
Hope College
Abstract


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Provenance: Polar Bear Oral History Project
Donor: Hope College History Department
Photographs: 24 images
Processed by: Craig Wright, February 1991
             Catherine Jung, April 2007

History

The Polar Bear Oral History Project documents the American intervention in the Russian Civil War from the viewpoints of local survivors of the American Expeditionary Force, North Russia, 1918-1919. Since these men participated in actions in the Archangel region, there are no materials in the collection which pertain to American activities in the Far East near Vladivostok. American forces involved in this conflict were known as “polar bears.”

The project was supervised by Dr. G. Larry Penrose of the History Department. Three students, Nancy Johnson, Deborah Lenning and Glen Johnson, interviewed fifteen veterans of the 339th Infantry Regiment and 310th Engineers Regiment from the summer of 1977 to the fall of 1979.

Scope and Content

The Polar Bear Oral History Project records consist of materials from 1910 to 1985, the bulk of which document the project itself and cover the years 1977 to 1979. Included are interview transcripts, cassette tapes, articles, bibliographies, diaries, clippings, photographs, microfilm and a book. The folders have been arranged alphabetically by topical headings.

Note: legal releases were not obtained from veterans Walter Bushaw and John Volkers. Their materials are RESTRICTED.

Container List

Box 1
The American Sentinel, Newspaper, 1918-1919 (copies) (see Box 2)
Articles, 1926-1991
Bak, Richard. “Michigan’s War on Bolshevism,” 1983
Loewenstein, Karl. “American Intervention in Northern Russia: The Impressions of the American Soldier,” 1991 (student paper)
MacMorland, Major General Edward E. “Our First War with the Russians,” 1951
Moore, Lieutenant Colonel Joel R. “The North Russian Expedition: The 85th Division’s Participation,” 1926
Feist, Joe Michael, ed. “Railways and Politics: The Russian Diary of George Gibbs, 1917”
Book, Michigan Polar Bears, 1965 (Digital)
Clark, Roger Sherman, n.d., 1919 (copies - originals at the Bentley Historical Library)
Correspondence, 1977-1979
Diaries, 1918-1919
Anonymous, Company E, 1918-1919
Arkins, Edwin L., Company C, 1918-1919
Siplon, James, Company I, 1918-1919
General Information, n.d., 1918-1920
History of the American Expedition Fighting the Bolsheviki: Campaigning in North Russia 1918-1919, The. Moore, Mead and Jahns, 1920
Letter, 1950
Interviews, 1977-1979
Bushaw, Walter, 1977 (RESTRICTED)
Colburn, Cleo Merritt, 1977
Grace, Charles W., 1977 (1 image)
Hershberger, Russell W., 1977 (1 image)
Kemperman, Radus H., 1977
Kooyers, Frederick M., 1977 (1 image)
Larsen, Alfred M., 1977 (1 image)
Lewis, Floyd, 1977
Marxer, Rudolph, 1977
Petropolous, George, 1977
Rotman, Martin, 1978
Siplon, James, 1977 (1 image)
Slagh, Albert J., Rough Draft, 1978
Volkers, John, 1978 (REstricted)
Maps, n.d. (see Box 2)
Photographs, n.d., 1910, 1918, 1977 (19 images)
Polar Bear Association, 1940-1977
  General, n.d., 1977
  Membership list, n.d.
  Programs, 1940-1962
Audiotape Cassettes/Digital, 1977-1978
  Bartels, Levi, 6/12/78
  Colburn, Cleo, 6/17/77
  Grace, Charles, 6/14/77 (2 tapes)
  Hershberger, Russell, 6/20/77
  Kemperman, Radus, 6/23/77
  Kooyers, Fred, 6/8/77
  Larsen, Alfred, 6/13/77 (2 tapes)
  Lewis, Floyd, 6/29/77 (2 tapes)
  Lewis, Floyd, 7/11/77
  Marxer, Rudolph, 6/16/77 (2 tapes)
  Rotman, Martin, 6/13/78
  Siplon, James, 6/29/77, 7/6/77 (3 tapes)
  Slagh, Albert J., 6/12/78
Photograph, “Camp Custer, Michigan,” 1917 (oversize)

Box 2

The American Sentinel, Newspaper, 1918-1919 (copies)
Maps, n.d.