

Military Collection
State Archives of North Carolina

North Carolina Hall of History Materials (WWI 7)
[World War I]

Collection Number: WWI 7

Title: North Carolina Hall of History Materials

Dates: circa 1914-1919, 1922-1923, 1941 (bulk 1916-1919)

Creator: Woodrow Wilson; John J. Pershing; North Carolina Historical Commission; Fred A. Olds; and various others

Abstract

North Carolina Hall of History Materials is composed of items collected by North Carolina Historical Commission Hall of History Collector Fred A. Olds, and exhibited from 1914 through the 1940s as part of the World War I exhibits in the North Carolina Hall of History. The collection holds various newspaper articles, letters, lists, military and national awards and certificates, telegrams, and published materials highlighting aspects of European nations and the United States' wartime experiences during WWI. The collection contains items in German and French, including German war propaganda leaflets.

Physical Description: Approximately 0.20 linear feet

Language(s): English, French, German

Repository

State Archives of North Carolina, 4614 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C. 27699-4614

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing the bulk of this collection. The letter written by King George V of Great Britain is part of the State Archives of North Carolina Vault Collection. Researchers wishing to use this letter must contact the State Archives Registrar in advance of coming to the State Archives to conduct research.

Restrictions on Use: There are no restrictions on use of this collection.

Preferred Citation

[Item name or title], [Box and Folder Numbers], North Carolina Hall of History Materials, WWI 7, WWI Papers, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C.

Acquisition

The North Carolina Hall of History Materials collection was acquired in multiple parts by Fred A. Olds from approximately 1914 to 1923, with additional items added by the North Carolina Historical Commission until 1941. As Collector for the North Carolina Historical Commission's Hall of History, Olds was charged with obtaining all manner of artifacts, documents, records, and visual materials to put on display in the Hall regarding the World War I period in history. Olds selected items which demonstrated the wartime experiences and military history of Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and the United States.

In the 1916-1918 North Carolina Historical Commission Biennial Report (published in 1918), the Historical Commission noted in the report that "The Collector for the Hall of History was instructed to devote special attention to the collection of all sorts of material bearing upon the war" Materials in this collection are also referenced in the 1918-1920 Biennial Report, specifically as it relates to the documents pertaining to Robert L. Blackwell. Not all of the materials in this collection are recorded by Olds as to their origin prior to their arrival in the World War I war records collection. Fred A. Olds, as Hall of History Collector, continued to gather materials related to World War I for exhibition purposes in the Hall, later giving the documents and photographs put on exhibit to the North Carolina Historical Commission's World War I war records collection.

All of the materials in this collection were acquired or collected as part of the North Carolina Historical Commission's on-going World War historic materials collection project, which was authorized by Sections 3 and 4 of Chapter 144 of the North Carolina Public Laws and Resolutions in 1919.

Separated Material

Due to the uniqueness of the letter from King George V of Great Britain, the letter has been removed from the collection, and relocated to the State Archives of North Carolina Vault Collection. The letter is numbered State Archives of North Carolina VC.52.

Related Material

The North Carolina Museum of History holds within its collections two items of Private Robert Blackwell—once on display in the Hall of History with documents in WWI 7. These items are: Photograph H.19XX.135.121, of Pvt. Robert Lester Blackwell; and Award H.1932.8.3, Military Medal (Blackwell, Robert Lester).

Processing Information

The North Carolina Hall of History Materials has been organized into three unnumbered groups of items, based on the geographic origin of the items. The divisions are as follows: North Carolina, United States, and International materials. Within these groups, the collection is arranged by date. The original order of the World War I materials from the North Carolina Historical Commission's Hall of History was based on the item's catalog numbers. On the original Hall of History materials file folders, the items' catalog numbers were written in parentheses after the folder title. In order to

preserve the original Historical Commission and Hall of History item cataloging numbering system, these catalog numbers have been retained in this new collection arrangement, by adding the numbers in brackets after the end of the folder title (both on the folder and in the finding aid). An example of these original item catalog numbers is Robert Blackwell's Citation for Gallantry, which was originally given the North Carolina Historical Commission catalog number "xx.332.124". Within each original folder for the historical items, 3" x 5" notecards containing with additional background information on the materials—such as dates, catalog numbers, and item provenance. These cards have been left with the items in their folders within WWI 7.

Paperclips and rusted metal fasteners were removed from the items in the collection. Original materials were removed from bindings had turned acidic, causing damage to the materials. Newspaper clippings and newspaper articles which were retained were photocopied as preservation copies. Badly torn or faded documents were photocopied as preservation copies, to save the informational content of the records.

Processed by: J. Cameron Crawford; Matthew M. Peek, June 2015.

Arrangement

The North Carolina Hall of History Materials is not arranged in particular series or subseries. It is arranged in three unnumbered groups based on the geographic origin of the documents: North Carolina; United States; and International. Within these groups, the collection is arranged by date.

Historical Note

The North Carolina Historical Commission (the precursor of the State Archives of North Carolina) recognized at the beginning of the United States' involvement in World War I the importance for North Carolina to begin an effort of collecting materials which documented the role taken by North Carolina soldiers and civilians in the war. In cooperation with the North Carolina Council of Defense, a special history committee, called the "Historical Preservation" committee, was appointed by the Council of Defense. The Historical Preservation committee consisted of the North Carolina Historical Commission Secretary Robert Digges Wimberly (or R. D. W.) Connor, as chairman; Haywood Parker of Asheville, North Carolina; Ms. Adelaide Fries of Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Paul W. Schenck of Greensboro, North Carolina; Edgecombe County-native George Gordon Battle, who was one of the leading lawyers in New York City at the outbreak of WWI; Ms. Lida T. Rodman; and J. G. deR. Hamilton of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The Council of Defense Historical Preservation committee's mission was to collect for permanent preservation the war records of the state of North Carolina. The term "war records" was given the widest possible interpretation, so as to include all materials that illustrate the state of mind of the citizens of North Carolina toward World War I; the effect of the war on social, educational, economic, agricultural, political and religious conditions; and the personal achievements, sacrifices, and services of North Carolina individuals in the war. Efforts were made by the North Carolina Historical Commission to secure the cooperation of such

organizations as the State and County Councils of Defense; the State and County Fuel Administrations; the State and County Food Administrations; the American Red Cross; and other organizations engaged in work connected with the World War I preparedness and support efforts of the United States.

The Historical Preservation committee and the North Carolina Historical Commission urged these institutions, organizations, and members of the public to preserve carefully their records, and ultimately deposit them with the North Carolina Historical Commission. Efforts were also made to secure assistance in this work through the appointment in each county of a county historian for war purposes. However, these efforts were not particularly successful, as resources and people were stressed throughout the war at the local level in North Carolina. Individuals willing to work as volunteer war record collectors were secured in sixty counties. These individuals promised to aid in the historical preservation work of the committee, but only a few of them had been active throughout World War I.

Not much could be accomplished in terms of collecting war materials, however, due to a lack of funding and the lack of a law by the North Carolina State Legislature indicating a state-backed collection program. From 1917 to 1919, the State Legislature was not in session, and this scenario could not be remedied. However, in 1919 the State Legislature formally approved the North Carolina Historical Commission's war records collection efforts with the passage of Chapter 144 of the North Carolina Public Laws and Resolutions (specifically Sections 3 and 4) in 1919. The new law empowered the Historical Commission to appoint a collector of World War records, and provided money for the project's support.

Acting under authority of this law, the Historical Commission chose Mr. Robert B. House Collector of World War Records, and House entered upon his work June 19, 1919. On taking up his duties, House found that the Historical Preservation committee of the State Council of Defense (through a system of volunteer collecting in various counties of the state), and Col. Fred A. Olds (North Carolina Historical Commission Hall of History Collector) had already collected a large amount of war materials. House tried to systemize the collection process and network of volunteer collectors around North Carolina. House and a part-time stenographer worked to copy information from original materials; label, classify, and identify original materials; and operate a continuous correspondence network with individuals throughout the state and with federal war-time government offices.

Fred A. Olds, the father of the North Carolina Museum of History, began collecting objects from North Carolina's past prior to 1900. He traveled all across North Carolina, picking up pieces of the state's history, and listening to the stories associated with each item told by local citizens. In 1898, a gallery of history was set up in the State Museum (now called the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences) in the old Agriculture Building in Raleigh, North Carolina. Olds soon developed a large private collection, and suggested that his collection and the historical material in the State Museum be combined to establish a state historical museum. On December 5, 1902, Olds' private collection and the State Museum's collection were merged and opened to the public as the Hall of History.

At the start of World War I in 1914, the North Carolina Historical Commission took over the operation of the North Carolina Hall of History, and assigned to the Hall two main purposes for its continued operation: 1) to teach the history of North Carolina to the public, and 2) to preserve historical material for and of the state. Items in the Hall were put on display in crowded glass display cases, often organized according to historical theme.

During World War I, Fred A. Olds was tasked with locating and gathering textual and artifacts regarding the Great War for exhibition by the state of North Carolina, with the goal of such exhibition being to educate the public and school children on the developing aspects of the war. Prior to the United States' entrance into the war, Olds focused his collection scope on gathering materials related to the involvement of European nations in the war. When the United States joined the war, Olds embarked on gathering war-related items connected with North Carolina's contributions to the war effort. He collected pamphlets, posters, soldiers' letters, military awards and certificates, photographs of combat scenes and home front activities, and other such items for inclusion in the Hall of History's war exhibits.

Within the World War I Papers in the Military Collection of the State Archives of North Carolina, there are other items which Olds collected and exhibited in the Hall of History WWI exhibits, but which are not included within this particular collection. Those items were divided up into different subject groupings following the war, and organized as part of the larger World War I records collection project by the North Carolina Historical Commission.

Scope and Content

The North Carolina Hall of History Materials collection is composed of awards, correspondence, newspaper clippings and articles, pamphlets, propaganda materials, telegrams, handouts, and published items, which were formerly placed on display in the North Carolina Historical Commission's Hall of History World War I exhibits. The collection is arranged in three unnumbered groups based on the geographic origin of the documents: North Carolina; United States; and International.

Subject Terms

Persons/Families

Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924.

Pershing, John J. (John Joseph), 1860-1948.

Corporate Names

British Red Cross Society

Places

Subject—Topical

World War, 1914-1918

World War, 1914-1918--Military personnel--United States

World War, 1914-1918--Newspapers

World War, 1914-1918--North Carolina
 World War, 1914-1918--Pamphlets
 World War, 1914-1918--Posters
 World War, 1914-1918--Propaganda
 World War, 1914-1918--United States
 World War, 1914-1918--United States--History

Material Types

Card Files
 Correspondence
 Manuscript
 Newspapers

Collection Inventory

Box/Folder	Description	Date
<i>North Carolina Hall of History Materials</i>		
1/1	Troop Ship Torpedoed Newspaper Article [xx.333.162]	February 7, 1918
1/2	University of N.C. Newspaper: Article on Red Cross [xx.333.64]	February 27, 1918
1/3	American Soldier's Letter From a German Prison [xx.152.3]	October 9, 1918
1/4	Citation for Heroism [19.10.2]	November 17, 1918
1/5	Robert L. Blackwell Citation Documents [32.8.4.8] [xx.332.118]	1918-1920
1/6	Clarence R. Hughes Identification Card [18.47.1]	March 18, 1918
1/7	Certificate of Award Raleigh Unit No. 1 [39.29.2]	1929
1/8	Edgar Parsons, 1st N.C. Soldier Killed in the War [42.65.1]	March 27, 1941
1/9	T.L. Tyson Safe Arrival Post Card [xx.324.54]	Undated
1/10	Citation for Gallantry Robert Blackwell [xx.332.124]	Undated

1/11	Casualty Numbers Newspaper, North Carolina [xx.325.53]	Undated
1/12	Autobiography—Fred V. Owen [xx.332.113]	Undated
1/13	Private Andrews Memorial [xx.193.48]	Undated

United States Hall of History Materials

1/14	1917 Draft Registration Certificate [xx.429.9]	June 5, 1917
1/15	Pershing's Christmas Message to America [xx.194.151]	November 28, 1917
1/16	Army Officer Equipment List [30.17.30]	February 13, 1918
1/17	Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper: A Story in Three Columns [xx.333.101]	March 16, 1918
1/18	Wilson's "Mothers' Day Message" Bulletin [xx.33.62]	May 11, 1918
1/19	General Pershing Letter to Master James Smith [22.11.6]	August 21, 1922
1/20	Wilson Telegram to War Mothers of N.C. [23.15.2]	April 26, 1923
1/21	Newspaper Article Arrival of the 35th and 87th [30.17.57]	Undated

International Hall of History Materials

1/22	Iron Cross First Class Certificate	circa 1914
1/23	German Identification Paper [xx.325.56]	1915-1916
1/24	Bermuda Colonist and Daily News [30.17.8]	December 22, 1917
1/25	The Fleet Annual and Naval Year Book (The Third, Great War) [37.44.2]	1917
1/26	German Iron Cross Second Class Certificate [xx.329.19]	April 1, 1918
1/27	German Propaganda Leaflet [23.9.1]	October 5, 1918

1/28	Ballot Voted in Germany's First Election [19.31.4]	1919
1/29	120th Infantry, 30th Division U.S. Army Award [xx.152.1]	March 9, 1922
1/30	The German People Offers Peace: German Leaflet [xx.334.30]	Undated
1/31	Shipping Tag of the Commission for Relief of Belgium	Undated
1/32	Belgian Food Card [xx.325.66]	Undated
1/33	The Better Part of Valor, German Leaflet [18.18.1]	Undated
1/34	Memorial from France to Captain Ben F. Dixon [35.6.4]	Undated
1/35	Description of Rug Donated by British Red Cross [xx.325.103]	Undated