

# **IRENE BURGOON BOYD**



**KNITTING FOR THE CAUSE**

## IRENE BURGOON BOYD

### *Knitting for the Cause*



Irene Burgoon was born 25 April 1901 in Altoona, Pennsylvania. She grew up in a family with a rich tradition of service in the United States Armed Forces. Her two brothers, Albert and Joe, served during WWI; her great grandfather was a Captain in the Union Army during the Civil War; and she could trace her lineage back to several Revolutionary War soldiers. In 1923, Irene married James Duncan Boyd, a USN veteran who had also served in WWI. They settled in Pittsburgh, PA and raised three sons, two of whom served in the US Army during WWII.

In 1941, Irene responded to the call and began “knitting for the cause”. She made hundreds of pairs of socks and dozens of sweaters to support the war effort and “keep the boys warm”. She also served as a coordinator for the American Red Cross, distributing patterns, yarn, and needles to knitters, and collecting finished garments and accessories for distribution to the troops serving around the world.

The red, white, and blue double-pointed needles and a collection of American Red Cross knitting patterns, along with a lifelong passion for knitting and service, were lovingly passed down by Irene Burgoon Boyd to her granddaughter, Nan Boyd Walther, who cherished them and has donated them to the St. Charles Veterans Museum in her grandmother's honor.

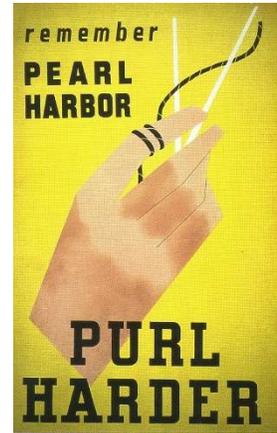




Wartime knitting was more than a hobby...it was an act of patriotism. Millions of women, children and men in Allied countries used their knitting needles as weapons of war. Those were stressful times for the folks on the home front, and knitting was a great way to relieve the anxiety and make an important contribution to the war effort.

Countless knitted items such as socks, sweaters, vests, gloves, and scarves were created and collected by the Red Cross, and numerous church committees and civic organizations to be distributed to the Allied forces.

Sailors in the North Atlantic were especially vulnerable, and they needed special sea boot stockings worn over the socks and inside their long leather sea boots. The cuff of the stocking was folded over the top of the boot.



On exhibit here in the museum is the footlocker of one sailor, D. L. Carpenter, which was found to be filled with hand-knitted socks, vests, gloves and other items donated by the Chicago Red Cross and the Christian Science War Relief.

What a privilege it is for the museum to be able to display these items, produced by hand by unidentified knitters, that found their way to Seaman Carpenter to help keep him warm while he defended his country!





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## MAN'S SOCK

(Medium Size)



**Equipment Needed:** Yarn 6/4 (medium weight), 4 oz. of suitable color for socks.

**Needles:** Four needles to fit the Red Cross Needle Gauge for socks. Gauge available from Headquarters.

**Scale:** 7 stitches to the inch, 9 rows to the inch. Make a sample to find out how many stitches are required for you to knit an inch. If your scale is not that given here, adjust the number of stitches cast on to fit your own scale. The sample of your knitting is also necessary because the yarn may vary slightly, making adjustments necessary in the number of stitches cast on.

When knitting the second sock of a pair, always count the rows of the first sock to insure uniform size when finished. These knitting directions are given as a guide. Other simple sock directions may be used so long as the garment is the proper size and of correct proportions.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING

The sock when finished should measure: Foot, 11 1/2 inches; leg, 14 inches.

On 5 needles cast on 60 sts., having 20 on each of 3 needles. Join, being careful not to twist sts.

Work ribbing of K 2, P 2 for three inches.

Work in plain knitting for the next 8 inches.

**Heel:** Divide sts. as follows: 30 on 1st needle (for heel) and 15 sts. each on 2nd and 3rd needles. On heel needle always slip first

stitch. \* K 1 row, turn; P 1 row, turn. Repeat from \* until there are 27 rows (3 inches).

**To Turn Heel:** Begin to turn heel on wrong side.

Slip 1, P 15, P 2 together, P 1, turn.

Slip 1, K 5, slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K 1, turn.

Slip 1, P 6, P 2 together, P 1, turn.

Slip 1, K 7, Slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K 1, turn.

Slip 1, P 8, P 2 together, P 1, turn.

Slip 1, K 9, Slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K 1, turn.

Continue in this fashion (P 10, K 11, P 12, K 13, P 14, etc.) until there are 18 stitches on needle.

**Gusset:** (With right side of garment on the outside and working to the left).

Knit up 13 stitches on side of heel. (This gives 51 sts. on 1st needle.)

K stitches of 2nd and 3rd needles on to one needle. (2nd needle.)

Knit up 13 stitches on other side of heel, and knit 9 stitches from 1st needle. (3rd needle.)

There are now on: 1st needle, 23 stitches.

2nd needle, 39 stitches.

3rd needle, 23 stitches.

1st needle. (a) K to within 3 stitches of end, K 2 together, K 1,

2nd needle. (b) K plain.

3rd needle. (c) K 1, slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K to end.

(d) K around plain.

Repeat a, b, c, d, until you have: 15 stitches on 1st needle, 30

stitches on 2nd needle, 15 stitches on 3rd needle.

Knit plain until foot measures 9 inches from back of heel.

**Kitchener Toe:**

1st needle. (e) K to within 3 stitches of end, K 2 together, K 1,

2nd needle. (f) K 1, slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K to within 3 stitches of end, K 2 together, K 1,

3rd needle. (g) K 1, slip 1, K 1, pass slipped st. over k st., K to end.

(h) K 2 rows plain.

Repeat e, f, g, h, three times (making 4 times in all).

Then narrow every other row 3 times.

K the stitches on your 1st needle onto your 3rd needle.

Break yarn (leaving 12-inch length); thread into worsted needle.

Hold sock so that the worsted needle is at your right and, always keeping yarn under knitting needles, weave front and

back together as follows: \* pass worsted needle through 1st

stitch of front knitting needle as if knitting, and slip stitches

off the knitting needle.

Hold sock so that the worsted needle is at your right and, always keeping yarn under knitting needles, weave front and

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back together as follows: \* pass worsted needle through 1st

stitch of front knitting needle as if knitting, and slip stitches

off the knitting needle.

Pass through 2nd stitch as if purling—leave st. on.  
Pass through 1st stitch of back needle as if purling—slip st. off.  
Pass through 2nd stitch of back needle as if knitting—leave st. on.

Repeat from \* until all stitches are off needles.

To avoid ridge across end of toe, weave end of yarn down side.

**Chapter Label:** To be sewed loosely on inside of top of one sock.

**Finished Socks:** Tie loosely together in pairs at top of leg in such a way that the hand can be inserted for inspection.

If the sock is thin at point of gusset, reinforce by darning on wrong side very lightly with split thread of yarn.

Socks should be washed when finished.

Attach two or three yards of the yarn for darning purposes.

### Directions for Folding and Bundling

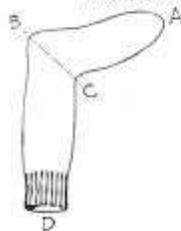


Diagram No. 1  
Straighten a pair of socks one upon the other as table as shown in diagram No. 1. Fold top A over BE on to leg D, forming diagram No. 2.



Diagram No. 2  
Finished fold of pair. Place five pairs so folded upon each other, alternating side BE with D to make bundle level. The forming diagram No. 3.



Diagram No. 3  
Finished bundle.

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS  
Washington, D. C.