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Finding aid for the Grand Rapids in World War I collection Collection 318

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on March 11, 2020.
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids History and Special Collections

111 Library Street NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

localhis@grpl.org

URL: <https://www.grpl.org/research/history/>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
Title:	Grand Rapids in World War I
ID:	Collection 318
ID [Archivists Toolkit Database::RESOURCE]:	324
Date [inclusive]:	circa 1914-1918
Physical Description:	14.8 Linear Feet 22 boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	This is a devised collection containing various accessions of information related to the participation of Grand Rapids, Michigan and its residents in the Great War, 1914-1918. The collection includes a large set of War Aid Bureau cards documenting soldiers enlisted from the Grand Rapids, Michigan area. Also included are scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings on these soldiers, prepared by Henry Idema. Also included are some original military documents, student papers and published and unpublished military histories. Several military histories document the 126th Infantry, and the 32nd Division, which was formed during the Spanish American War and served in both World War I and II.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Grand Rapids History and Special Collections

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localhis@grpl.org

URL: <https://www.grpl.org/research/history/>

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Various and unknown donors

Processing Notes

There are a number of additional processing needs of this collection, including both physical processing and descriptive processing for better access. These include:

- Removal of rusty metal paper clips from the blue War Aid Bureau cards.
- Foldering, boxing and cross reference of the material clipped to these cards.
- Construction of a database, at least to provide a name index, to those listed in the cards.
- Microfilming of the cards.

Items from Accession 2002.043 need to be humidified and rehoused.

Blue Cards. Due to the arrangement of the furniture in the temporary building, the drawer where these cards were previously housed could not be pulled out far enough to detect cards remaining in the drawer. When the cabinet was sold, some of the cards were still in it, and returned to the Library. A box was added at the end of the Large Shoebox range, and these cards were housed in that box. All of this series needs to be checked, beginning at the end of the blue cards, to see if the found cards need to be integrated alphabetically, or if the alphabet ranges and order need to be adjusted in the boxes.

So, currently we have to boxes, 14 & 15, which are listed as being the last boxes for the set, and this needs to be corrected, and the box labels corrected.

An earlier finding aid documenting this information was lost due to format destruction, and this information is reconstructed from the Archivist's memory. 5/20/2008

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Coll. 023, Godfrey Anderson Manuscripts

Coll. 108, 339th Ambulance Company Collection

Coll. 119, LuLu Cudney Papers. "Butterworth Nurses Serving in the Red Cross, 1898, 1918-19," 1930.

Coll. 141-25, Harry Wells Naval Related materials, 1999.108

Coll. 145, Dr. Frank C. Kinsey World War I Photographs

Coll. 146, Dr. Sumner Merrill Wells, Jr. World War I & Personal Papers

Coll. 174, Women's Committee of the Council on National Defense. Grand Rapids Unit. Records.

Coll. 198, Avery C. Gilleo Collection of World War I

Coll. 219, Samuel H. Ranck Papers.

Coll. 320, Record of Kent County Soldiers and Sailors in Service in the Great War [World War I]

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Controlled Access Headings

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- World War, 1914-1918 -- Registers -- Michigan
- World War, 1914-1918

Collection Inventory

Series I. War Aid Bureau Cards. (Blue)

Scope and Contents

The source of these cards is currently undocumented. Information on the cards includes: Name, Address, Date of Birth, Place of Birth, Place of Enlistment, Date of Enlistment, Branch of Services, Rank, Date Reported for Duty, Unit, Person to Notify in Emergency (Name/Address/Relationship), Lodge, Church, Marriage Date / Place, Name of Worked, Members of Family. Sometimes other cards or information are clipped to the blue cards. These include:

A. Soldiers and Sailors Records – The Great War (small white card). This card gives less information, but information also collected on the blue card.

B. Local Board for Division no. 1, City of Grand Rapids. (small white card) These cards were created on the back of discarded Grand Rapids Public Library Receipt Blank for Special Loans cards. The "Local Board ..." information was stamped on the blank back of these cards, and a name and address was typed in the top left corner. The use or significance of any of these cards has not been documented.

War Aid Bureau, Grand Rapids

Title/Description	Instances
Blue Cards A-BJ	Box 1
Blue Cards BL-CA	Box 2
Blue Cards CE-DE	Box 3
Blue Cards DH-F	Box 4
Blue Cards G-HEN	Box 5
Blue Cards HEP-J	Box 6
Blue Cards K-LA	Box 7
Blue Cards LE-ME	Box 8
Blue Cards MI-O	Box 9
Blue Cards P-RE	Box 10
Blue Cards RH-SH	Box 11
Blue Cards SL-SZ	Box 12
Blue Cards T-VAND	Box 13
Blue Cards VANE-Z	Box 14
Blue Cards W-Z. Found. Unprocessed.	Box 15

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Series II. Herman Idema Series

Scope and Contents

This series contains two scrapbooks created by Idema, and other documents found and saved by him, and deposited at the Grand Rapids Public Library. The scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings only about the soldier, including deaths, wounds and other information. Vol. 1 includes at least one article on Idema himself, and his War Work. There is some indexing within the volumes. The saved documents are ledger type books or sheets with the heading "Record of M.N.G. From Grand Rapids, Michigan", and are perhaps part of the separate Coll. 320, Record of Kent County Soldiers and Sailors in Service in the Great War [World War I] Idema found one of these volumes at the City Hall in 1921, and another at the Armory later that same year. No photocopying is permitted from these fragile early volumes. See desk staff for alternatives.

Scrapbooks

Soldiers', Sailors' and Nurses' Records / compiled by Herman H. Idema, Formerly M940.3.Id3

Title/Description	Instances
V.1 Oct. 5-14, 1918	Box 20
V.2 Nov. 28-Dec. 25, 1918 [oversized]	Box 20

Military Rosters	Box 20
Michigan National Guard Register Books.	Box 20
Record of [Naval Militia] from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Original printed title crossed out and "Naval Militia" written in left headermargin. N.d. 1986.094	Box 20

[List of Men Who Enlisted in the U.S. Army, or Register of Recruits from Western Michigan]

Title/Description	Instances
[Book 1] June 23, 1916-Dec. 29, 1916. OVERSIZED. Fnd. At the Armory, Nov. 1921.	Box 20
[Book 2] Apr. 12, 1917-May 13, 1917. OVERSIZED. Fnd. In City Manager's Office of City Hall, May 1921. 1986.094	Box 20

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Series III. Various Documents

Scope and Contents

This series includes single or small access listed under the subseries for the document type.

Subseries A. Military Histories

Title/Description	Instances
Historical Technical Report, 536 Engineer Service Battalion, N.A. [1919]	Box 16
Group Organized as Camp Custer, Michigan, May 8, [1918?] Made up of unassigned colored men [African Americans], and white men as non coms.	Box 16
History of the 126th Infantry in the War with Germany / by Emil B. Gansser. Grand Rapids : 125 Infantry Assoc., 1920. v. 1 1999.026	Box 16
Thirty-second Division Exploits / William G. Haan. Reprinted from the New York Time. Ca. 1919. Cover title: In Commemoration of the Foreign Service and Home Celebration of the 32nd Division. Compliments of Harding Coolidge Club of Wisconsin. Milwaukee : Broadway Press, n.d.	Box 16
On the Battle Fields of France in 1918 / by Emil B. Gansser, formerly captain, 126th Inf. 32Nd Div. Grand Rapids, 1958. v. 1 1999.026	Box 16
History of the 317th Infantry / Edley Craighil, 1st Lt. & Adj. 2nd Bn. This copy presented to the GRPL by Arthur F. Shaw,	Box 16

Captain Co. K, 317th Infantry, 80th Division, World War. I. 00.
[3329].1

Subseries B. Monument & Lists of Dead

Title/Description	Instances
Memoria in aeterna : a Remembrance of the Dedication of the Memorial Pillars erected in Fulton Street Park by the Citizens of Grand Rapids in memory of those who gave their lives in the World War / American Legion. Nov. 11, 1926.	Box 16

Michigan's Gold Star Record. Excerpts. From Michigan History Magazine, as part of an ongoing series in the 1940's.

[List of soldiers who died in WWI.	Box 16
Title/Description	Instances
[Excerpt #1]Caskey to Chodupski	Box 16
[Excerpt #2]Chricinski to Cole	Box 16

[Gold Star?] Men, Next of Kin & Address [List]

Title/Description	Instances
c. 1 original, source unknown.	Box 16.5
c. 2 Photocopy, Source unknown	Box 16.5

Gold Star Mothers [1924?] List.

Title/Description	Instances
c. 1 original, source unknown.	Box 16.5
c. 2 Photocopy, Source unknown.	Box 16.5

Kent County Men Who Gave Their Lives in the Great War. [Gold Star Men]

Title/Description	Instances
c. 1 original, source unknown.	Box 16.5
c. 2 Photocopy, Source unknown.	Box 16.5

Subseries C. Correspondence/Letters

Title/Description	Instances
Slash Picture of Crown Prince.	Box 16
Letter. To E.F. Demmon, his father, by Corp. Ralph W. Demmon, Nov.24, 1918. 2002.068	Box 16

Subseries D. Certificates

Charles D. Davidson (3)

Title/Description	Instances
Army of the USA. For Charles D. Davidson, Oct. 22, 1917. Corporal in the Medical Dept.	Box 17
Army of the USA. For Charles D. Davidson, Jan. 23, 1918. To Sargent in the Medical Dept.	Box 17
USA. Treasury Dept. Bureau of War Risk Insurance. Certificate no.131768. Dec. 1, 1917. For \$10,000. 2002.043	Box 17

Subseries E. Papers**Charles D. Davidson (2)**

Title/Description	Instances
Honorable Discharge from the Army. Davidson as Sergeant Field Artillery Replacement Troups, Aug. 30, 1918.	Box 17
State of Michigan. Application for World War Bonus. Kent Co.	Box 17

John F. Watkins [2020.019]**Biographical / Historical**

John Frederick Watkins was born in Whitehall, Michigan in 1897 to Frederick and Ethel Watkins. He served in World War I and returned home to Whitehall. He eventually moved to Indiana where he married, had a family and practiced law until his death in 1988.

Title/Description	Instances
Photographs of soldiers, mostly unidentified, 1919	Box 16.1
Photographs family, some identified, 1919	Box 16.1
Photo negatives, unidentified, 1919	Box 16.1
Misc. correspondence, 1919	Box 16.1
Letters to John F. Watkins from French pen pal, 1919	Box 16.1
Military ID and passes, 1919	Box 16.1
Postcards sent to family, 1919	Box 16.1

Subseries F. Publications

Title/Description	Instances
Bits of Poetry by the doughboy. Publ by Sergt. N.J. Danhof. GrandRapids. VanderWerf Printing Co. ca. 1917 Formerly MKG811.D22 00.[3186].1	Box 16

"The Returned Soldier" In Library Service. Detroit Public Library. V. 2,no. 12, Feb. 15, 1919. 00.[3252].1 Box 16

Subseries G. Reference Documents

Title/Description	Instances
[Chart, listing County, Population, Proportion. Michigan Quota, per population World War I?] Needs additional clarification. Source unknown.	Box 16.5

Subseries H. Student Papers

Title/Description	Instances
The Grand Rapids Evening Press' Comments on Germany, 1910-1914 / Robert Schoone-Jongen. Nov. 25, 1970. History 400A 00.[3248].1	Box 16.1
Life During the Strife : student views in Grand Rapids during World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II / Brian S. Vlieg. Dec. 11, 1984. History 395, Diephouse. 00.[3249].1	Box 16.1
The Opinion of the Grand Rapids Press concerning Preparedness, Neutrality, and Germany, 1914-1918 / Doug DeBoer. Dec. 5, 1979. Prof. Ippel. 00.[3250].1	Box 16.1
A View of Grand rapids Public Opinion Toward Germany, June 29 to Dec. 31, 1914 / Herk Vanden Bosch, Dec. 7, 1970. History 400A, Dr. Miller. 00.[3251].1	Box 16.1

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Series IV. Various Images.

Scope and Contents

Subseries A. World War I Reference Photos.

A large number of photographs showing images of World War I have been found in the archival backlog. These images may have been taken or acquired by Samuel Ranck during his time in Europe providing library services to soldiers. Or, they may be reference images that were acquired through some other means for reference purposes. No accession information is known. This material is unprocessed.

Subseries A. World War I Reference Photos.

Title/Description	Instances
Panorama. 2nd Bat. O.T.S., Capt. H.M. Baker, Comdg., June 10, 1918. "C.D. Davison, 2dn Battery, no. 29"--verso. 2002.043	Box 17
Panorama. Photo no. 264. Paul L. Richards, Montgomery, Ala. "Charles DeWitt Davidson"--verso. 2002.043	Box 17

Panorama. Ambulance co. 339, 310 Sanitary Train / photo by Spencer & Wyckoff, Detroit, Mich. Cracking. 2002.043	Box 17
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[George I. Davidson, father of Charles DeWitt Davidson.] / Hesselink & Phillips, photographers. Shows a man in a suit, with glasses, seated at a desk. 2002.043	Box 17
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Camp Custer, Battle Creek, MI / 32nd Division [2019.052]

General

Edward Everett Read was born in Grand Rapids and was a second lieutenant in Company K of the 61st Infantry during World War I. He mailed these photographs, mostly panoramic, home to his mother Mrs. Lucy M. Read.

Title/Description	Instances
The Human U.S. Shield, 30,000 Officers and Men, Camp Custer (2 copies), 1918	Drawer FF.IX.D
Camp Custer photographed from kites at 500 ft., 1918	Drawer FF.IX.D
View of Camp Custer as seen from Liberty Theatre	Drawer FF.IX.D
32nd Michigan Infantry, Col. L.C. Covell - Commanding, Camp Cotton, El Paso, TX, 1916	Drawer FF.IX.D

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