

**United Spanish War Veterans
Collection, 1898-1960
MSC 111-MSC 113, MS Size C**

Introduction

This collection consists of documents from the 1st Regiment Infantry of Vermont Volunteers' assignment in Georgia during the 1898 Spanish American War. It also includes records from the veteran's groups formed after the war, the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV), at national, state, and local levels. The collection occupies 3 linear feet of shelf space and is housed in three records center boxes and one oversized folder. The collection came to the Vermont Historical Society at an unknown time.

Institutional Notes

The 1st Regiment Infantry of Vermont Volunteers (now the Vermont National Guard) had limited participation in the Spanish American War. The conflict took place within the calendar year of 1898 with the Vermont unit's involvement limited from May through October of that year. After the war, many veterans' groups sprang up around the United States; in 1904 most of them merged into the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV). Despite the Vermonters' short time span in the Spanish American War, many veterans signed up for the group that became the USWV Department of Vermont.

The USWV Department of Vermont began in 1904, six years after the Spanish American conflict began under Commander Edward H. Prouty. The organization limited its membership to veterans of the Spanish American War, the Philippine Insurrection, and the military campaign in China. By including only veterans, the organization self-imposed a timeframe for its existence; when the last member died, the veterans' group ceased to exist.

The USWV in Vermont was organized into several camps across the state. In this context, the term "camp" refers to the local subunit of the larger Department of Vermont, analogous to the term "post" as used by the American Legion. Membership in a camp could last a lifetime; officers in the camps and the department were elected each year. Members were required to have served honorably in the military between April 21, 1898, and July 4, 1902. Each had to apply in writing, be investigated by a membership committee, be vouched for by a member in good standing, and subjected to a secret ballot vote before being allowed to enlist in a camp. The USWV allowed honorary members from other veterans' groups to observe, but not take part in, the camp monthly meetings.

Each camp was named for a participant in the Spanish American War, but not a living person. Most of the names came from soldiers that died during Vermont's activation or later as a result of the conflict. Vermonter Colonel Emerson H. Liscum is honored although he did not serve with the 1st Vermont Volunteer Infantry during the Spanish American War. He commanded the 9th US Infantry in 1900 and died during a battle in China on July 13 of that year.

There are no documents in the collection that accurately defines the end of the United Spanish War Veterans in Vermont. The obituary for Oliver R. Lowell states that he served as the department commander at the time of his death in 1962 and the collection ends about this time.

Scope and Content

The USWV in Vermont was founded in 1904, six years after the Spanish American conflict began, some of the correspondence in the collection is from that same year, letters, etc. written and received by then Department of Vermont Commander, Edward H. Prouty.

This collection documents the activities of the 1st Vermont Volunteer Infantry during the 1898 Spanish-American War and the subsequent activities of the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV) Department of Vermont through 1960.

The collection is organized in five series. The first series contains documents from the activation of the 1st Vermont Volunteer Infantry and their deployment to Camp George H. Thomas in Chickamauga, Walker County, Georgia. The wartime records are copies kept by the officers in charge of the regiment as they performed their duties. Other documents include correspondence from Vermont Adjutant General Theodore S. Peck, Col. Osman D. Clark, commanding, Lt. Col. John H. Mimms, and Capt. Arthur G. Eaton, 1st VT adjutant. An oversized folder contains monthly regimental and company return documents, supply documents, target practice results, and payrolls from the Vermont regiment's time in Georgia, 1898.

The second series contains documents on the USWV at a national level as well as the Department of Vermont level. Much correspondence between the national and state officials is included. There is also information about veterans' issues debated in Washington, D.C., Rep. Frank Greene, a former Vermont department commander, worked the issues as the US House of Representative member from Vermont. The series also contains some of the general orders issued by the Vermont Department to the camps, 1909 to 1946. Other records include correspondence and reports between the Department of Vermont and the national organization. The collection touches on the Military Order of the Serpent, a companion veterans group with a seemingly less serious mission. The second series also contains a copy of most of the editions of *Pearson's War Pictures* depicting the lives of the soldiers and sailors from the era, mostly in pictures.

The third series documents some of the many USWV camps spread throughout Vermont. The national organization had rules and by-laws for establishing, naming, membership, and policies and procedures for local encampments. The collection contains correspondence, monetary records, and membership rosters, mostly in folders, but also in three ledgers included.

Not all the USWV camps set up in Vermont lasted) some disbanded a few years after establishment) and not all camps that survived are represented here. The Barre camp seems to have been numbered both 2 and 8, although both organizations were named for Harry B. Lamson. Two separate camps, Camp 2 in St. Johnsbury and Camp 12 in Winooski were both named for Col. E. N. Liscum, although they weren't operating at the same time. Folder 0 for this collection contains a list of camps in Vermont and a short biography of each person honored with

a camp name as well as information from the national by-laws for establishing a camp within the USWV.

The fourth series contains records from some of the many commanders at the Department of Vermont. The documents are arranged chronologically by commander's term. A few of the records are contained in bound volumes rather than separated into individual file folders and are at the end of the series. Most of the commanders' documents are correspondence-related. Folder 0 contains a list of known commanders at the Vermont Department level and a short biography of each one, and some information from the national by-laws for establishing a state level department within the USWV.

The fifth series contains a few folders of correspondence from other officers at the state level.

Related Collections

- Book: Heller, Paul, *More Granite City Tales: Writing on the History of Barre, Vermont*, 2014. Contains a chapter on Company E and its participation in the Spanish American War, Call no. 974.31 B274heL2.
- Book: Johnson, Herbert T., *Vermont in the Spanish American War*, prepared and published under the direction of Herbert T. John, the Adjutant General, by authority of the General Assembly, 1929. Call no. 929 V59w 1898.
- Book: *The Green Mountain Boys at Chickamauga (Georgia) 1898*. Views and rosters. Published by Head Bros., Mexico, Missouri. Call no. 973.89 V1h.
- Book: *50th Anniversary of the Muster of the First Regiment, Vermont Volunteer Infantry ...* Call no. 973.896 V592.
- Pamphlet: *Roster of the Regiment: Vermont Boys Who Will Become a Part of the United States Army To-day ...* From the Burlington Free Press dated May 16, 1898. Call no. 929 V59spb.
- Manuscript, "James E. Mitchell Spanish American War papers, 1926 – 1954." Mitchell became a member of the Lamson Camp, USWU, Barre, Vermont. Call no. MSA 283:6.
- Manuscript, "First Vermont Infantry Regiment, Company E scrapbook, 1898 – 1899," assembled by Gertrude E. Lang. Call no. XMSC 37:10.
- Manuscript, "George W. Sharpley papers, 1897-1898, 1909." Papers and photos belonging to Spanish American War veteran, George Sharpley. Call no. MSC 211:10.
- Photograph collection: Spanish American War Training Photographs. Call no. FB-123:4
- Manuscript: Lang, Gertrude. "First Vermont Infantry Regiment, Company E Scrapbook, 1898-1899." Call no. XMSC 37:10.
- Manuscript: "United Spanish War Veterans Records, 1904 – 1962." MSA 789.
- Manuscript: George W. Sharpley Papers, 1897-1898. Call no. MSC 211.10.
- Manuscript: Dr. Joseph W. Jackson Papers, 1892-1925, Call no. BCH 117.
- *The Vermonter, a periodical*, Vol. III, No. 11, June 1898. Call no. 974.3 V598V.

InventoryI. 1st Vermont Regiment

- MSC 111:01 1st VT Regiment Wartime Records
 :02 T. S. Peck Correspondence
 :03 Clark and Mimms Correspondence
 :04 Eaton Documents
 :05 1898 General Orders, Various Sources
 :06 1898 Expense Records
 :07.1 1898 A.G.O. Forms
 :07.2 *The Vermonter*, June 1898
 MS Size C Monthly regimental return documents
 Monthly company return documents
 Clothing and supply documents
 Target practice score sheets
 Ordnance stores
 Blank Muster Out Roll
 Payrolls

II. USWV Department of Vermont

- :08 Rules and Regulations
 :09 Inspection Reports to National Organization
 :10 Correspondence with National USWV, 1906 - 1908
 :11 _____, 1909 - 1930
 :12 _____, 1946 - 1950
 :13 Miscellaneous Correspondence
 :14 _____, Holidays
 :15 Miscellaneous Documents
 :16 General Orders 1909 – 1946 (incomplete)
 :17 Reports Received, 1946 - 1949
 :18 National Legislation for Veterans (1 of 2)
 :19 National Legislation for Veterans (2 of 2)
 :20 Blank Department Business Forms
 :21 Marketing to Department or Camps
 :22 Military Order of the Serpents
 :23 *National Tribune – Stars and Stripes*, subscription forms
 :24 Miscellaneous Clippings and Essays
 :25 Miscellaneous Materials
 :26 [Number not used]
 :27 *Pearson's War Pictures*, No. 2-4, 6-11, 13-16
 :28 Photo of the USS Maine
 :29 Ledger: Department of Vermont, contains department monetary records laid out by camp, Camps 1 – 11, 1904 – 1914, incomplete.
 :30 Ledger: Department of Vermont, contains meeting minutes from annual encampments, 1905 - 1918
 MSC 112: 01 Department of Vermont Membership Transmittals 1939-1946

: 02 Department of Vermont Membership Transmittals 1947-1954

III. Individual Camp Records

- MSC 112: 03 Harold S. Folyes Camp No. 1 Rutland, 1908-1954
 : 04 _____, correspondence
 : 05 Col. E. N. Liscum Camp No. 2 St. Johnsbury, 1908-1916
 : 06 _____, correspondence
 : 07 Harry B. Lamson Camp No. 2 Barre, 1908-1954 (See also Camp No. 8 below)
 : 08 Daniel F. Curtin Camp No. 3 Brattleboro, 1908-1938
 : 09.1 _____, correspondence
 : 09.2 _____, member and camp monetary records, 1932 – 1954 (ledger)
 : 10 O. J. Gisborne Camp No. 5 Montpelier, 1908-1909
 : 11 _____, correspondence
 : 12 William C. Spafford Camp No. 6 Bennington, 1932-1938
 : 13 Harry B. Lamson Camp No. 8 Barre, 1908-1909 (See also Camp No. 2 above)
 : 14 James W. Flynn Camp No. 9 Burlington, 1908-1939
 : 15 _____, correspondence
 : 16 William C. Spafford Camp No. 10 Bennington, 1910-1917
 : 17 _____, correspondence
 : 18 Howard K. Blair Camp No. 11 Newport, 1911-1914
 : 19 _____, correspondence
 : 20 _____, 1930-1946
 : 21 Col. E. N. Liscum Camp No. 12 Winooski, 1938-1939

IV. Department Commanders Correspondence

- : 22 William F. Starr Camp No. 13 White River Junction, 1938-1950
 : 23 Prouty, Edward H., 1904 - 1907
 : 24 Dyer, Edward H., 1905 - 1906
 : 25 Greene, Frank L., 1905 - 1909
 : 26 Bashaw, Charles, 1906 - 1909
 MSC 113: 01 Fennell, Luther W., 1908
 : 02 _____, 1909
 : 03 _____, 1910
 : 04 _____, 1911 – 1929
 : 05 Ripley, Ned D., 1905 – Mar 1911
 : 06 _____, Apr 1911 – Dec 1911
 : 07 _____, 1912- 1938
 : 08 Hamilton, James M., 1913 - 1915
 : 09 Miller, Edgar N., 1906 1916
 : 10.1 Howes, Phil S., 1906 – 1938
 : 10.2 “Miscellaneous Letters, 1930 – 1935, Towne and Churchill, Gates and
 Boehmer, Taps [Deaths]”
 : 11 Gates, Elbert, 1936 - 1938
 : 12.1 Mead, George W., 1940 – 1950
 : 12.2 _____, “Commander, Department of 1939 Vermont, U.S.W.V. 1940, Records
 and Correspondence, G. W. Mead, Department Commander.”

: 13 Ellis, Henry, 1907 – 1950

V. Department Adjutants Correspondence

: 14 Laughton, James W., 1909 - 1911

: 15 Boyce, Clayton B., 1905 - 1946

: 16 Heald, Clair Vivian, 1945 – 1949

: 17 _____, 1950 – 1951

Harry Harrington
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