

APPENDIX E

STRAIGHT-OUT AMERICANISM

I cannot resist putting in the following letter, because it shows just what Americanism demands in the face of Germany at this time, and because it shows what a thoroughgoing American the average young American of German parentage or descent is—for the gallant young soldier who writes this letter is typical of the hundreds of thousands of other gallant young American soldiers, in whole or in part of German blood—and typical of all the millions of other young American soldiers, Protestant, Catholic, and Jew, of old native American stock, or of Irish, English, Scandinavian, Slavonic, French, Italian parentage.

The writer of the letter is Lieutenant Earl B. Mahle, a second lieutenant of a machine-gun company, who had been gassed in battle. The letter is written from a hospital, on July 20, 1918. It was addressed to his uncle, the Reverend W. E. Mahle, of Blooming Grove, Minnesota. It runs in part as follows:

In your letter you asked a lot of questions the like of which you say I have to answer when I get back. I see no objection in answering a few of them now.

You wonder how we feel when given the opportunity