

## **Finding Aid for the Bancroft Camp 16, United Spanish War Veterans Collection**

**Title:** Bancroft Camp 16, United Spanish War Veterans Collection

**Dates:** 1898-1958

**Quantity:** 6.0 Linear feet

**Abstract:** The United Spanish War Veterans (USWV) organization was created for individuals that fought in the Spanish-American War to free Cuba from Spain in 1898. Before the 'Amalgamation Agreement' was signed in 1904 there were various large organizations in place. After the agreement was signed there was one institution created combining these organizations. The Bancroft Camp 16 was the USWV chapter for Racine, Wisconsin, which was a subset of the national USWV organization. This collection consists of materials from the United Spanish War Veterans Bancroft Camp 16 in Racine, Wisconsin from 1899-1956. The materials include financial records, pension records, member roster lists, correspondence, governing rules and regulations, ceremony records, and convention proceedings.

### **Biographical/Historical Note**

The United Spanish War Veterans was an organization of American veterans who fought in the Spanish-American War, which occurred from 1898 to 1899. After the war ended, five national veteran organizations were created for the support of the veterans. In 1904, the United Spanish War Veterans was established and consolidated the five veteran organizations into one. Wm. A. Bancroft Camp, No. 16 was the United Spanish War Veterans chapter for Racine, Wisconsin and was organized in 1905. Bancroft Camp 16 was named in honor of former Brigadier-General Wm. A. Bancroft, Philadelphia, who was a firm authoritarian and respected by his men.

Bancroft Camp 16 strived to work for true Americanism, continuation of Memorial Day, and allegiance to the flag. It also demonstrated a dynamic support system for its members and affiliations. Bancroft Camp held meetings, parades, and gatherings garnering support for local veterans and their families. It was a civic-minded organization that held a huge part in forming the Construction of Memorial Hall, an honor to the veterans of all American wars. Bancroft Camp was host to the Ladies Auxiliaries, the Sons of Veterans, and the Comrades across the state of Wisconsin and played a vital role in bringing veterans and their families together.

Pension and convention funds for the veterans were essential for the USWV. If an individual could be confirmed as a veteran of the War and applied to the USWV, they would be eligible for a pension for their duties. The pension could also be applied to the veteran's widow after death. There was a process to apply for this pension and many times it required the certification of a medical doctor. Events were held to connect and aid USWV members. Local organizations would hold conventions and

activities where members would gather and support each other. Delegates from these local organizations would have the opportunity to attend the national USWV convention to assist in supporting bills, creating by-laws, and addressing other areas of interest.

## **Scope and Content**

The collection consists of materials from the United Spanish War Veterans' Bancroft Camp 16 located in Racine, Wisconsin. The dates of materials in the collection range from 1899 to 1956. Materials in the collection include correspondence, memorial booklets/programs, financial records, semi-annual reports, membership paperwork, newspaper clippings, and organization proceedings. The programs provide information on activities and ceremonies that were attended by the United Spanish War Veterans members, and give a valuable perspective to military history. The correspondence between members demonstrates the comradery and eagerness among members of the organization. The financial records reveal the financial support that the members contributed, accurate details that were kept on the accounts, and offers a history of the organization.

The collection is divided into three series. The **Financial Records** series includes three subseries: **Reports, Books, Additional Records**. The **Member Papers** series contains five subseries: **Member Applications, Rosters Lists, Pension Papers, Photographs, Additional Papers**. The **Governance Records** series includes four subseries: **Rules and Regulations, Ceremonies and Rituals, General Orders and Circulars, Meetings and Conventions**.

**Series I. Financial Records** includes the organization's allocations of funds and fiscal statements. This series contains bank statements, bank records, receipts, quartermaster accounts, and reports. The financial materials also include ledgers and miscellaneous information on the assets and spending of the organization and its members. Each subseries is in a separate folder or file within the collection's box. The dates of the financial records vary from 1906 to 1938. The Financial Record Book has records from 1907-1938 and the Bank Book is from 1914-1929. There are additional receipts and invoices from the organization included as well.

**Series II. Member Papers** includes documents regarding the veterans and their membership. This series contains member applications, roll calls, rosters lists, pension papers, medical information, and confirmations. The material in this series links the members to each other and the organization through very detailed records. Each subseries is in a separate folder or file within the collection's box. Member records are available from 1906 to 1917. There are also rosters lists and roll calls dated from 1912-1917. Pension papers in this series include pension applications, medical statements, confirmations for members, and widow information. There is a photograph from 1898 that includes member's faces and names accordingly. There is also correspondence between members and officers in this series.

**Series III. Governance Records** contains the ceremonies and ritual records, the rules and regulations records, the orders and circulars, meeting minutes, encampment proceedings, programs, legislation bulletin, meeting minutes, convention programs, souvenir books, and newspaper clippings. The material in this series documents the organization's governing guidelines and key functions. It also provides an understanding about the sanctions passed to amend the governing policies. Each subseries is in a separate folder or file within the collection's box. The 'Rules and Regulations' from the years 1910, 1920, 1930 record the organization's governing policies and show a progression of order spanning over 30 years. The 'Ceremonies and Rituals' include personal information regarding the USWV and its members. Ceremonial information dates from 1913-1929 and ritual information ranges from 1912-1935. The 'General Orders and Circulars' provides information from 1909-1912 on member sanctions, violations, and resolutions affecting the governance laws. The 'Legislative Bulletin' from 1955 signifies the efforts in obtaining better benefits for members.

### **Container List**

#### **FINANCIAL RECORDS**

REPORTS, 1906-1948.

Quarter Master Reports, 1947-1948

Semi-Annual Reports, 1906-1912

Convention Financial Reports, 1906-1908

BOOKS, 1907-1938.

Bank Book, 1914-1929

Financial Record Book, 1907-1938

ADDITIONAL RECORDS, 1906-1948.

Receipts, 1906-1948

Cancelled Checks, 1918-1922

Delinquent Notifications, 1908

#### **MEMBER PAPERS**

MEMBER APPLICATIONS, 1906-1917.

ROSTER PAPERS, 1906-1943.

Member Lists, 1942-1943

Roll Call, 1912-1917

Correspondence, 1906-1910

PENSION, 1909-1945.

Applications, 1909-1945

Medical Correspondence, 1936-1945

PHOTOGRAPH, 1898.

ADDITIONAL PAPERS, 1913-1946.

Member Certificates, 1918

Medal Notification, 1918

Newspaper Clippings, 1918-1919

Member Correspondence, 1913-1946

**GOVERNANCE RECORDS**

RULES AND REGULATIONS, 1910-1930.

CEREMONIES AND RITUALS, 1912-1935.

Ceremony Books, 1913-1929

Ceremony Correspondence, Programs, and Orders, 1913-1918

Ritual Booklet, 1935

Ritual Books, 1912-1935

GENERAL ORDERS AND CIRCULARS, 1907-1955.

Circulars, 1907-1913

Legislative Bulletin, 1955

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS, 1905-1958.

State and Meeting Minutes, 1905-1923

State Convention Papers, 1907-1948

Proceedings, 1917-1948

Member Correspondence, 1907-1909

Souvenir Book, 1940

Program, 1918

National Convention Papers, 1905-1958

Proceedings, 1927-1958

Member Correspondence, 1905-1955