

Military Collection
State Archives of North Carolina

North Carolina Draft Records (WWI 3)
[World War I]

Collection Number: WWI 3

Title: North Carolina Draft Records

Dates: 1917-1920, 1939

Creator: North Carolina Council of Defense; North Carolina Historical Commission; Fred A. Olds; and various others.

Abstract

North Carolina Draft Records is composed of original correspondence, subject files, government records, recruiting materials and posters, and blank forms created and utilized by the cities, counties, and the state of North Carolina during World War I, collected by the North Carolina Historical Commission as part of their war records collection project. These records document the draft enlistments and military induction by city and county draft boards in North Carolina. These materials document the names, ages, home towns, races, and occasionally next-of-kin of North Carolinians who registered for the draft, as well as those who enlisted. Other materials in the collection document draft deserters and draft evaders. Also included in the collection are original blank and locally-created military recruitment materials, posters, and other items from all branches of the United States military.

Physical Description: Approximately 2.50 linear feet

Language(s): English

Repository

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

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing this collection.

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

Preferred Citation

[Item name or title], [Box and Folder Numbers], North Carolina Draft Records, WWI 3, WWI Papers, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C.

Acquisition

This collection was acquired in multiple parts by the North Carolina Historical Commission from 1918 to 1930, with a single addition between 1954 and 1956. The bulk of the collection (Series I) was acquired by Fred A. Olds, collector for the North Carolina Historical Commission's Hall of History, prior to the publication of the 1918-1920 North Carolina Historical Commission Biennial Report. This acquisition was described in the report under the heading *Local Exemption Boards* as "Local Board reports, about 2,000 pieces, containing the lists of drafted men from each county, obtained by Col. P. A. Olds. Miscellaneous material as follows: Photographs; list of inducted men and letters of the Hyde County Board; Account of the Carteret County Board; Information concerning the draft in Hyde, Caldwell, Stokes, Chowan, Graham and Franklin counties; History of the Draft Board for Beaufort and Halifax counties."

The records on deserter—a complete file of the deserters from North Carolina as published by the War Department and the Congressional Record—was received from the federal government prior to the publication of the 1920-1922 North Carolina Historical Commission Biennial Report in 1922. Also by the publication of the 1920-1922 Biennial Report, the Historical Commission had received the bulk of the local draft board draft enlistment records from the county draft boards—what is now Series I in WWI 3. The local draft enlistment records were originally "alphabetized by race, names, and counties, for binding," and contained the names of about 55,100 North Carolinians inducted into military service in World War I.

One of the last items from this collection received as a donation by the North Carolina State Department of Archives and History according to the 1954-1956 Biennial Report was a "List of men ordered to report to Rutherford County Local Board for Military Duty, 1917-18," a notebook containing the records of Rutherford County's Draft Board operations during World War I. The record was donated Clarence W. Griffin, a Rutherford County newspaper editor, Rutherford County historian, and later member of the North Carolina Historical Commission.

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.

Related Material

North Carolina Council of Defense Records, WWI 1, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C.

Military Organizations Records, WWI 13, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C.

Compiled Individual Military Service Records, WWI 14, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C.

Processing Information

This collection is arranged into three series based on the original organization of the collection, as it had been arranged during the 1960s by the North Carolina Department of Archives and History. The original categories were retained; however, new folder categories were sometimes created, or folders were re-titled to better preserve and represent their contents. Series I: Local Draft Board Records prior arrangement was largely retained. Series I was arranged alphabetically by county name, with miscellaneous records related to the local draft boards arranged following the county materials. Some oversized materials were rehoused for better preservation of the items, as in the case of Report Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem (in Box 2). Series II: Recruiting in North Carolina was organized by the creating agency or U.S. military branch. Items for each of the military branches were divided up by material format, such as brochures, posters and blank enlistment forms. Some oversized posters were removed and rehoused in appropriate storage enclosures at the end of the collection (see Oversized Materials). The materials for Series III: Deserters and Draft Evaders were originally housed in a single folder in WWI 12 Miscellaneous WWI Materials (formerly titled WWI Papers, Miscellaneous). This folder's contents were divided and organized alphabetically based on city or county name. Series IV: Oversized Materials largely consists of recruitment and draft registration posters for cities, counties, and the state of North Carolina, which did not fit within regular-size archival file folders and boxes.

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

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into four series:

Series I: Local Draft Board Records
Series II: Recruiting in North Carolina
Series III: Deserters and Draft Evaders
Series IV: Oversized Materials

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.

One of House's first tasks was to survey all possible sources of information concerning North Carolina in the World War to be found in the National Archives; in departments of the North Carolina government; and among the various county organizations and individuals of North Carolina. Having found other states in America were performing the same records collection

work during the war, in September, 1919, representatives from several states met in Washington, D.C., to organize what became the National Association of State War History Organizations. This was a cooperative enterprise financed by a membership fee of \$200, paid by each member state organization. The North Carolina Historical Commission became a member of this association. This organization assisted North Carolina and House in standardizing war records collection policies and procedures.

In North Carolina's government departments, House found that the correspondence and published documents from the years 1917 to 1920 would be essential for documenting the state's role in World War I; but, those documents still held an administrative value in their respective government offices during the war and could not be released to the North Carolina Historical Commission for preservation. House strongly advocated with the heads of each office the necessity of preserving their records for the war years, until such time as they could be released to the Historical Commission. The records produced by county organizations and individuals in North Carolina were found to be in a chaotic state. In many cases, officials of various war-work organizations in the state had destroyed their records immediately upon the signing of the armistice ending World War I, under the impression that these records were of no further value. In many cases, they had kept no complete records during the course of the war.

While in a majority of the counties of North Carolina, volunteer collectors had agreed to bring together material for the Historical Preservation committee and the Council of Defense, they had in reality done little systematic work to organize their materials or save them. By letters and personal visits, House prevailed on most of these volunteer collectors to continue their connection with the North Carolina Historical Commission. In addition, House secured in sixty-two counties of the state African-American representatives to gather information and materials pertaining to African Americans in World War I (though few of these records were transferred to the Historical Commission after the war ended). Following up this effort to organize volunteer collectors, House held in Raleigh, North Carolina, on February 4, 1920, a conference of volunteer war records collectors, in order to emphasize what documents ought to be preserved and methods of preserving them.

House noted in his 1920 report to the North Carolina Historical Commission that the best county war records collection results around the state were achieved in Orange, Guilford, Mecklenburg, Cumberland, Halifax, Hyde, Wilkes, and Warren counties. The variance in the efforts of the volunteer county war collectors explains why for some counties—such as Rutherford and Forsyth counties—there are more records related to draft enlistment, draft desertion, and military service recruitment in certain North Carolina counties than others.

Scope and Content

The North Carolina Draft Records is composed of correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, booklets, posters, reports, official draft records and draft reports, and typed copies of soldiers' death records copied from the North Carolina Adjutant General's Office. Also included in this collection are the recruiting posters and various materials utilized by various military branches, including the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, the Marine Corps, and the North Carolina National Guard. Additionally, this collection contains records on the military deserters

and draft evaders for various counties in North Carolina; there are also case documents and correspondence related to the efforts of officials to arrest individual deserters and draft evaders. Although many of these documents are undated, the majority of the documents range in date from 1917 to 1920. The collection is divided into four series: Series I: Local Draft Board Records; Series II: Recruiting in North Carolina; Series III: Deserters and Draft Evaders; and Series IV: Oversized Materials.

Subject Terms

Corporate Names

North Carolina Council of Defense
North Carolina. State Department of Archives and History

Places

North Carolina

Subject—Topical

Draft (Military service)--United States--1910-1920
Military deserters--United States
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--Recruiting & enlistment--United States
World War, 1914-1918--United States—History

Material Types

Correspondence
Form letters
Photographs
Posters

Collection Inventory

Series I: Local Draft Board Records

Series I: Local Draft Board Records contains correspondence, photographs, bound manuscripts, speeches, registration records, train schedules, Selective Service memorandums, newspaper clippings, and handwritten and printed draft lists for North Carolina counties. These records

document the names and backgrounds of the men from North Carolina’s counties, who either enlisted or were drafted into service in World War I.

Practically each county or major city’s draft boards compiled two versions of the same draft enlistment lists for the North Carolina Council of Defense’s Historical Preservation committee: one list typed with handwritten notes; and the other list is the final, full-typed master list. The handwritten notes on the draft enlistment lists almost exclusively document the race of individuals registering or enlisting for the draft; those compiling the lists marked the drafted or enlisting individual as “Colored” (usually with a “col”) or “White” (usually with a “wh”). Most of the draft board lists were created from the original handwritten local draft or enlistment records in 1919 or 1920, but are not marked with the specific dates of creation. For most of the counties, there are two copies of the master typed lists of drafted or enlisted men. Occasionally, typed copies of death records duplicated from the North Carolina Adjutant General’s Office are included in this series—as in the case of Lenoir County (see Box 3, Folder 21). This series is arranged alphabetically by county name, with miscellaneous materials located at the end of the series.

Interesting items in this series include a list created at the U.S. Navy Recruiting Station in Raleigh, North Carolina, of North Carolina Naval Militia Members Mobilized for National Service, dated April 6, 1917, covering the New Bern, Elizabeth City, and Washington, North Carolina (see Box 5, Folder 22). Another interesting item is a bound manuscript—one of only three copies every created—of the history and operations of Winston-Salem’s Local Draft Board in Forsyth County, North Carolina. Due to its binding and size, it is stored in Box 2, a flat archival box (which is why the box does not follow alphabetical order of county names), placed in box order prior to Box 3—which contains the Forsyth County draft board lists.

Box/Folder	Description	Date
1/1	Alamance County	Undated
1/2	Alexander County	Undated
1/3	Alleghany County	Undated
1/4	Anson County	Undated
1/5	Ashe County	Undated
1/6	Avery County	Undated
1/7	Beaufort County	Undated
1/8	Bertie County	Undated
1/9	Bladen County	Undated

1/10	Brunswick County	Undated
1/11	Buncombe County	1917, 1919
1/12	Burke County	Undated
1/13	Cabarrus County	1919, undated
1/14	Camden County	Undated
1/15	Caldwell County	1920, undated
1/16	Carteret County	1917, 1920, undated
1/17	Caswell County	1919, undated
1/18	Catawba County	Undated
1/19	Chatham County	Undated
1/20	Cherokee County	Undated
1/21	Chowan County	1919-1920, undated
1/22	Clay County	Undated
1/23	Cleveland County	Undated
1/24	Columbus County	1918, undated
1/25	Craven County	1917, undated
1/26	Cumberland County	Undated
1/27	Currituck County	Undated
1/28	Dare County	Undated
1/29	Davidson County	1919, undated

[Box 2 is a flat archival box, containing a bound manuscript and a folder (Box 2, Folder 1) for Winston-Salem's Local Draft Board in Forsyth County. See Box 3, Folder 5 for the corresponding Forsyth County draft lists]

2/1	Supplemental Documents to Winston-Salem Draft Board Report	1939
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2	Report Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem (bound manuscript)	circa 1919
3/1	Davie County	Undated
3/2	Duplin County	Undated
3/3	Durham County	1918, undated
3/4	Edgecombe County	1919, undated
3/5	Forsyth County	1919, undated
3/6	Franklin County	1917-1919, undated
3/7	Gaston County	Undated
3/8	Gates County	Undated
3/9	Graham County	1918, 1920, undated
3/10	Granville County	1919, undated
3/11	Greene County	1919, undated
3/12	Guilford County	1919-1920
3/13	Halifax County	1920, undated
3/14	Harnett County	Undated
3/15	Haywood County	1919, undated
3/16	Henderson County	Undated
3/17	Hertford County	Undated
3/18	Hoke County	Undated
3/19	Hyde County	Undated
3/20	Iredell County	1919, undated
3/21	Jackson County	Undated

3/22	Johnston County	1919, undated
3/23	Jones County	1919, undated
3/24	Lee County	1919, undated
3/25	Lenoir County	1919, undated
3/26	Lincoln County	1919, undated
4/1	McDowell County	Undated
4/2	Macon County	1919-1920, undated
4/3	Madison County	1919, undated
4/4	Martin County	Undated
4/5	Mecklenburg County	1919, undated
4/6	Mitchell County	Undated
4/7	Montgomery County	1919, undated
4/8	Moore County	1919, undated
4/9	Nash County	Undated
4/10	New Hanover County	Undated
4/11	Northampton County	Undated
4/12	Onslow County	1919, undated
4/13	Orange County	Undated
4/14	Pamlico County	1919, undated
4/15	Pasquotank County	1917, 1919, undated
4/16	Pender County	Undated
4/17	Perquimans County	Undated
4/18	Person County	Undated

4/19	Pitt County	1919, undated
4/20	Polk County	1919, undated
4/21	Randolph County	Undated
4/22	Richmond County	1919, undated
4/23	Robeson County	1920, undated
4/24	Rockingham County	Undated
4/25	Rowan County	1918, 1920-1921, undated
4/26	Photograph of Rowan County's Fourth Contribution to U.S. Army	May 29, 1918
4/27	Rutherford County	1919, undated
4/28	List of Men Ordered to Report to Rutherford County Local Board for Military Duty	1917-1918
5/1	Rutherford County List of Registration Cards in Order of People's Liability for Military Service	Undated
5/2	Sampson County	1919, undated
5/3	Scotland County	1919, undated
5/4	Stanly County	Undated
5/5	Stokes County	1920, undated
5/6	Surry County	Undated
5/7	Swain County	1919, undated
5/8	Transylvania County	Undated
5/9	Tyrell County	1919, undated
5/10	Union County	1919, undated
5/11	Vance County	Undated

5/12	Wake County	Undated
5/13	Warren County	1919, undated
5/14	Washington County	Undated
5/15	Wayne County	1919, undated
5/16	Watauga County	Undated
5/17	Wilkes County	1919, undated
5/18	Wilson County	Undated
5/19	Yadkin County	Undated
5/20	Yancey County	Undated
5/21	Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation Draft Registration List, 1917	June 1917
5/22	List of North Carolina Naval Militia Members Mobilized for National Service	April 6, 1917
5/23	Train Schedule for the Second Increment of the National Army from Counties in North Carolina to Camp Jackson, South Carolina	Undated
5/24	Local Draft Boards Chairmen List	Undated
5/25	County Sheriff Draft Registration Form Letters	1917
5/26	State and National Blank Draft Registration Forms and Informational Notices	1917-1918
5/27	Gov. Thomas W. Bickett Appeal “The Day and its Duties”	May 26, 1917
5/28	U.S. Army Southeastern Department Memorandum 354.1—Training Camps for Colored Citizens	May 25, 1917
5/29	Selective Service Regulations	1917-1918
6/1	John J. Mackay Jr’s Signed Copy of Selective Service Regulations Appendix (Form 100)	1917

6/2	John J. Mackay Jr's Signed Copy of "Report of the Provost Marshall General" on the First Selective Service Draft (bound manuscript)	1918
6/3	Miscellaneous Draft Registration Materials	1917-1918
6/4	Draft Registration Posters	1917
6/5	Draft Registration Posters	1917
6/6	Draft Registration Posters	1917
6/7	Draft Registration Posters	1917
6/8	Draft Registration Newspaper Notices	1917

Series II: Recruiting in North Carolina

Series II: Recruiting in North Carolina contains newspaper clippings, posters, flyers, blank forms, booklets, handouts, and recruiting lists for various branches of the United States military, including the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and the North Carolina National Guard. Primarily, these materials pertain to recruiting materials handed out by the various military branches to recruits or potential recruits, placed out in public areas, or supplied to North Carolina colleges and universities. For example, Series II includes full-color U.S. Marine Corps recruiting booklets (see Box 6, Folder 16). Series II also includes a mass-produced, partially-blank U.S. Army recruiting poster, with handwritten information advertising a recruiting party to be held in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina (see Box 6, Folder 14). The U.S. military branch materials are arranged alphabetically by military branch name, then by format. All other materials are arranged by format.

Box/Folder	Description	Date
6/9	Draft Enrollment Newspaper Articles	1917
6/10	Recruiting Posters and Flyers	Undated
6/11	Military Officers Forms	1917, undated
6/12	National Guard and Militia	1917-1918, undated
6/13	U.S. Army Recruiting Materials	Undated
6/14	U.S. Army Recruiting Posters	Undated
6/15	U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Materials	Undated

6/16	U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Booklets	Undated
6/17	U.S. Navy Recruiting Booklets and Handouts	1917, undated
6/18	U.S. Navy North Carolina Recruits Lists	1917-1918, undated
6/19	U.S. Navy Recruitment—Miscellaneous	1917, undated

Series III: Deserters and Draft Evaders

Series III: Deserters and Draft Evaders contains handwritten and typed lists of suspected, reported, or confirmed World War I draft evaders or military service deserters. Series III also contains handwritten and typed notes on the efforts of local, state, and federal officials to capture military service deserters and draft evaders. For example, Series III contains a November 28, 1918, report of an investigation about John Campbell of Hot Springs, North Carolina (see Box 6, Folder 28). This series is arranged alphabetically by county or city name, with any existing individual desertion records or investigation materials placed at the end of the series.

Box/Folder	Description	Date
6/20	Buncombe County Deserters	Undated
6/21	Elizabeth City Deserters	Undated
6/22	Montgomery County Deserters	Undated
6/23	New Bern Deserters	Undated
6/24	Raleigh Division Deserters	Undated
6/25	Wake County Deserters	Undated
6/26	Wilson County Division Deserters	Undated
6/27	Deserters in North Carolina, Eastern District	Undated
6/28	Individual Desertion Records	1918, undated

Series IV: Oversized Materials

Series IV: Oversized Materials consists of oversized items, such as posters and large proclamations, originally folded and stored in regular file folders within the collection. The oversized items have been arranged by size within the corresponding size of archival storage boxes and acid-free folders. Each oversized item is described based on which original folder and series/subseries the item was located in prior to reprocessing of the collection. In brackets following the folder or item title is written the original box and folder for other locations within

the collection WWI 3, from which the oversized items were formerly stored. Box 7 is stored on the archival storage shelves with the rest of WWI 3's collection boxes. The remaining oversized folders are now stored in the Military Collection Oversized Map Case.

Box/Folder	Description	Date
7/1	Vance County Draft Registration Posters (3 copies) [Removed from Box 4, Folder 30]	June 5, 1917
7/2	<i>Military Branch Recruitment Posters</i> Sylva Radio Company North Carolina National Guard Signal Corps Wireless Branch Recruitment Poster, Undated <i>New York World</i> U.S. Navy Recruitment Poster, Undated [Removed from Box 6, Folder 9]	Undated

Oversized Folder 1

	“How to Answer Questions on Registration Cards!” Poster [Removed from Box 3, Folder 13]	Undated
	“Have You Changed Your Mail Address Since You Registered Under the Draft Law?” Poster (Major John D. Langston, Aide to Governor Thomas Bickett) [Removed from Box 3, Folder 13]	circa 1917
	North Carolina National Guard War Strength Governor’s Proclamation Poster [Removed From Box 5, Folder 23]	May 21, 1917
	Catawba County Draft Registration Board War Registration Poster (2 copies) [Removed from Box 1, Folder 18]	June 5, 1917
	Raleigh U.S. Marine Corps Recruitment Poster [Removed from Box 6, Folder 5]	Undated
	Moore County Sheriff Food Economy Proclamation Poster (2 copies) [Removed from Box 3, Folder 30]	May 12, 1917