 23).¹¹⁹



Fig. 23. Everything's Moving Faster These Days¹²⁰

Baylor's Homecoming Parade was modified to accommodate the war effort during 1942. Floats were allowed, but rubber tires and gasoline engines could not be used.¹²¹ The maximum cost for a float was set at \$5.00.¹²² The Baylor Homecoming

¹¹⁸"Yule Cards Ought to Be in Mail by Dec. 1, Warning," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹¹⁹"Shop, Mail Early," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 13 November 1942.

¹²⁰"Everything's Moving Faster these Days," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

¹²¹"No Tires, No Gas Will Be Used in Baylor's Parade," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 11 October 1942.

¹²²Brady, "Baylor at War," 60.

Queen rode in an elegant horse and carriage.¹²³ Baylor President Pat Neff hoped the change in the parade would encourage the public to embrace conservation and rationing.¹²⁴

Local public schools held “Victory Concerts” to encourage local bond and stamp sales.¹²⁵ The admission fee for a concert was usually a ten-cent war stamp. These were repeated often throughout the Waco School District.¹²⁶

With Christmas approaching, local newspapers began reporting updates for children about Santa Claus’s situation. In early November *The Waco News-Tribune* warned children that Santa was substituting tin and metal toys with wood in 1942. The metal was needed for the war effort.¹²⁷ A week later the newspaper reported that Santa was also experiencing a problem obtaining sugar candy and chocolate in 1942.¹²⁸ Children were informed two days later that Santa had placed war stamps and bonds at the top of his list as presents.¹²⁹

Another program aimed at young people was a curfew for teenage girls. Waco pastors requested a curfew for all teenage girls because of their reputed activities during

¹²³“Baylor’s Parade for Homecoming Queen Due Today,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 October 1942.

¹²⁴Brady, “Baylor at War,” 60.

¹²⁵“Victory Concert Series Repeated by Waco Schools,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

¹²⁶“Victory Concert on Schedule for Tuesday Night,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 October 1942.

¹²⁷“Santa Claus Goes in for Wood Toys; War Takes Metal,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 November 1942.

¹²⁸“Santa Claus is Threatened with Candy Shortage,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹²⁹“Santa Claus to Put War Stamps on Gift Roster,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942.

the night.¹³⁰ Nationwide, promiscuous teens had begun wandering the streets at night.¹³¹ Some locals believed that the new defense plants and military bases might case teenage waywardness in McLennan County. Alcohol was another item parents targeted as dangerous to their innocent daughters. The only proper way to address the issue was to place a curfew on all teenage girls.¹³² Judge McDaniel, however, ruled that a curfew was not necessary. Instead, parents should tend to their children in a better way.¹³³ The judge did call on the local county juvenile board to consider the problem.¹³⁴

The war became a blessing and a curse for McLennan County. The high-paying new jobs at BOP were a blessing, but the uncontrolled actions of teenagers were a curse. Santa was bringing war bonds, hardly the obvious pick of any child for Christmas. Victory Concerts were selling the war a song at a time. Victory campaigns during the last quarter of 1942 in McLennan County focused largely on youth, making them eager to participate in the war, a blessing and a curse simultaneously.

Sugar Rationing

The final month of 1942 proved predictable for sugar supplies. Sugar stamp Number 10 was good for three pounds of sugar between 16 December 1942 and 31

¹³⁰“Curfew for Girls under 18 Is Plea of Waco Pastors,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 December 1942.

¹³¹“Josephine Abbott, “What of Youth in Wartime?,” *Survey Midmonthly* 79 (October 1943): 265.

¹³²“Curfew for Girls under 18,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 December 1942.

¹³³“Parents to Blame for Young Girls’ Acts, Judge Says,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 December 1942.

¹³⁴“County Juvenile Board Is Called to Meet Saturday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 December 1942.

January 1943.¹³⁵ Industrial users of sugar were granted moderate increases in McLennan County near Christmas. Levels were set to remain high until February 1943.¹³⁶

Miscellaneous Rationing

Milk was becoming a rare item throughout America.¹³⁷ Buttermilk was added to the shortage list in early November 1942. McLennan County residents were beginning to have trouble finding adequate milk supplies.¹³⁸ All excess storage butter was being purchased by the government, frozen, and shipped overseas to the military services.¹³⁹ The government recommended goats for replacement dairy products.¹⁴⁰ Several weeks later ice cream production, already hurt by sugar rationing, was cut back by 20% (Fig. 24).¹⁴¹

¹³⁵“Sugar Stamp 10 Worth 3 Pounds Dec. 16 to Jan. 31,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 13 December 1942.

¹³⁶“More Sugar for Industrial Users in this County,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 December 1942.

¹³⁷“Subsidy on Milk Studied to Ease Supply ‘Squeeze,’” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 October 1942.

¹³⁸“Buttermilk is Latest Item on Shortage List,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 November 1942.

¹³⁹“40 Per Cent of Storage Butter Frozen for Army,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 21 November 1942.

¹⁴⁰“Goat Milk and Mulepower help Combat Shortage of Food and Transportation,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.

¹⁴¹“20 Per Cent Slash in Output of Ice Cream Ordered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 December 1942.



Fig. 24. A Favorable Balance¹⁴²

Several new items were rationed in the final quarter of 1942, including short-wave radios. The Office of War Information soon took full control of the nation's fourteen commercial short-wave radio transmitters for information. Usage was divided between the Office of War Information and the Central Intelligence Agency.¹⁴³

People in McLennan County were slowly becoming tired of living the war all day, every day. Bob Poage, local congressman during the war, late admitted: "I don't think any of [McLennan County residents] liked [rationing]. I never heard anybody express themselves as liking it."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²"A Favorable Balance," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 December 1942.

¹⁴³"Government Takes Control Short Wave Radios during War," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 November 1942.

¹⁴⁴Poage, Oral History, 632.

Local War Work and War Housing

On 22 October The War Manpower Commission finally listed McLennan County as likely to suffer a labor shortage.¹⁴⁵ As a result the federal government requested a reorganization of all war work in order to intensify efficiency.¹⁴⁶ A new plan was meant to centralize all war work and provide more rational production measures. Reorganization took time, but McLennan County needed workers right then. At least 100 workers were desperately needed for local war production plants.¹⁴⁷ By now a compulsory draft was designed for the nation to provide war workers.¹⁴⁸ The one holiday allowed for defense workers was Christmas, only because Roosevelt had asked employers to give employees one holiday.¹⁴⁹

The McLennan County housing battle continued through the last quarter of 1942. New rental housing in McLennan County did not fall under the same regulations as did a home existing at the time rent ceilings were first implemented.¹⁵⁰ A new restriction was passed during the first week of October equalizing all housing to 1 March 1942 levels.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵“Waco is Listed as Area where Labor Shortage Expected,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 22 October 1942.

¹⁴⁶“Reorganization of Government for War Job Is Asked,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

¹⁴⁷“100 Workers Are Urgently Needed for Local Plant,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 November 1942.

¹⁴⁸“Compulsory Draft of War Workers Mapped for U.S.,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 December 1942.

¹⁴⁹“War Plants Rest Christmas First Time during War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 December 1942.

¹⁵⁰“Revised Ruling on Rent to Cover New Houses Is Issued,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 October 1942.

¹⁵¹“All Uncontrolled Rents to Be Fixed at March 1 Level,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 October 1942.

The policy would also apply to the fifty-seven building permits issued by the city of Waco.¹⁵²

The final quarter of 1942 was a unique time to own property in a defense town like Waco. The time was perfect to sell houses, but not to buy them. The nationwide rate of homeowners reportedly grew 15% between 1940 and 1944.¹⁵³ But houses, new or old, were increasingly scarce during 1942.

Several new rules were enforced in defense housing to minimize rental panics. First, a tenant had three months to move before being evicted from a home. Three months would provide a tenant with plenty of time locate a new place to live and avoid putting pressure on the housing market. Second, the landlord had a right to immediately evict a tenant only if the landlord himself planned to live in the house.¹⁵⁴

Local landlords participating in the local housing registration program could have their homes upgraded at no cost.¹⁵⁵ The upgrade policy was thought to promote more landlords' participation in the program. A similar deal the government offered was to convert large houses into duplexes.¹⁵⁶ The policy responsible for the changes was known

¹⁵²“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 November 1942.

¹⁵³D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with American* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984), 170.

¹⁵⁴“New Rent Rule on Owner's Right to Take House Shown,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 October 1942.

¹⁵⁵“Government Will Lease Homes and Build them Over,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 November 1942.

¹⁵⁶“Owners Need Not Evacuate Houses Leased for War,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 November 1942.

as the Lease-Conversion Plan for McLennan County.¹⁵⁷ The program reported large participation, and many local people were excited about the plan.¹⁵⁸

The program was considered the only possible way for McLennan County to meet the housing shortage created by the war.¹⁵⁹ The rules of the plan were relaxed even further by the end of December 1942. The number of qualified homes increased, and a solution to the housing shortage in McLennan County seemed apparent.¹⁶⁰

The final quarter of 1942 saw an intensified effort to recruit women as workers in defense plants. Waco women were asked to enter school or participate in more war projects.¹⁶¹ The Waco Chamber of Commerce sponsored classes teaching women retail and sales management to fill job openings in McLennan County left by the departed soldiers.¹⁶² Newspapers reported in November 1942 that women were replacing men in numerous local industries and businesses.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁷“Lease-Conversion Plan Is Endorsed for Waco Housing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 November 1942.

¹⁵⁸“New War Housing Program in Waco Gets Good Start,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 November 1942.

¹⁵⁹“House Shortage must Be Solved by Lease Route,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.

¹⁶⁰“Conversion Plan for Waco Houses now Liberalized,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 27 December 1942.

¹⁶¹“Women Are Asked to Enter School of War Projects,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 20 October 1942.

¹⁶²“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 31 October 1942.

¹⁶³“More Women Are Replacing Men in Waco Industries,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 November 1942.

Clearly, Waco finally began to embrace the woman worker by the end of 1942. A local drive was called a “Women for War Industry.”¹⁶⁴ *The Waco News-Tribune* reported the effort by declaring that “debutantes must join farm girls in war industry.”¹⁶⁵ The Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant boasted it employed many women workers and needed more.¹⁶⁶

Scrap Iron

The scrap iron drive reached its peak for 1942 during the final quarter. Advertisements stated that it took 2,500 tons of steel to create a Liberty Ship.¹⁶⁷ Twenty tons of iron had been brought in by the Lion’s Club for the ransom payment on their bell.¹⁶⁸

Waco I.S.D. students were challenged to find their weight in scrap iron for the school drive.¹⁶⁹ The children were let out of school early on 12 October 1942 to locate scrap metal.¹⁷⁰ Thousands of other McLennan County residents were also in search of scrap.

¹⁶⁴“‘Women for War Industry’ Drive Is Planned Here,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

¹⁶⁵“Debutantes must Join Farm Girls in War Industry,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942.

¹⁶⁶“Ordnance Uses Many Women,” *Bluebonnet News*, 10 October 1942.

¹⁶⁷“Get Scrapping Mad!” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

¹⁶⁸“20 Tons of Scrap Brought by Lions to ‘Ransom’ Bell,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 October 1942.

¹⁶⁹“Waco School Kids Will Seek Their Weight in Scrap,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 October 1942.

¹⁷⁰“School Kids Quit Classes at 1:30 to Rake in Scrap,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 12 October 1942.

Several other lots were opened around town to designate various types of scrap metal. The Jaycees began to collect tin cans and sponsored a dance for the public.¹⁷¹ Admission to the dance was one dozen tin cans (Fig. 25).¹⁷²



Fig. 25. America Needs It NOW!¹⁷³

The Lion's Club sponsored a vacant lot for scrap on Austin Avenue. Their goal was to collect more than 1 million pounds of scrap.¹⁷⁴ By now, however, there was probably not much scrap left in McLennan County.

¹⁷¹"Jaycees to Lead Collection of Tin Cans in County," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 October 1942.

¹⁷²"Dozen Tin Cans Is Admission Fee to Jaycee Dance," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 16 October 1942.

¹⁷³"American Needs It NOW!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 October 1942.

¹⁷⁴"Lions will Assort Scrap Offered in Industrial Drive," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 October 1942.

Meanwhile, Army trucks continued to help gather scrap iron from local neighborhoods. The Army canvassed the county during most of October in search of scrap iron (Fig. 26).¹⁷⁵



Fig. 26. 'Ach Himmel!'¹⁷⁶

The government urged local people to look for abandoned railways or mines for scrap metal.¹⁷⁷ The Army dismantled two bridges that spanned the river in San

¹⁷⁵"Army Trucks will Help Gather Scrap Metal Here Today," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 7 October 1942.

¹⁷⁶"Ach Himmel!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 8 October 1942.

¹⁷⁷U.S. Department of Commerce, *Small Town Manual*, 6.

Antonio.¹⁷⁸ By mid-October 600 million pounds of scrap metal had been collected in Texas.¹⁷⁹

In a phenomenal effort, the city of Waco soon began removing rails from the streets around town. The old rails had supported a trolley car decades earlier.¹⁸⁰ A total of 42,260 tons of iron rails were removed by 18 October 1942.¹⁸¹

Popular advertisements encouraged donors to find more. One declared: "Your scrap will save some brave boy's life!"¹⁸² Another stated: "Mountains of Scrap will Save Thousands of Lives!"¹⁸³ Yet another asked assertively: "Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?"¹⁸⁴

Scrap metal salvage totals broke all-time records.¹⁸⁵ The total for the state of Texas reached nearly 660 million pounds of scrap metal.¹⁸⁶ Twenty-three tons of cans

¹⁷⁸"Army Blows Up Colorado Bridge for Scrap Heap," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 October 1942.

¹⁷⁹"Huge Scrap Pile Shipped by Texas Last Five Months," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

¹⁸⁰"Removal of Rails Is Slowing Down," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 October 1942.

¹⁸¹"260 Tons of Iron Rails Taken Out of Waco Streets," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 18 October 1942.

¹⁸²"Your Scrap Will Save some Brave Boy's Life!" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 26 October 1942.

¹⁸³"Mountains of Scrap will Save Thousands of Lives!" *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

¹⁸⁴"Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 October 1942.

¹⁸⁵"October Salvage Collection Sets New High Mark," *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 1 November 1942.

¹⁸⁶"658,029,042 Pounds Texas Scrap Total," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 30 October 1942.

were sent to Dallas to be scrapped.¹⁸⁷ Ironically, Waco City Manager W. C. Torrence believed Waco contributed only half of all its tin cans to the scrap piles.¹⁸⁸

Meat

In early October, the Office of Price Administration (OPA) stated that nationwide meat production was at an all-time high.¹⁸⁹ However, conditions could not have been more different in McLennan County. Local grocers reported shortages of pork products.¹⁹⁰ Soon, large cities around the nation also began to report shortages in meat products.¹⁹¹

The OPA requested a 20% cut in all meat delivery to civilians.¹⁹² Next, the OPA imposed a 10% cut on civilian beef quotas.¹⁹³ Chicken was suggested as a solution to other meat shortages.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁷“23 Tons of Cans Sent to Dallas from Waco Area,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.

¹⁸⁸“Test Shows Waco Gives Only Half its Old Tin Cans,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 December 1942.

¹⁸⁹“Meat Production Reaches All-Time High Past Month,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 October 1942.

¹⁹⁰“Bacon, Ham Hard to Find in Waco; other Foods Low,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 October 1942.

¹⁹¹“San Diego without Meat; Washington Urged to Give Aid,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 14 October 1942.

¹⁹²“20 Per Cent Cut in Meat Delivery to Civilians Set,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 2 October 1942.

¹⁹³“Ten Per Cent Cut in Civilian Beef Quota is Ordered,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 10 November 1942.

¹⁹⁴Tom Harper, “Extra Off-Season Output is Needed of Meat Chickens,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 October 1942.

In mid-November the government announced that meat rations would be enacted soon. Ration sizes were set at under two and a half pounds per person.¹⁹⁵ But, not all meats would be rationed. Liver, heart, kidneys, sweetbreads, brains, and pig's feet were exempted.¹⁹⁶

Hunting and fishing were deemed important to helping the emergency meat shortage.¹⁹⁷ Governor Coke Stevenson prepared for meat rationing by shooting a deer on the first day of the season (Fig. 27).¹⁹⁸



Fig. 27. Headin' for the Next Roundup¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵“Meat Ration May Be Set under Two and Half Pounds,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 19 November 1942.

¹⁹⁶“Several Kinds of Meat not Subject to Quota Rules,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 15 October 1942.

¹⁹⁷“Hunting, Fishing Are Important to War Emergency,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 23 November 1942.

¹⁹⁸“The Austin Viewpoint,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942.

¹⁹⁹“Headin' for the Next Roundup,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 October 1942.

The shortages of meat around the state continued to grow. Houston reported a shortage in late November 1942.²⁰⁰ Amarillo also stated meat was disappearing levels were decreasing quickly.²⁰¹ The meat shortage in Waco was also more severe.²⁰² County commissioners even saw fit to suspend beef meals at the county jail until further notice.²⁰³

By mid-December, Christmas turkeys had become expensive and hard to find in Waco. People were urged to buy a turkey when they saw one.²⁰⁴

The government now warned Americans to expect decreases in meat production during January 1943. McLennan County residents clearly faced another troublesome year.

Coffee

Coffee shortages began to occur throughout the country in October 1942.²⁰⁵ The Office of Price Administration (OPA) believed rationing was the answer.²⁰⁶ Local Sugar Rationing Boards would be placed in charge of coffee rationing.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁰“Houston Meat Scarce,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 24 November 1942

²⁰¹“Meat Shortage Is Noted in Amarillo,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 November 1942.

²⁰²“Meat Shortage in Waco Is Growing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 11 December 1942.

²⁰³“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 9 December 1942.

²⁰⁴“Turkeys Are High and Getting Hard to Find in Waco,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 20 December 1942.

²⁰⁵“Coffee Shortages Hit Almost Every Section of Nation,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 3 October 1942.

²⁰⁶“Coffee Rationing Foreseen by OPA,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 4 October 1942.

²⁰⁷“Sugar Panel Will Take over Job of Coffee Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 October 1942.

One of the reasons the government cited for coffee rationing was shipping problems. The OPA stated that rations would be increased if better shipping could be developed.²⁰⁸

The last week to purchase unlimited amounts of coffee was the third week of November.²⁰⁹ Sales were frozen one week prior to rationing to provide grocers ample time to stock up on supplies.²¹⁰

Requirements for coffee rationing were similar to those for sugar rationing. Applicants were required to not have surplus supplies of coffee stashed.²¹¹ War Ration Book One Stamp Number 27 was good for one pound of coffee.²¹² The Number 27 Stamp expired on 4 January 1943.²¹³ Tea and cocoa became the top replacements for most coffee drinkers in McLennan County when coffee was not available.²¹⁴

The final quarter of the year 1942 was perhaps one of the most crucial. The quarter set the stage for 1943 and the start of new rationing programs. Perhaps, most importantly, the end of 1942 signified to average people that one way or another they could survive the war.

²⁰⁸“Coffee Ration to Be Increased if Shipping Better,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 6 November 1942.

²⁰⁹“2nd Cuppa Coffee for Breakfast is out Next Sunday,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

²¹⁰“All Retail Sales of Coffee End as Ration Prepared,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 22 November 1942.

²¹¹“Figure Coffee Supply,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 27 November 1942.

²¹²“Pound of Coffee per Ration Book May Now Be Sold,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 29 November 1942.

²¹³“Coffee Deadline Near,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 31 December 1942.

²¹⁴“It Happened Yesterday,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 December 1942.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

Two and a half years would pass before the Allies emerged victorious. By the end of the war, Americans believed that their industry had saved the world, that American soldiers fought the hardest, and that American weaponry worked the best.¹ Americans proudly viewed themselves as saviors of in the world following World War II.

The war affected McLennan County most by an increase in population of 28,000 people during 1940 and 1950.² The final challenge would be to transition the war economy into a peace-time economy without disrupting the population.³

The Federal Women's Bureau asserted that 80% of women nationwide wanted to retain their jobs after the war.⁴ The prevailing view among historians is that the war was the first time in recent history the public had embraced an iconoclastic view of the feminine role in society.⁵ A major problem occurred, however, when soldiers returned home and wanted their jobs back. Most women were usually either dismissed from their jobs or forced to work elsewhere.⁶ Thesis dismissals have caused feminist-minded

¹Adams, *The Best War Ever*, 69.

²Wallace, *Waco*, 112,

³Michael J. Bennett, *When Dreams Come True: The GI Bill and the Making of Modern America* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc, 1996), 32.

⁴Lois Banner, *Women in Modern America: A Brief History* (New York, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc, 1974), 206.

⁵William H. Chafe, *The American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Votes, 1920-1970* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 136.

⁶A. G. Mezerik, "Getting Rid of Women," *Atlantic Monthly* 236 (June 1945): 79.

historians to criticize the traditional view of World War II advances for women workers. They argue that all economic and social advances made by women during the war years were simply primitive and ambiguous.⁷

During 1942, McLennan County gradually supported new roles for women in the war effort. The Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant clearly embraced the idea of women employees.⁸ The local Waco Chamber of Commerce also advocated women workers as a solution to the problem of labor shortages throughout the county. Businesses were encouraged to hire any labor that could be found. The jobs discussed were both commercial and industrial.⁹ McLennan County did not struggle to accept women workers as much as it did the idea of minority workers.

Rarely was the hiring of black or Hispanic workers done outside of a rural setting. Worse, the only people many farmers wanted to hire were Hispanics. The most common solution to the 1942 farm labor shortage was hiring Hispanic laborers.¹⁰ A majority of the migrant workers were citizens of Mexico who came north to earn money and assist the war effort. Hispanic workers might have been hired locally, but black labor was never fully utilized during 1942. Labor shortages in industry and farming may have been desperate, but few employers embraced black workers as they did women and migratory workers.

⁷ Philomena Goodman, *Women, Sexuality, and War* (New York, New York: Palgrave, 2002), 14.

⁸“Ordnance Uses Many Women,” *Bluebonnet News*, 10 October 1942.

⁹“More Women are Replacing Men,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 8 November 1942.

¹⁰“5000 Mexicans to Help,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 6 September 1942.

War bonds were one of the most unique aspects of war life. Historians typically describe war bonds as “a nonpartisan way to help the war.”¹¹ This study shows, however, that bonds were more directly aimed at selling American propaganda than providing a means to fight. Congress had the ability to tax at any point during the war. As a practical application, bonds were nothing more than a deferred and devalued tax refund.

McLennan County bond rates averaged returns of only 2 to 3%. A Series F War Bond grew in value from \$74 in 1942 to \$100 in 1954.¹² With inflation levels on the rise because of the war, the dollar values would deflate, causing a dollar in 1954 to be worth far less than a dollar in 1942. The federal government could have simply taxed people the extra millions of dollars it needed and refunded the money following the war. But the government wanted Americans to believe that they were voluntarily participating in a great, united war against tyranny.

Rationing programs remained controversial across the nation, but in Texas many were downright dubious. The federal government mandated rationing levels and policies for the states, even when the states objected. Coke Stevenson’s and Franklin Roosevelt’s discussions on tire and gas rationing were bitter examples. Rationing gasoline in Texas was like “rationing sand in the Sahara,” but gas rationing could have been avoided in McLennan County and elsewhere in Texas.¹³

Other questionable effects came from rubber salvage drives. The government claimed that rubber salvage drives provided enough scrap rubber to keep supplies normal

¹¹Lawrence Samuel, *Pledging Allegiance: American Identity and the Bond Drive of World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), xvii.

¹²“County Purchase of War Bonds,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 5 January 1942.

¹³“O’Daniel Declares Gas Rationing,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 November 1942.

until synthetic rubber could be developed.¹⁴ But the government did not tell the public about the alchemy it used to try to turn pencil erasers into tires. The legitimacy of the government's justification for salvaging rubber remains questionable, at best.

Sugar rationing was another questionable policy. The government stated that shortages were the fault of the main producers in the Caribbean. Houston refineries, however, told the public levels of imported sugar were the same as they had always been.¹⁵

With regard to the title of this thesis: "Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?" --a modern historian sees this as propaganda, of course.¹⁶ The advertisement serves as an effort to sell the war by appealing to all activities in everyday life on the home front.

Fundamentally, the advertisement challenged every person with the question, who will die because you failed to give? Who will die because you did not give a cookie sheet to the war? That cookie sheet could have made three hand grenades—three hand grenades that could have helped G.I. Joe push his way out of a foxhole in North Africa or the Pacific. This propaganda conformed perfectly to the beliefs of the overwhelming majority of Americans during the war. Clearly, they willingly sacrificed much of their wealth and many of the freedoms to help the war effort.

The year 1942 proved pivotal to American hopes to win the war. The home front witnessed scrap drives, grease drives, tire rationing, coffee rationing, air raid simulations, bond drives, stamp drives, victory concerts, meat rationing, rubber drives, wood drives,

¹⁴"200 Millions Pounds of Scrap Rubber Collected," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 25 June 1942.

¹⁵"Sugar Rate Stationary," *The Waco News-Tribune*, 1 August 1942.

¹⁶"Whose Boy Will Die Because You Failed?" *The Waco News-Tribune*, 4 October 1942.

and labor shortages. At home and abroad, America was struggling to stop losing the war and somehow find a way to start winning it. Everyone realized, however, that the only way the Americans could even hope to win the war was by keeping the peace at home—keeping the people united. The best way to accomplish that was to make each citizen believe that he or she was performing an essential duty. The government's message was clear: everything anyone did might help win or lose the war.

Another message was not so clear. What were the morals and values Americans were fighting for? The “greatest generation” maintains that World War II was “the good war”—a momentous event that defined what it means to be an American.

Franklin Roosevelt first began to formulate this ideal view of the war during 1942.¹⁷ He proposed in November of 1942 that following the war, a new Bill of Rights should be drafted, one that was more modern and gave substance to the reasons why America was fighting and why soldiers were dying. His new Bill of Rights comprised ten items:

1. Right to work.
2. Right to fair pay.
3. Right to adequate food.
4. Right to security.
5. Right to live in a society of free enterprise.
6. Right to come and go.
7. Right to speak or be silent.
8. Right to equality before the law.
9. Right to rest.
10. Right to an education.

¹⁷“New Bill of Rights for U.S. after War Suggested by FDR,” *The Waco Sunday Tribune-Herald*, 15 November 1942.

Judging from the facts, however, this thesis has revealed concerning McLennan County during 1942, that new Bill of Rights should have been changed to include other values the government was promoting:

1. Right to work, if you are white.
2. Right to fair pay, if you are male.
3. Right to adequate food, if you register for an comply with food rationing programs.
4. Right to security, if you were not drafted.
5. Right to live in a society of free enterprise, if one excludes the government's price and wage ceilings and orders that halted production on all the common items one needs to live.
6. Right to come and go, if the person does not need new shoes, more gasoline, decent tires, a new car, or a new bicycle.
7. Right to speak or be silent, as long as one speaks positively about the war, and is silent about the legitimacy of rationing claims.
8. Right to equality before the law, if it is "Separate but Equal" before the law.
9. Right to rest, but only on Christmas Day.
10. And a right to an education, if the cotton is not in bloom and ready to be picked by child laborers.

As this more accurate Bill of Rights indicates each citizen held the right to work, but defense work in Waco and McLennan County was primarily designed to use white labor. African Americans were hired at a fraction of the rate Anglo Americans were at the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant. The dozen black women employed at BOP were for food catering. According to a postwar sociological study of the BOP, "It was considered advisable to have the Negroes segregates inasmuch as possible for that is the way of dealing with the race problem in Texas."¹⁸

Every person had a right to fair pay, not to equal pay. The experiences of women workers in McLennan County were ambiguous. At the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant black men and white men earned equal pay but women averaged significantly less than did

¹⁸Walter Samuel Corrie, Jr., "A Sociological Study of the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant at McGregor, Texas," (M.A. thesis, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1948), 39.

men. Some women took advantage of the opportunity to progress economically and establish successful post war careers. The vast majority of local women, however, returned to their homes and families when the war was over. Many historians, therefore, are incorrect in arguing that the war presented the big opportunity for women to advance up the economic ladder. The primary factor determining whether or not women remained in the job market was economic class. Working class women of all races continued to work, but middle-class and upper-class women did not remain in the workforce. The few middle and upper class women who did remain in the work force confronted the same “glass-ceilings” after the war that they had experienced during the war. For example, black men and white men made equal portions at the Bluebonnet Ordnance Plant while women averaged less than males.

Every citizen had a right to adequate food, but what was “adequate food”? In McLennan and throughout the nation, the federal government’s propaganda machine convinced citizens that “adequate food” was relative to the value of ration stamps and the specific time those ration stamps were issued. Each government ration was considered an appropriate amount for the alleged national supply of food. Citizens seldom question the government’s claims about food shortages.

The right to security was not allowed to the thousands of McLennan County males targeted by the draft. A draft may have been necessary, but it did not promote a sense of security for any American male between the ages of 17 and 35. Physical, emotional, and financial security were all at risk for these citizens and their families.

The right to free enterprise was greatly compromised during 1942. Before granting any contract, the government always place, ceilings on the prices of the goods it

wanted and on the wages it agreed to pay. Price-fixing and wage ceilings did not promote free enterprise in McLennan County or elsewhere, despite the economic boom created by the war.

A person had a right to come and go in society. But the government sought increasingly to restrict the use of new tires, new cars, and new bicycles and reduce consumption of gasoline because overuse supposedly hindered the war effort. It was extremely difficult to travel any distance because of restrictions mandated by the government.

Every American citizen had the right to speak or be silent. Any challenges to government imposed rationing or expressions of doubts about other government programs were squelched by government propaganda and a complacent public opinion. Even Governor Coke Stevenson's expressions of resentment toward federal authority failed to affect government restrictions and rationing requirements.

All people ostensibly had a right to equality before the law. This claim, however, was pure propaganda. In 1942, blacks and Hispanics were clearly not equal to whites before the law. Minorities in McLennan and throughout the nation could not effectively challenge a local system that allowed white employers and property owners to deny equal access to jobs and housing.

All workers had a right to rest and leisure. But the only holiday allowed by the federal government during the year of 1942 was Christmas Day. During the remaining 364 days of the year, war workers had to devote themselves to putting in at least 40 hours a week. They received no vacations whatsoever.

The final right stated that all Americans deserved a good education. But when labor shortages became alarming, hundreds of McLennan County school children were taken from their classrooms to help harvest cotton and other crops. Several hundred dropped out of school to supplement family incomes during 1942. In order to obtain the labor required to meet government quotas for agricultural production farmers turned increasingly to children. Education was important, but cotton was crucial.

Some forms of government restrictions were necessary during 1942 on the World War II home front. The United States was engaged in a total war that required a total effort. However, because President Roosevelt and other government leaders wanted, more than anything else, to unify the country they launched a propaganda campaign based upon strident patriotism and public fear. This well orchestrated effort permeated every aspect of American life, enabling government authorities to impose a whole series of haphazard and often unnecessary programs that actually undercut Roosevelt's "New Bill of Rights." At the war's end, the people of Waco and McLennan County, however, remained convinced that they had contributed their all.

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