

Tasker Howard Bliss Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2013

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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2013

Collection Summary

Title: Tasker Howard Bliss Papers

Span Dates: 1864-1933

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1917-1930)

ID No.: MSS13037

Creator: Bliss, Tasker Howard, 1853-1930

Extent: 80,000 items

Extent: 393 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 104 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78013037>

Summary: Army officer, diplomat, and scholar. Correspondence, printed matter, drafts of speeches, lectures, and articles, diaries, memoranda, reports, minutes of meetings, and scrapbooks relating mainly to Bliss's military career and participation in peace negotiations after World War I.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Allen, Henry T. (Henry Tureman), 1859-1930--Correspondence.

Baker, Newton Diehl, 1871-1937--Correspondence.

Bliss, Tasker Howard, 1853-1930.

Crosby, Oscar Terry, 1861-1947--Correspondence.

Grew, Joseph C. (Joseph Clark), 1880-1965--Correspondence.

Harrison, Leland, 1883-1951--Correspondence.

Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964--Correspondence.

House, Edward Mandell, 1858-1938--Correspondence.

Lansing, Robert, 1864-1928--Correspondence.

Polk, Frank L. (Frank Lyon), 1871-1943--Correspondence.

White, Henry, 1850-1927--Correspondence.

Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924--Correspondence.

Organizations

Allied and Associated Powers (1914-1920). Supreme War Council.

Army War College (U.S.)

United States. American Commission to Negotiate Peace.

United States. Army--Foreign service--Cuba.

United States. Army--Foreign service--Philippines.

United States. Army.

United States. War Department. General Staff.

Subjects

Freedom of the seas.

Spanish-American War, 1898--Cuba.

World War, 1914-1918--Peace.

World War, 1914-1918.

Places

Cuba--History--1895-

Europe--Economic conditions--1918-1945.

Europe--Politics and government--1918-1945.

Mexico--History--Revolution, 1910-1920.
Philippines--History--1898-1946.
United States--Foreign relations--1913-1921.

Occupations

Army officers.
Diplomats.
Scholars.

Provenance

The papers of Tasker Howard Bliss, army officer, diplomat, and scholar, were given to the Library of Congress by Bliss in 1929-1930. Additional material was given by the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1935, Eleanora Bliss Knopf in 1936, by the trustees of the Bliss estate in 1939, and again by Eleanora Bliss Knopf in 1971.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1941 and revised in 1947-1948 and 1979. The finding aid was revised again in 2013.

Additional Guides

Card indexes to correspondents in the collection are available in the Manuscript Reading Room.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Broadsides have been transferred to the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Tasker Howard Bliss Papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Tasker Howard Bliss is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Tasker Howard Bliss are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Tasker Howard Bliss Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1853, Dec. 31	Born, Lewisburg, Pa.
1875	Graduated, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.

1875-1902	Served in 1st U.S. Artillery
1882	Married Eleanora E. Anderson
1885-1888	Professor of military science, U.S. Naval War College
1897-1898	Military attaché, U.S. Legation, Madrid, Spain
1898-1902	Collector of customs, Havana, Cuba, and chief, Cuban Customs Service
1902	Appointed special envoy to Cuba to negotiate treaty of reciprocity between Cuba and the U.S.
1903	Commandant, Army War College
1909	Member, Army General Staff, and president, Army War College
1909-1910	Assistant and then acting chief of staff, U. S. Army
1911	Commander, provisional brigade on Mexican border
1915	Appointed member, Army General Staff, and assistant chief of staff, U. S. Army
1917	Member, Allied Council
1917-1918	Chief of staff, U.S. Army, with rank of general
1918-1919	Member, Supreme War Council and U.S. American Commission to Negotiate the Peace
1930, Nov. 9	Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Tasker H. Bliss (1853-1930) span the years 1864-1933, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1917-1930. The collection is organized into two parts and consists of correspondence, printed matter, speeches, lectures, and articles, diaries, memoranda, reports, minutes of meetings, scrapbooks, and other material chiefly reflecting his military career and participant in peace negotiations after World War II.

Part I

Part I is comprised of a [General File](#) spanning the years 1870-1919 with personal and official papers relating to Bliss's military career from before the Spanish-American War through World War I. Topics include his service in Cuba and the Philippines, association with the Army War College, service on the Mexican border during the revolutions that succeeded the regime of Porfirio Diaz, and duties after being appointed chief of staff of the United States Army in 1917.

Part II

Part II spans the years 1901-1933 and is organized into six series: [Personal File](#), [Office File-Supreme War Council](#), [Family Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Speech and Article File](#), and [Miscellany](#). The focus of Part II is on Bliss's work with the U.S. American Commission to Negotiate Peace following World War I and his participation in the Allied and Associated Supreme War Council. Prominent correspondents include Henry T. Allen, Newton Diehl Baker, Oscar Terry Crosby, Joseph C. Grew, Leland Harrison, Herbert Hoover, Edward Mandell House, Robert Lansing, Frank L. Polk, Henry White, and Woodrow Wilson.

In addition to correspondence, Part II contains Bliss's diary from 1917-1919 as well as reports, memoranda, minutes of meetings, and press summaries. Minutes of Supreme War Council sessions are especially valuable, as is Bliss's autograph draft, with copies, of his own report on the council. Included are minutes of: the supreme council meetings (not including the Council of Four), January 12-December 6, 1919; daily meetings of the American commissioners, January 30-October 9, 1919; conferences between the American delegation and American technical advisors, June 3-September 3, 1919; meetings of the Permanent Committee of Military Representatives, February 4, 1918-September 1919; meetings of the Superior Blockade Council, February 14, 1919; meetings of the Allied Commission on Reparations, February 3-15, 1919; and meetings of the Powers with Special Interests, January 27-March 6, 1919.

There are also copies of resolutions passed at sessions of the Supreme War Council, of decisions of the Council of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, and of joint notes of the Permanent Military Representative. Included also are S-H Bulletins, Department of State daily news summaries, New York newspapers summaries, and American and international press comments. Miscellaneous subject files encompass postwar issues relating to topics such as the Italian problem in the Adriatic, Albania, Armenia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Banat, Belgium, Bessarabia, Greece, Holland, Hungary, economic policy, the food situation in Germany, financial data, and freedom of the seas.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in two parts composed of seven series:

Part I:

- [General File, 1870-1919](#)

Part II:

- [Personal File, 1917-1920](#)
- [Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930](#)
- [Family Correspondence, 1864-1933](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1892-1927](#)
- [Speech and Article File, 1909-1927](#)
- [Miscellany, 1907-1929](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-243	<p><u>Part I: General File, 1870-1919</u></p> <p>Personal and official letters, telegrams, memoranda, diaries, notes, scrapbooks, military reports and orders, indexes, and other material.</p> <p>Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 244-317	<p><u>Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920</u></p> <p>Diaries, correspondence, memoranda, minutes and reports of the Supreme War Council and various commissions, bulletins, news reports, and other press material, and miscellaneous documents.</p> <p>Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 317-387	<p><u>Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930</u></p> <p>Correspondence, reports, minutes, and other material.</p> <p>Arranged by topic or type of material.</p>
BOX 388-392	<p><u>Part II: Family Correspondence, 1864-1933</u></p> <p>Letters by Bliss family members, including correspondence with his wife.</p> <p>Arranged by name of correspondent.</p>
BOX 392	<p><u>Part II: General Correspondence, 1892-1927</u></p> <p>Letters sent and received.</p> <p>Organized chronologically.</p>
BOX 393	<p><u>Part II: Speech and Article File, 1909-1927</u></p> <p>Speeches, articles, and related material.</p> <p>Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 393	<p><u>Part II: Miscellany, 1907-1929</u></p> <p>Printed matter.</p> <p>No arrangement.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-243	Part I: General File, 1870-1919 Personal and official letters, telegrams, memoranda, diaries, notes, scrapbooks, military reports and orders, indexes, and other material. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 1	Copy of joint resolution of Senate and House, no. 167 (1870) 1884, 12 May, ordnance notes no. 346: thesis by Bliss, "Strategical Value of the Inland Canal Navigation of the United States" (printed copy) Manuscript of above thesis, dated April 1884. [A.D.S.] together with correspondence transmitting it to Chief of Ordnance 1884, 10 June, proceedings and preliminary report of Board of Officers appointed by Special Order No. 111 Typewritten copy of report (translated from Spanish by J. MacD. Sheridan): "Weyler's Campaign, in Mindanao, Philippine Islands" [1890] 1893, 25 May, carbon copy of typewritten report by Capt. Theo. A. Bingham on "Hints to Officers Detailed as Military Attachés" Bliss correspondence, 26 Nov. 1894 to 5 Sept. 1900 Letters to Adjutant General of Cuba 1 Jan. 1899-31 Jan. 1899
BOX 2	1 Feb.-15 Mar. 1899
BOX 3	Copies of official telegrams to and from Bliss, United States Army Headquarters at Cuba, 17 May 1899-17 Nov. 1900
BOX 4	Miscellaneous letters received 27 June 1898-31 July 1900
BOX 5	1 Aug. 1900-18 Sept. 1901
BOX 6	20 Sept. 1901-17 Sept. 1902
BOX 7	Letters sent to Collectors of Customs Baracoa 18 Jan. 1899-13 Oct. 1899
BOX 8	17 Oct. 1899-24 Oct. 1900 Batabano 3 Jan.-5 June 1899
BOX 9	8 June 1899-17 Dec. 1900
BOX 10	Matanzas 10 Jan.-14 July 1899
BOX 11	18 July 1899-2 Mar. 1900
BOX 12	23 Mar.-4 Dec. 1900
BOX 13	Letters and telegrams received from Collectors of Customs in Cuba, 1899 Baracoa, 17 Jan.-4 Nov. Batabano, 6 June-20 Nov. Caibarin, 15 June-5 Aug.
BOX 14	Caibarin, 6 Aug.-11 Nov. Cardenas, 26 May-23 Nov.

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 15	Cienfuegos, 18-30 May Cienfuegos, 7 June-4 Nov. Gibara, 22 Mar.-28 Nov.
BOX 16	Guantanamo, 16 June-31 July Guantanamo, 1 Aug.-14 Nov. Manzanillo, 2 June-22 Nov. Matanzas, 13 Apr.-12 Dec. Nuevitas, 22 Mar.-11 Dec.
BOX 17	Sagua la Grande, 17 June-22 July Sagua la Grande, 28 July-22 Dec. Santa Cruz, 7 Feb.-5 Sept. Santiago de Cuba, 22 Feb.-13 Nov. Trinidad, 19 May-19 Dec. Tunas de Zaza, 28 June-15 Dec. Miscellaneous, 26 Aug.-22 Dec.
BOX 18	Special Cases; combination in the Havana Custom House: cases of dishonest practice in Custom House brought to attention of W. Morgan Shuster, Chief of Statistics and Acting Assistant Auditor for Cuba
BOX 19	Continuation of above, with typewritten copy of the proceedings and copies of supporting documents, [15-23 Dec. 1899]
BOX 20	Vouchers for property received from Bliss by Collectors of Customs, [Nos. 1-49], 6 Feb.-29 June 1899 Bliss's report on insular property expanded for fiscal year ending 30 June 1900 Vouchers, 10 July 1900-30 June 1901 [Nos. 1-35] 1900, Oct., papers relating to Bulls-Shuster-Bravo difficulty
BOX 21	Abstract of insular property Oct.-Dec. 1900 Jan.-Mar. 1901 Apr.-June 1901 Abstract of articles received by Bliss from various sources for fiscal year ending 30 June 1901, together with supporting papers Miscellaneous letters and endorsements, 1901
BOX 22	1-2 Apr.
BOX 23	3-10 Apr.
BOX 24	11-15 Apr.
BOX 25	16-23 Apr.
BOX 26	24-30 Apr.
BOX 27	Miscellaneous letters sent, 1901 1-9 Jan.
BOX 28	10-15 Jan.
BOX 29	16-19 Jan.
BOX 30	21-24 Jan.
BOX 31	25-31 Jan.
BOX 32	Miscellaneous letters and endorsements, 1901 5-7 Aug.
BOX 33	6-15 Aug.
	16-28 Aug.

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 34	29-31 Aug. Telegrams to Collectors of Customs, 1 Jan.-30 Apr. 1902 Abstracts of insular property transferred to officers, for fractional part of fiscal year ending 31 Mar. 1902
BOX 35	Letters to and copies of a few letters from Bliss, 3 May-31 Dec. 1902
BOX 36	Same as above, 5 Jan. 1903-26 July 1904
BOX 37	Correspondence 1 Jan.-1 Feb. 1904
BOX 38	2 Feb.-23 Mar. 1904
BOX 39	28 Mar.-31 May 1904
BOX 40	1 Jan.-25 Dec. 1905 Acts of the Legislative Council, Moro Province 1 June 1903-29 Feb. 1904 (printed)
BOX 41	16 Apr. 1904-10 Mar. 1907 General Orders Philippine Division [Nos. 1-60], 7 Jan.-5 Aug. 1905 (printed) Luzon Division, [Nos. 1-21], 2 Jan.-16 Mar. 1906 (printed)
BOX 42	Correspondence, 1906 2 Jan.-27 Feb. [The index bound in this volume is now useless, since the correspondence has been arranged in chronological order.]
BOX 43	1 Mar.-27 June
BOX 44	30 June-9 Aug.
BOX 45	11 Aug.-26 Oct.
BOX 46	27 Oct.-31 Dec. Special orders, Luzon Department, [Nos. 1-37], 2 Jan.-15 Mar. Bliss's autograph memoranda (in pencil), undated
BOX 47	Correspondence, stamped "Headquarters Department of Mindanao." [Nos. 1-48], 11 Mar. 1906-13 Sept. 1907. [A typewritten subject index to this correspondence is in Vols. 48- 49]
BOX 48	Typewritten subject index to correspondence in Vol. 47
BOX 49	Continuation of above index Bliss's typewritten diary 12 Apr.-8 Aug. 1906
BOX 50	9 Aug. 1906-9 Jan. 1907
BOX 51	10 Jan.-30 June 1907
BOX 52	31 Aug. 1910-26 Mar. 1911
BOX 53	27 Mar.-22 Oct. 1911
BOX 54	23 Oct. [1911]-5 Feb. 1915 [6-13 Mar. 1913, manuscript notes used as basis for typewritten copies. These are bound, and follow 31 Dec. 1913] Bliss's typewritten diary 1 July-25 Sept. 1907
BOX 55	26 Sept. 1907-5 Mar. 1908
BOX 56	6 Mar.-24 July 1908
BOX 57	25 July 1908-17 Jan. 1909
BOX 58	18 Jan.-4 Aug. 1909
BOX 59	Correspondence, 1907 1-18 Jan.

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 60	19 Jan.-6 Feb.
BOX 61	[6 Feb.]-19 Feb.
BOX 62	20 Feb.-29 Mar.
BOX 63	30 Mar.-27 Apr.
BOX 64	28 Apr.-1 June
BOX 65	4 June-11 July
BOX 66	12 July-14 Aug.
BOX 67	15 Aug.-27 Sept.
BOX 68	1 Oct.-21 Dec.
BOX 69	23-31 Dec.
	Secret Service papers, (consisting of correspondence and accounts), 16 Apr. 1906-25 May 1908
	Records of expeditions, 8 Jan. 1906-10 Mar. 1908
BOX 70	Telegrams sent and received 1907
	1 Jan.-11 Feb.
BOX 71	12 Feb.-20 Mar.
BOX 72	21 Mar.-16 Apr.
BOX 73	17 Apr.-7 May
BOX 74	8 May-6 June
BOX 75	7 June-7 July
BOX 76	8-27 July
BOX 77	28 July-3 Sept.
BOX 78	4 Sept.-1 Oct.
BOX 79	2-15 Oct.
BOX 80	16 Oct.-1 Nov.
BOX 81	2-15 Nov.
BOX 82	16 Nov.-8 Dec.
BOX 83	9-31 Dec.
BOX 84	1908
	1 Jan.-26 Feb. 1908
BOX 85	27 Feb.-11 May
BOX 86	12 May-25 Oct.
BOX 87	26 Oct.-31 Dec.
	Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1906-1908
BOX 88	Correspondence, 1908
	1 Jan.-6 Feb.
BOX 89	7 Feb.-27 Mar.
BOX 90	28 Mar.-30 Apr.
BOX 91	1-29 May
BOX 92	1-28 June
BOX 93	30 June-5 July
BOX 94	6-15 July
BOX 95	16 July-21 Sept.
BOX 96	22 Sept.-8 Dec.
BOX 97	9-28 Dec.

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
	General orders dated 14 Dec. 1908-2 Apr. 1909 and special orders dated 15 Dec. 1908-30 Mar. 1909 (printed)
BOX 98	Partial index of correspondence, June-Nov. 1909 Correspondence, 1909 2 Jan.-25 Sept.
BOX 99	27 Sept.-Dec. Correspondence to and from Bliss while in command of Department of Mindanao and Philippine Division (with index), 1 Jan.-14 Aug. 1909
BOX 100	Continuation of above correspondence file, controlled by index in Vol. 99 (1 folder)
BOX 101	(1 folder)
BOX 102	Correspondence, 1910 7 Jan.-25 Apr.
BOX 103	26 Apr.-27 June
BOX 104	28 June-28 Dec.
BOX 105	Letterbook of letters sent, 1911 20 Aug. 1910-7 Mar.
BOX 106	10 Mar.-20 May
BOX 107	21 May-5 July
BOX 108	Letterbook, letters received, (indexed), 19 Aug. 1910-29 June 1911 Letterbook, letters and documents relating to affairs in the Hawaiian Territory (indexed), Sept. 1910-Jan. 1911 Papers connected with lease of land at Schofield Barracks, H.T., 1-20 Nov. 1911
BOX 109	Correspondence 1 Jan.-2 June 1911
BOX 110	3 June-30 Dec. 1911
BOX 111	1 Jan.-8 Apr. 1912
BOX 112	9 Apr.-31 May 1912
BOX 113	1 June-21 Aug. 1912
BOX 114	22 Aug.-30 Nov. 1912
BOX 115	7 Dec. 1912-30 Jan. 1913
BOX 116	Station list of troops in the Southern Department Annual report of Bliss as commander of Southern Department for the year ending 30 June 1913 (printed) Letter of commendation from Secretary of War Roster of troops serving in Southern Department (printed) Weekly report from District Commander of Big Bend District 25 Feb.-31 May 1913
BOX 117	17 June 1913-10 Jan. 1914
BOX 118	11 Jan.-24 Apr. 1914
BOX 119	25 Apr. 1914-31 Jan. 1915 Weekly reports of border commander, Columbus, N.Mex. 1 Apr. 1913-14 Mar. 1914
BOX 120	15 Mar. 1914-30 Jan. 1915
BOX 121	Weekly reports of border commander, Brownsville, Tex. 3 Apr.-6 Dec. 1913
BOX 122	13 Dec. 1913-30 May 1914

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 123	2 June 1914-30 Jan. 1915 Weekly reports of border commander, Sam Fordyce or Fort Ringgold 8 Apr.-30 Nov. 1913
BOX 124	6 Dec. 1913-29 Jan. 1915 Weekly reports of border commander, Del Rio, Texas 10 Apr.-27 Sept. 1913
BOX 125	29 Sept. 1913-30 Jan. 1915
BOX 126	Weekly reports of border commander, Douglas, Arizona 17 Mar. 1913-23 Jan. 1914
BOX 127	24 Jan.-13 July 1914
BOX 128	14 July-7 Oct. 1914
BOX 129	14 Oct.-27 Nov. 1914
BOX 130	28 Nov. 1914-1 Feb. 1915
BOX 131	Weekly reports from border commander, Eagle Pass 19 Mar.-21 Aug. 1913
BOX 132	23 Aug.-4 Dec. 1913
BOX 133	6 Dec. 1913-22 May 1914
BOX 134	23 May 1914-30 Jan. 1915
BOX 135	Weekly reports from border commander, Fabens Cavalry Patrol District 12 May 1913-21 Feb. 1914
BOX 136	28 Feb. 1914-29 Jan. 1915
BOX 137	Weekly reports from border commander, El Paso, Texas 16 Mar.-4 Aug. 1913
BOX 138	5 Aug.-18 Oct. 1913
BOX 139	24 Oct. 1913-17 Jan. 1914
BOX 140	18 Jan.-6 Apr. 1914
BOX 141	10 Apr.-30 May 1914
BOX 142	5 June 1914-2 Feb. 1915
BOX 143	Weekly reports from border commander, Laredo, Texas 17 Mar. 1913-9 Jan. 1914
BOX 144	10 Jan.-26 Apr. 1914
BOX 145	29 Apr. 1914-12 Jan. 1915
BOX 146	16-30 Jan. 1915 Weekly reports from border commander, Nocales, Arizona 16 Mar.-18 Oct. 1913
BOX 147	25 Oct. 1913-10 July 1914
BOX 148	11 July 1914-30 Jan. 1915
BOX 149	Weekly reports compiled at headquarters of Southern Department from reports of border commanders, covering a period from 22 Mar. 1913-30 Jan. 1915, and numbered 1-98 consecutively Nos. 1-35
BOX 150	Nos. 36-59
BOX 151	Nos. 60-81
BOX 152	Nos. 82-98
BOX 153	Telegrams to and from border commanders, 12 Dec. 1913-1 Nov. 1914 Telegrams and correspondence relative to telegrams on border conditions 5 Mar.-26 Sept. 1913

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 154	2 Oct. 1913-22 Jan. 1914
BOX 155	23 Jan.-24 Apr. 1914
BOX 156	25 Apr.-21 May 1914
BOX 157	22 May-2 Oct. 1914
BOX 158	3 Oct. 1914-2 Feb. 1915 Telegrams to and from headquarters regarding Mexican border troubles Telegrams (with index), Apr.-May 1914 Correspondence relating to Brazos and Colorado River floods in Texas, 1913 6-7 Dec.
BOX 159	7-31 Dec.
BOX 160-167	Letters to officials from Bliss commanding the Southern Department; arranged by subject and according to writer rather than chronologically, and controlled by the index, which is bound in Vol.160. The dates covered are 28 Feb. 1913-3 Feb. 1915
BOX 161-170	Letters and telegrams, personal and official, from Bliss to various officers; arranged by subject and according to writer rather than chronologically. Index in Vol. 168 [25 Feb. 1913-3 Feb. 1915]
BOX 171-172	Letters and telegrams, personal and official, from Bliss to commanding generals; arranged by subject and according to writer rather than chronologically, and controlled by the index, bound in Vol. 171. [Inclusive dates: 27 Mar. 1913-15 Feb. 1915]
BOX 172-176	Letters from officers in the War Department to Bliss, Feb. 1913-1915; arranged by subject and according to writer rather than chronologically, and is controlled by the index, bound in Vol. 173
BOX 177	Correspondence with various persons while at camp in Naco, Arizona 2 Nov. 1914-12 June 1915
BOX 178	13-18 Jan. 1915 [The part from 12 Dec. on is indexed] 6 Dec. 1914-11 Jan. 1915
BOX 179	12-19 Jan. 1915 Letters and telegrams, personal and official, from Bliss to various civilians 3 Mar. 1913-24 Mar. 1914 (with index)
BOX 180	25 Mar. 1914-4 Feb. 1915 (controlled by index in Vol. 179)
BOX 181	Bliss's report as Commander of the Southern Department, for the fiscal year ending 30 June 1914. [Two carbon copies of this report are bound in this volume]
BOX 182	Correspondence from Commanding Generals, (indexed), 20 Mar. 1913-15 Feb. 1915
BOX 183-185	Letters and telegrams, personal official, from various officers to Bliss, 23 Jan. 1913-26 Jan. 1915; arranged by subject and according to writer rather than chronologically, and controlled by the index, which is bound in Vol. 183
BOX 184-187	Letters and telegrams, personal and official, from various civilians to Bliss, 9 Dec. 1912-30 Dec. 1914; controlled by index, bound in Vol. 186
BOX 188	Correspondence Set I 3 Jan.-12 Feb. 1915
BOX 189	13-27 Feb. 1915
BOX 190	29 Mar.-25 May 1915
BOX 191	26 May-15 July 1915
BOX 192	16 July-22 Aug. 1915
BOX 193	23 Aug.-4 Oct. 1915
BOX 194	6 Oct.-19 Nov. 1915
BOX 195	20 Nov.-9 Dec. 1915

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 196	10-31 Dec. 1915
BOX 197	3 Jan.-5 Feb. 1916
BOX 198	8 Feb.-19 Mar. 1916
BOX 199	20 Mar.-17 Apr. 1916
BOX 200	18-29 Apr. 1916
BOX 201	1-22 May 1916
BOX 202	23 May-23 June 1916
BOX 203	24 June-6 Aug. 1916
BOX 204	11 Aug.-8 Sept. 1916
BOX 205	9 Sept.-30 Oct. 1916
BOX 206	4 Oct.-15 Nov. 1916
BOX 207	16 Nov.-27 Dec. 1916
BOX 208	28 Dec. 1916-23 Jan. 1917
BOX 209	29 Jan-27 Feb. 1917
BOX 210	28 Feb.-26 Mar. 1917
BOX 211	27 Mar.-21 Apr. 1917
BOX 212	12 Apr.-12 May 1917
BOX 213	14-30 May 1917
BOX 214	1-28 June 1917
BOX 215	29 June-15 July
BOX 216	17-31 July 1917
BOX 217	1-15 Aug. 1917
BOX 218	16-31 Aug. 1917
BOX 219	1-20 Sept. 1917
BOX 220	21-27 Sept. 1917
BOX 221	28 Sept.-9 Oct. 1917
BOX 222	10-20 Oct. 1917
BOX 223	21 Oct.-25 Nov. 1917
BOX 224	26 Nov.-31 Dec. 1917
BOX 225	19 Nov. 1917-6 Feb. 1918
BOX 226	8 Feb.-4 May 1918
BOX 227	29 Apr.-22 July 1918
BOX 228	24 July-17 Sept. 1918
BOX 229	18 Sept.-21 Oct. 1918
BOX 230	22 Oct.-29 Nov. 1918
BOX 231	30 Nov. 1918-1 Jan. 1919
BOX 232	Set II 3 Jan.-29 Mar. 1919
BOX 233	3- Mar.-30 June 1919
BOX 234	1 July-20 Oct. 1919
BOX 235	21 Oct.-31 Dec. 1919
BOX 236	Mar. 1912-26 Dec. 1914
BOX 237	1914-20 May 1915
BOX 238	10 June 1915-1 Dec. 1916
BOX 239	13 Dec. 1916-1 Nov. 1917
BOX 240	13 Mar-31 May 1917

Part I: General File, 1870-1919

Container	Contents
BOX 241	12 May-Aug. 18 1917
BOX 242	20-29 Aug. 1917
BOX 243	12 Dec. 1917-19 Dec. 1919
BOX 244-317	Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920 Diaries, correspondence, memoranda, minutes and reports of the Supreme War Council and various commissions, bulletins, news reports, and other press material, and miscellaneous documents. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 244	Diaries Nov.-Dec. 1917 Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919 Mar.-Aug. 1919 Personal Correspondence, Oct. 1917-Aug. 1919
BOX 245	General Correspondence Biddle McCain Nov.-Dec. 1917 (2 folders) Oct. 1918-Oct. 1919 Newton Diehl Baker Nov. 1918-Oct. 1919 Dec. 1917-Nov. 1918 Secretary of State, Jan. 1918-Aug. 1919 State Department, 1919 Sept.-Oct. Oct.-Dec.
BOX 246	Permanent Military Representatives French, Apr.-Dec. 1918 Italian, Apr.-Dec. 1918 British, Mar. 1918-Oct. 1919 Collectively, Feb.-Nov. 1919 Robert Lansing Nov. 1918-Feb. 1920 Sketches by Lansing at Paris Peace Conference F. L. Polk, Aug. 1919-Mar. 1920 Henry White, Dec. 1918-Mar. 1920 Edward Mandell House Gordon Auchincloss Nov. 1918-Apr. 1919 Sept. 1918-1919
BOX 247	Joseph C. Grew, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919 Leland Harrison, Dec. 1918-Oct. 1919 Woodrow Wilson Nov. 1918-Apr. 1919 Apr. 1919 May 1919

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container

Contents

	June 1919
	Memoranda American Peace Commission, Jan.-Nov. 1919
	Memoranda Prepared by Staff, Dec. 1918-July 1919
BOX 248	Miscellaneous Memoranda
	Dec. 1918-July 1919
	July 1919-Feb. 1920
	American Expeditionary Forces and American Forces in France
	Jan.-Dec. 1918
	Dec. 1918-June 1919
	June 1919-Mar. 1920
	Maj. Gen. Henry T. Allen, Sept.-Nov. 1919
	Brig. Gen. H. H. Bandoltz, Sept. 1919
	Naval Officers, Nov. 1918-Oct. 1919
	Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill, Dec. 1918-Oct. 1919
BOX 249	Col. Edward Davies, Sept.-Nov. 1919
	Brig. Gen. Robert C. Davis, May 1919
	Brig. Gen. George H. Harries, Mar.-Aug. 1919
	Brig. Gen. W. W. Harts, Aug. 1918-Mar. 1919
	Lt. Ralph Hayes, Jan.-Mar. 1919
	Maj. Gen. Kernan, Feb.-Apr. 1919
	Brig. Gen. Charles A. McKinstry, Dec. 1918
	Maj. Royal Tyler, June-Sept. 1919
	Maj. Gen. W.C. Langfitt, May 1919
	Brig. Gen. Mason M. Patrick, Feb. 1919
	Lt. Col. Francis E. Riggs, June-July 1919
	Gen. H.A. Smith, May 1919
	Col. Stephen L. H Solcum, May 1919
	Col. R.H. Williams, Jan. 1919
	French Military Officers
	June-Dec. 1919
	Oct.-June 1919
	Col. R.H. Van Deman, Nov. 1918-May 1919
	Military Papers
	Aug.-Dec. 1918
	Jan.-July 1918
BOX 250	Dec. 1917-May 1918
	May-July 1918
	July-Nov. 1918
	Nov. 1918-Mar. 1919
	Newton Diehl Baker
	Mar. 1918-Mar. 1919
	Feb. 1919-Jan. 1920
	Jan.-Mar. 1920
BOX 251	Peyton C. Marsh
	Mar.-Dec. 1918
	Feb.-Dec. 1918

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container

Contents

	Dec. 1928-Mar. 1920
	War Department, Jan. 1919-Apr. 1919
	Oscar T. Crosby, Nov. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Department of State, Jan.-Dec. 1918
	Edward B. Stettinius, Aug. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Memoranda Prepared by United States
	Navy Advisory Group, 1918-1919
	(2 folders)
BOX 252	Minutes
	Supreme War Council
	First Six Sessions, Nov. 1917-June 1918
	Sessions, 1918
	Eighth, Oct.-Nov.
	Seventh, July
	Sixth, June
	Fifth, May
	Sixth, June
	Duplicates, Copy, Nov. 1917
	Second
	Third
	Fourth
	Fifth
BOX 253	Reports
	Supreme War Council
	Nov. 1917-1918
	(2 folders)
	Jan. 1919
	Feb. 1920
	Nov. 1917-1918 (Copy)
	Jan. 1919-Mar. 1920
	Feb. 1920
	(2 folders)
BOX 254	Feb. 1920
	(5 folders)
BOX 255	Sessions
	1st -7th, Nov. 1917-July 1918
	1st 12th, Nov. 1917-Jan. 1919
	8th-12th, Oct. 1918-Jan. 1919
	13th-14th, Feb. 1919
	(2 folders)
	15th-18th, Feb.-Mar. 1919
BOX 256	15th-18th, Feb.-Mar. 1919
	(2 folders)
	Feb. 1919-Mar. 1920
	Peace Conference Plenary Sessions
	1-2, Jan. 1919
	3, Feb. 1919

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 257	4-5, F4-8, Apr.-May 1919 Permanent Military Representatives Meetings 40-61, 27 July 1918-11 May 1919
BOX 258	Permanent Military Representatives 1919 Meetings 62-75, 12 May-3 July (3 folders) 75-85, 8 July-29 Aug. 76-85, 8 July-29 Aug. (1 folder)
BOX 259	(1 folder) 86-90, 9 Sept.-4 Nov. (2 folders) Inter-Allied Commission, Laibach, Mar. 1919 Naval, Military, and Air Representatives 1919 May-June June-July Aug.-Oct. Oct.-Nov. Bureau Conference 1919 Jan.
BOX 260	Jan. Feb. (3 folders) Mar. (2 folders)
BOX 261	Mar. Meetings of the Foreign Ministers 1919 Apr. Mar.-Apr. May (2 folders) June
BOX 262	June-July Meetings Heads of Delegations 1919 Oct. (4 folders) Great Five Powers Nov.
BOX 263	Nov. (4 folders)
BOX 264	Dec.
BOX 265	

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container

Contents

	American Peace Commission
	1919
	Jan.-Mar.
	Mar.-Apr.
	Apr.-June
	June-Aug.
	Aug.-Sept.
BOX 266	American Delegates with Technical Advisors
	1919
	June-July
	Aug.-Sept.
	Superior Blockade Council
	1919
	Feb.-Apr.
	May-June
	Commission on Reparation
	Feb, 1919
	Economic Group, Feb.-June 1919
	Powers with Special Interests, Jan.-Mar. 1919
	Decisions of the Council of Principal Allied and Associate Powers
	1919
	Apr.-May
BOX 267	May-June
	Miscellaneous Reports and Recommendations, Mar.-Nov. 1919
	Joint Notes of Military Representatives, Dec. 1917-Jan. 1919
	Resolutions Adopted by the Supreme War Council
	1919
	July
	July-Aug.
	Aug.
BOX 268	Aug.-Sept.
	Sept.-Oct.
	Oct.
	Oct.-Nov.
	Nov.-Dec.
	S-H Bulletins
	1919
	Feb.-Mar.
BOX 269	Mar.
	(4 folders)
	Apr.
	(2 folders)
BOX 270	Apr.
	(2 folders)
	Apr.-May
	May
	(4 folders)

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 271	May (2 folders) May-June June (3 folders)
BOX 272	June (3 folders) July (2 folders)
BOX 273	July (5 folders)
BOX 274	July (4 folders) July-Aug. Aug.
BOX 275	Aug. (7 folders) Aug.-Sept.
BOX 276	Aug. (6 folders) Sept.
BOX 277	Sept. (2 folders) Sept.-Oct. (2 folders) Oct. (2 folders)
BOX 278	Oct. (6 folders)
BOX 279	Oct.-Nov. Nov. (5 folders)
BOX 280	1919 Nov. (4 folders) Nov.-Dec. Dec.
BOX 281	Dec. (3 folders) Intelligence (Political and Military) Dec. 1917-Nov. 1918 Nov.-Dec. 1918 Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
BOX 282	Feb. 1919 Feb.-May 1919 May-June 1919 Reports

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container

Contents

	Warrington Dawson
	Apr.-Nov. 1919
	Nov.-Dec. 1919
	Resumé of News
	Feb.-Mar. 1918
BOX 283	Mar. 1918
	Apr. 1918
	(2 folders)
	Apr.-May 1918
	(2 folders)
BOX 284	May-June 1918
	June 1918
	July 1918
	Aug. 1918
	Sept. 1918
	Oct. 1918
BOX 285	Nov. 1918
	Dec. 1918
	Jan. 1919
	Feb. 1919
	Mar. 1919
BOX 286	Apr. 1919
	May 1919
	Press News
	Dec. 1917-Dec. 1919
	Memoranda
	American Peace Commission
	Nov. 1918-Sept. 1919
	Dec. 1918-Apr. 1919
	American Forces in France, May-Nov. 1919
	Bulletins
	American Forces in France, May-Nov. 1919
BOX 287	Telegrams
	1919
	Nov. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Jan.
	(7 folders)
BOX 288	Jan.
	(7 folders)
	Jan.-Feb.
BOX 289	Feb.
	(8 folders)
BOX 290	Feb.
	Mar.
	(7 folders)

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 291	Mar. (5 folders) Mar.-Apr. Apr. (3 folders)
BOX 292	Apr. (9 folders)
BOX 293	Apr. (3 folders) Apr.-May May (6 folders)
BOX 294	May (8 folders) May-June
BOX 295	June (8 folders)
BOX 296	June (2 folders) June-July July (4 folders)
BOX 297	July
BOX 298	July Aug. (7 folders)
BOX 299	Aug. (7 folders) Sept.
BOX 300	Sept. (10 folders)
BOX 301	Oct. (10 folders)
BOX 302	Nov. (8 folders)
BOX 303	Nov. Nov.-Dec. Dec. Miscellaneous Papers relating to the Italian Problem in the Adriatic, Oct. 1918-July 1919 Miscellaneous Papers relating to Armenia, Apr. 1918-Dec. 1919 Reports Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, American Military Mission to Armenia, Oct. 1919 Appendix, Oct. 1919 A-F. (6 folders)
BOX 304	G-L (5 folders)

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container	Contents
	Military, Naval and Air Terms with Austria, May 1919
	Copy of the Conditions of Peace with Austria, June 1919
	French, English Texts (2 folders)
	Italian Text
BOX 305	English, Italian Texts
	Memorandum on the functions of the Editing Committee with regard to the Austrian Treaty, Aug. 1919
	Austria, Counter Proposals, Aug. 1919 (4 folders)
BOX 306	Boundaries, etc. (including disposition of the Klagenfurt Basin) 1919
	Feb.-Nov., Inter-Allied Commissions of Control
	Sept.-Dec., Armistice
	Oct. 1918-Jan. 1919, Baltic Provinces 1919
	Apr.-Nov., Latvia
	Nov., Lithuania
	July, Banat
	Feb., Belgium
	Feb.-Nov., Bessarabia and Debrudja
	July-Feb. 1920, Bulgaria, Armistice and Peace Terms, Sept. 1918-Aug. 1919 1919
BOX 307	Bulgarian Peace Conditions (English, French and Italian Texts)
	Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia, May-Nov.
	Bulgaria, Inter-Allied Commission of Control, July-Dec.
	Bulgaria, Counter-Proposals and Allied answers thereto, Aug.-Oct.
	Damatian Islands, Jan.-Apr.
	Danzig, July-Aug.
	Fiume, Mar.-July
	Maj. General Charles Pelot Summerall, July-Aug.
	Germany, Disarmament, Miscellaneous, Jan.-Nov.
	Minutes
	German Disarmament, Committee on the Limitation of 1919
	Armaments, Jan.-Feb. (2 folders)
BOX 308	Germany, Aeronautics, July-Nov.
	Army of Occupation, Feb.-June; June
	Inter-Allied Commissions of Control
	Feb.-Sept.
	Oct.-Nov.
	Armistice and the Renewals of Armistice
	Oct. 1918
BOX 309	Nov. 1918-Feb. 1919 1919
	German Disarmament, Papers on Military, Naval, and Air Terms

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container

Contents

	Feb.-Mar.
	Mar.-Nov.
	Germany, Papers relating to Military, Naval and Air Terms of Peace
	1919
	Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Feb.-Mar.
	Mar.-June
	June-Aug.
	Germany, Preliminary Peace Terms (English, French Texts)
	1919
	(2 folders)
BOX 310	1919
	(2 folders)
BOX 311	Annotations of German Treaty, 28 June 1919
	(5 folders)
	1919
	Remarks of German Delegation on Peace Terms and reply of Allied Governments
	(2 folders)
	Allied Responses to German Counter-Proposals, June
	Germany, Miscellaneous, May-Nov.
	Great Britain, Miscellaneous, July-Aug.
	Greece, Miscellaneous, Oct. 1918-Aug. 1919
BOX 312	Holland, Miscellaneous, Feb.-July
	Hungary, Military, Naval, and Air Terms
	Nov. 1918-Jan. 1920
	(2 folders)
	June-Aug.
	Miscellaneous, Jan.-Nov.
	(2 folders)
	Italian Claims, Secret Treaty of 1915
	Jan. 1915-Sept. 1919
	Jan.-Oct. 1919
	Korea, Miscellaneous, Apr.-May
	Memel, Miscellaneous, July-Oct.
	Montenegro, Miscellaneous, Jan.-Aug.
	Persia, Miscellaneous, June
	Poland, Miscellaneous
	Jan.-Dec.
BOX 313	Jan.-Dec.
	(2 folders)
	Russia, North, Miscellaneous
	Mar. 1918-Dec. 1919
	Feb.-Nov. 1919
	Soviet, Miscellaneous
	Feb.-Nov.
	Feb.-Nov.
	South, June-July

Part II: Personal File, 1917-1920

Container	Contents
BOX 314	White, May-Aug. Siberia, Apr.-July Prisoners of War in Germany, Jan.-Nov. Roumania, Miscellaneous, Jan.-Nov. (2 folders) Serbia, Miscellaneous, Apr.-Aug. Schleswig, June-Oct. Shantung, Miscellaneous, Mar.-May Silesia, Miscellaneous, June-Nov. Spain, Miscellaneous, Mar.-Apr. Switzerland, Miscellaneous, Dec. 1917-Apr. 1918 Teschen, July-Aug. Ukraine, Miscellaneous, July (2 folders)
BOX 315	Reports of Commissions and Committees of the Peace Conference 1919-1920 (5 folders)
BOX 316	1919-1920 (2 folders) Document File, File 500 (4 folders)
BOX 317	(2 folders)
BOX 317-387	Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930 Correspondence, reports, minutes, and other material. Arranged by topic or type of material.
BOX 317	Supreme War Council, Versailles Organization, duties, etc. 1919 May Nov. (2 folders) Army Serbia, Jan. Orders, Instructions etc., governing Army Field Clerks of the American Section, Oct. 1918 Coast Military Material, United States Army, Oct. 1917 Strength and Location of United States Forces, May-Sept.
BOX 318	Organization of United States Army, July 1917-Jan. 1919 Railroads, France, Nov. 1917-June 1919 Manpower, United States, Nov. 1917 Military Situation in the Balkans Dec. 1917-Oct. 1918 July-Oct. 1918 Jan.-July 1919 Miscellaneous Office Memoranda, Sept.-Dec. 1918 Strategy of European War, General

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container	Contents
BOX 319	Oct. 1917 Strategy of the European War, General, Nov. 1917 Transports and Transportation of Troops and Supplies, United States Oct.-Dec. 1917 Dec. 1917-June 1918 Jan.-Nov. 1918 Tanks, United States Army, Sept. 1917-Dec. 1918 Military Operations of the United States Army, Oct. 1917-Feb. 1918 Production and Supply of Munitions of War, United States, Oct.-Dec. 1917 Strength of Allied Forces, Feb. 1918 Strength of All Armies, June 1919
BOX 320	Strength of Central Powers, Mar.-Dec. 1918 Maps, Books, Publications presented to the American Section, Supreme War Council, Nov. 1918 Supreme War Council, Organization, Duties, Etc. British Section, Feb. 1918-Aug. 1919 Bulgarian, Army, Aug. 1918 French Section, Apr. 1918-Nov. 1919 Italian Section, Feb. 1917-Sept. 1919 Army, Germany, May-July 1918 Aeronautical Troops, Personnel, United States, June 1918 Proceedings of the Naval Liaison Committee, Feb.-Aug. 1918; Aug. 1918 Proceedings of the Executive War Board, Feb.-Mar. 1918; Feb.-May 1918
BOX 321	Minutes of the Second Session, Supreme War Council and Military Representatives, 1st to 15th Meetings, Dec. 1917-Feb. 1918; Feb.-Mar. 1918 Proceedings of the Permanent Committee of Military Representatives, Feb.-Mar. Army, Italy, June-July Army, Netherlands, Apr. Travel Orders for Personnel of American Section, SWC (Dec. 1917-Oct. 1919) Plan of Operation for the United States Army on the Macedonian Front; also Operations of Allied Powers, July Tanks, General, Oct. Army, Japan, Feb. Exchange of Information between the American Expeditionary Forces and American Section, SWC, Oct. Belgian Section, SWC, Aug.-Sept. Reports of Military Intelligence Received from American Military Attaché, Petrograd, Russia, Feb. 1918-Jan. 1919 Visits of United States Army Officers, Feb. Proceedings of the Fourth Session, SWC, Mar.-May Resources, France, Sept. Military Operations of Allied Powers, May-Aug. Military Operations of the Central Powers, June Army, Russia, Feb.-Aug. 1919
BOX 322	1918 Inter-Allied Transportation Council Feb.-Nov.

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	May-July
	July-Oct.
	Oct.-Nov.
	Mar.-July
	Nov. 1918-July 1919
	Inter-Allied Committee on Aviation
	Mar.-July
	July-Aug.
	Proceedings of Permanent Committee of Military Representatives
	Apr.
BOX 323	Apr.
	Apr.-May
	May
	(3 folders)
	Inter-Allied Council on War Purchases
	Aug. 1917-Jan. 1918
	Jan.-Sept.
	Oct.
	Railroads, Greece, Jan.-Apr.
	Inter-Allied Tank Committee, Apr. 1918-1919
	Proceedings of the Fifth Session, SWC, Apr.-June
	General and Political Conditions in Italy, Apr. 1915-Aug. 1918
BOX 324	Army, Poland
	Proceedings of the Sixth Session, SWC, May-June
	General and Political Conditions in Spain, Aug.
	Proceedings of the Permanent Military Representatives, June-July 1918
	(2 folders)
	Missions, Italy, Oct. 1918-June 1919
	General and Political Conditions in Roumania, Dec. 1918
	General and Political Conditions in Turkey, July
	Military Policy, 1918-1919
	Proceedings of the Permanent Committee of Military Representatives, Aug. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Military Papers, Feb.-Nov.
	Allied Intervention in Russia
	Mar. 1918-Apr. 1919
	May 1918
BOX 325	Mar. 1918-July 1919
	Military Policy in Mesopotamia and Palestine, June-Aug.
	Czechs and Jugo-Slavs, Feb.-Aug.
	General and Political Conditions in Austria-Hungary, Sept.-Nov.
	France, General, Aug.
	General and Political Conditions in Russia, Dec. 1917-Oct. 1918
	Transportation and Tonnage of United States Troops under the 100 Division Program, Aug.-Sept.
	Transportation, Transports Italy, Aug. 1919
	General and Political Conditions in Germany, July-Aug. 1919
	Joint Committee Military and Naval Representatives SWC, Oct. 1918

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Preliminary Meetings of the Peace Conference
	Nov. 1918-Apr. 1919
	May-July 1919
	Organization, Duties, etc of American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Inter-Allied Conference for the Administration of Occupied Territory, Dec. 1918
	Proceedings of the Permanent Committee Representatives
	June 1918
	July-Sept. 1918
	Sept.-Oct. 1918
BOX 326	1919
	Feb.-Apr.
	Apr.
	Apr.-May
	(2 folders)
	Army, Lithuania, July
	Silesia, General and Political Conditions, July
	Plans of Military, Naval and Aerial Clauses, Formed by the Military, Naval and Aerial
	Representatives. To be Inserted in Various Peace Treaties, May-Aug.
BOX 327	Proceedings of Permanent Committee of Military Representatives, May-June
	(2 folders)
	Military, Naval and Aerial Representatives
	May-July
	July-Sept.
	Aug.-Sept.
BOX 328	Minutes
	Military and Naval Representatives
	Mar. 1918-June 1919
	June-July
	June-Aug.
	Permanent Committee of Military Representatives
	June-Aug.
	July-Aug.
	Aug.
	Aug.-Sept.
	(2 folders)
BOX 329	Aug.-Oct.
	Sept.-Dec.
	Baltic States, General and Political Conditions
	Anti-Bolsheviks etc.
	Inter-Allied Commissions of Control for Austria, Sept.-Oct.
	Armistice, Germany, Nov.
	Treaty of Peace with Germany, June
	Armistice, Austria-Hungary, Oct.
	Treaty of Peace with Austria, Sept.
	War Department Cables
	Feb. 1918-Aug. 1919
	Oct. 1918-Nov. 1919

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container	Contents
BOX 330	1918 Minutes Cablegrams Jan.-Sept. Apr.-Sept. May-June Dec. 1918-Mar. 1919 Jan.-Apr. 1918 Oct.-Dec. 1919 Miscellaneous Cablegrams 1918-1919 (2 folders)
BOX 331	1918-1919 Oct. 1918-Apr. 1920 Mar. 1918-Sept. 1919 American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Personnel Dec. 1918-Mar. 1919 1919 (4 folders)
BOX 332	Japanese Peace Commission, Dec. 1918 British Peace Commission, Dec. 1918 Armistice with Bulgaria, Dec. 1918 Armistice with Turkey, Dec. 1918 Armistice with Austria-Hungary, Nov.-Dec. 1918 Armistice with Germany, Sept. 1918-Feb. 1919 (2 folders) General Correspondence, Miscellaneous Dec. 1918-Nov. 1919 Apr.-Nov. 1919 Feb.-Aug. 1919 Miscellaneous Memoranda, Dec. 1918-Oct. 1919 Property, Dec. 1918-Aug. 1919 Circulars, Hotel de Crillon, Paris, Dec. 1918 Negative Intelligence Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
BOX 333	Feb.-Mar. 1919 Mar. 1919 Apr. 1919 May 1919 (2 folders) Press Review Apr.-May 1919 May-June 1919
BOX 334	Memoranda, G-2, GHQ AEF Feb.-Dec. 1918 Dec. 1918 (4 folders)

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Jan. 1919 (3 folders)
BOX 335	Jan. 1919 Feb. 1919 (2 folders) Mar. 1919 (2 folders) Apr. 1919 May 1919 Naval Bulletins Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
BOX 336	Permanent International Armistice Commission Nov. 1918-Feb. 1919 (2 folders) Diplomatic Corps in Paris and Personnel attached to President Raymond Poincaré, Dec. 1918 Daily News Summary, Department of State Dec. 1918 Jan.-Mar. 1919 (3 folders)
BOX 337	Apr.-Aug. 1919 (5 folders) American Radio News Service Dec. 1918
BOX 338	Jan.-Feb. 1919 (4 folders)
BOX 339	Mar.-May 1919 (4 folders)
BOX 340	May-Sept. 1919 (5 folders) American Press Comment Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919 (2 folders)
BOX 341	Jan.-Apr. 1919 (5 folders)
BOX 342	Apr.-June 1919 (4 folders) London Press Comment, Dec. 1918-Apr. 1919 Paris Press Comment Dec. 1918-Apr. 1919 Sept. 1919
BOX 343	European Press Comment, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919 Latin America Press Comment, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919 Oriental Press Comment, Jan.-Feb. 1919 Spanish Press Comment, Jan. 1919 Swiss Press Comment, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919 American Bi-Weekly Press Summary, Jan. 1919 London News Review, Jan. 1919

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	London Press Summary
	Jan.-Feb. 1919
	(2 folders)
BOX 344	Mar.-May 1919
	(4 folders)
BOX 345	June 1919
	South American Press Comment, Jan. 1919
	Scandinavian Press Comment, Jan. 1919
	Naval Cables, Adriatic, Dec. 1918-Apr. 1919
	Naval Cables, Miscellaneous, Dec. 1918-Nov. 1919
	Adriatic Reports, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Naval Memoranda, Miscellaneous, Nov. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Combat Situation
	Jan.-Apr. 1919
	(4 folders)
BOX 346	May 1919
	Latin American Press Summary, Jan. 1919
	Paris Press Summary
	Jan.-Sept. 1919
	(5 folders)
	Oriental Press Summary, Feb. 1919
	Armistice Made by the Central Powers, Feb.-Mar. 1919
	Current Intelligence Summary, France and the United States
	Mar.-Apr. 1919
BOX 347	Apr.-June 1919
	(2 folders)
	Information and Documents from the Yugo-Slav
	Press Bureau
	Mar.-Aug. 1919
	(3 folders)
	Memoranda for Peace Commissioners
	Mar.-May 1919
BOX 348	May-Nov. 1919
	Memoranda
	Jan.-Sept. 1919
	(2 folders)
	American Editorial Summary
	June-Sept. 1919
	(2 folders)
	American Forces in Germany, Bulletins and Press Comments
	July-Aug. 1919
BOX 349	Aug.-Oct. 1919
	(6 folders)
BOX 350	Oct.-Nov. 1919
	(3 folders)
	American Forces in Germany, Daily Censorship
	Reports

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Aug.-Nov. 1919 (3 folders)
BOX 351	Nov. 1919 Summary of New York Papers, Sept.-Oct. 1919 Press Summary, Sept.-Nov. 1919 (4 folders) American Press Summary, Oct. 1919 American and Foreign Press Summary, Oct. 1919 League of Nations, General
	Dec. 1918 (2 folders)
BOX 352	Dec. 1918 (3 folders) United States, Dec. 1918-Aug. 1919 (2 folders) France, Dec. 1918-June 1919 Great Britain, Mar. 1918-June 1919
BOX 353	Scandinavia, Jan. 1919 Italy, Feb. 1919 China, Jan.-Mar. 1919 Miscellaneous, Jan. 1919-Nov. 1924 Boundary, United States Views, Dec. 1918-Mar. 1919 Italy, Jan.-Dec. 1919 France, May 1916 Poland, Jan. 1919 Disarmament, Feb.-Aug. 1919 Disarmament, United States, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919 Disarmament, Germany India, Nov.-Dec. 1919 Syria, General, Nov. 1918-Nov. 1919
BOX 354	Documents From the Greek Minister, Paris, France, Dec. 1918 (2 folders) Arab State, Dec. 1918-Oct. 1919 Bagdad Railway, Dec. 1918 Prisoners, General, Dec. 1918-Nov. 1919 Economic Policy, Dec. 1918-May 1919 Location and Station of Allied Troops, Nov. 1918-Oct. 1919 Turkish Empire Apr. 1918-Oct. 1919 (3 folders)
BOX 355	Sept.-Nov. 1919 Czecho-Slovakia, General, Dec. 1918-Aug. 1919 Hague Conferences, Dec. 1918 Davis Hunter Miller, General Correspondence, Dec. 1918 Conference, St. Jean du Maurienne, Dec. 1918 Luxemburg, Dec. 1918-June 1919 Germany, Food Situation, Dec. 1918

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Alsace-Lorraine, Dec. 1918
	Herbert Hoover, General Correspondence, Dec. 1918-July 1919
	Food Administration, Miscellaneous, Nov. 1918-Nov. 1919
	Food Situation, General, Dec. 1918-June 1919
	Poland, Dec. 1918-July 1919
	Bulgaria, Jan.-Sept. 1919
	Austria-Hungary, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
	President Woodrow Wilson, Papers and Speeches, Jan.-July 1919
BOX 356	Peace Conference, United States, Dec. 1918-Sept. 1919
	China, Jan.-Aug. 1919
	Peace Terms, General, Jan.-June 1919
	Greece, Dec. 1918-Mar. 1919
	Libya, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Financial Data, Jan.-Apr. 1919
	(2 folders)
	Peace Commission-Investigating Committee, Jan. 1919
	Intelligence Section Report on Territorial, Economic and Labor Questions, concerning disputed territories in Europe and Western Asia, Jan. 1919
	Italy, General
	Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
BOX 357	May-Oct. 1919
	Dodecanese, Jan.-Oct. 1919
	Transportation, General, Jan.-Nov. 1919
	Germany, General, Jan.-Aug. 1919
	Balkans, Jan.-May 1919
	Ireland, General, Dec. 1918-July 1919
	Ireland, Demand for Investigation by American Commission, June 1919
	Russia, General, Dec. 1918-Mar. 1919
	(2 folders)
BOX 358	German Colonies, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Information of the Press, Dec. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Peace Conference, General, Jan.-Feb. 1919
	Bolivia, Jan. 1919
	Siam, Jan. 1919
	Peru, Jan. 1919
	Albania, Jan. 1919
	Bolshevik and Anti-Bolshevik Forces, Jan.-July 1919
	American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Library, Feb.-May 1919
	Freedom of the Seas, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
	Responsibility for War, Feb. 1919
	Supplying Allied Armies Thru Holland, Dec. 1918-Feb. 1919
	France, General, Feb.-Aug. 1919
	Portugal, General, Feb. 1919
	Socialism, General, Feb. 1919
	Jewish Question and Zionism, Feb.-May 1919
	American Federation of Labor, Feb. 1919
	Labor Developments, Oct. 1919

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Peace Conference, Brazil, Feb. 1919
	Sweden, General, Feb. 1919
	Peace Conference, Panama, Feb. 1919
	Esthonia, Feb. 1919
BOX 359	Italo-Slav Controversy, Feb.-Aug. 1919 (2 folders)
	Treaties and Agreements, 1815-1919
	Belgium, General, Feb.-Nov. 1919
	Asland Islands, Feb. 1919
	Army, United States , Dec. 1918-Aug. 1919
	“Visite des regions devasties du nord de la France”, Apr.-Aug. 1919
BOX 360	United States Future Military and Financial Policy in Europe, Feb. 1919
	Albania, General, Feb.-Sept. 1919
	Ukraine, General, Feb.-Dec. 1919 (4 folders)
	Lithuania, General, Jan.-Sept. 1919
	War Losses, General, Feb. 1919
	Prohibition, Sept. 1919
	Inter-Allied Aviation Conference, Mar. 1919
	Capt. Emanuel V. Voska, Miscellaneous Documents, Nov. 1918-Jan. 1919
	Transylvania, Mar.-Nov. 1919
	Superior Blockade Council, Mar.-June 1919
	Army, Germany, Mar.-June 1919
	Demobilization, General, Feb. 1919
	Armenia, General, Feb.-Aug. 1919
	Peace Conference, Cuba, Mar. 1919
	Welfare Organization, Feb. 1919
BOX 361	Carinthia, Feb.-July 1919 (3 folders)
	Yugo-Slavia, General, Dec. 1918-June 1919
	Peace Conference, France, Feb. 1919
	Kurdistan, General, Feb. 1919
	Ruthenia, General, Feb. 1919
	Labor, General, Jan.-Nov. 1919
	Esperanto, General, Feb. 1919
	Banat, Mar. 1919
BOX 362	Austria, General, Aug. 1919
	Roumanian-Hungarian Neutral Zone, Feb.-June 1919
	Lettland, General, June 1919
	Finland, General, June 1919
	Bolshevism, General, Mar. 1919
	Army, Hungary, Mar. 1919
	Mexico, General, Mar. 1919
	Dye Industry, Mar. 1919
	Asia-Minor, Mar.-Sept. 1919

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Division of Current Diplomatic and Political Correspondence, American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Feb.-Mar. 1919
	Palestine, General, Mar. 1919
	Macedonia, General, June 1919
BOX 363	Persia, General, Feb.-Mar. 1919
	Lebanon, General, Feb. 1919
	Hungary, General, Mar.-Aug. 1919
	Protocol, Peace Conference, Jan. 1919
	Railroad, Paris-Dakar, Mar. 1919
	Memoranda from General D. E. Nolan, Germany, Apr.-June 1919 (2 folders)
	Serbia, General, Oct. 1918-May 1919
	Spain, General, Mar. 1919
	Kerner's Political Situation in Central Europe, Apr.-May 1919
	Transport of General Haller's Army, Feb.-Apr. 1919
	Korea, General, Dec. 1918-May 1919
	Holland, General, Feb. 1919
	Daily Bulletin on Austria-Hungary and Yugo-Slavia, Mar.-Apr. 1919
	Great Britain, General, Apr.-June 1919
	Gasses, General, Apr. 1919
	General Churchill, Apr.-Oct. 1919
	Telegrams, 1919
	Military Attaché
	Cairo, Apr.-Nov.
	Rome, Apr.-Nov.
BOX 364	Peru, Apr.-May
	Belgrade, Apr.-Sept.
	Russia, Apr.-Aug.
	Denmark, Apr.-May
	Belgium, Apr.-May
	Spain, Apr.-June
	Mexico, Apr.
	Cuba, Apr.-May
	Switzerland, Apr.-Aug.
	Greece, Apr.-Nov.
	Bulgaria, Apr.-Oct.
	China, Apr.-June
	Sweden, Apr.-Oct.
	Japan, Apr.-May
	France, Apr.
	Roumania, Apr.-Sept.
	Trans-Caucasia, General, Apr. 1919
	Military Occupation, Apr. 1919
	Telegrams, Military Attaché, 1919
	London, May-June
	Aeronautics, General, Apr.-May 1919
	Telegrams, Military Attaché, 1919

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	Holland, May-June
	Poland, May-Nov. 1919
	Romania, General, May-Aug. 1919
BOX 365	Army of Occupation, Apr.-Aug. 1919 (2 folders)
	Rhineland, General, June-July 1919
	Montenegro, General, May 1919
	Military Commissioners on League of Nations, May 1919
	Baltic States, June-Nov. 1919
	Peru-Chile Question, Jan. 1919
	American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Secret Reports May-June 1919 (2 folders)
BOX 366	June-July 1919
	Parker, William S. (Private, United States Army), June 1919
	Schleswig, General, May 1919
	Army 1919
	Italy, July
	Bulgaria, July
	Bessarabia, General, Sept. 1919
	Lusatian, Slavs, General, Sept. 1919
	Army 1919
	Turkey, July
	Telegrams, Military Attaché, Czecho-Slovakia, July 1919
	Teschen, General, May 1919
	Army, General, Feb. 1919
	Thrace, General, July 1919
	Dobrudja, General, July 1919
	Marburg, General, Aug. 1919
	Mondane Railroad and Tunnel, Aug. 1919
	United States Liquidation Commission, Aug. 1919
	Arms and Ammunition, Sept. 1919
	Inter-Allied Commission of Control, Oct.-Nov. 1919
	Major General Henry T. Allen, Reports, Oct. 1919
	Georgia, General, July 1919
	Hale, Andy R. (Sergeant), Sept. 1919
	General Correspondence July 1920-Mar. 1921 (2 folders)
BOX 367	Aug. 1918-July 1922 (7 folders)
BOX 368	July 1922-Feb. 1924 (6 folders)
BOX 369	Mar.-Dec. 1924 (5 folders)
	Geneva-Newspaper Clippings, 1924
BOX 370	American Committee Draft, Treaty Mutual Assistance, Geneva, 1924

Part II: Office File-Supreme War Council, 1917-1930

Container

Contents

	General Correspondence
	Jan.-Nov. 1925
	(5 folders)
BOX 371	Nov. 1925-Jan. 1927
BOX 372	Jan. 1927-Sept. 1928
	(5 folders)
BOX 373	Sept. 1928-May 1930
BOX 374	Preliminary Partial Index
	Drafts of Articles and Speeches
	1920-1939
	(5 folders)
BOX 375	1920-1930
	Miscellaneous Printed Matter and Clippings
	(5 folders)
BOX 376	(6 folders)
BOX 377	Copies of War College Lectures
	Nov. 1921-Oct. 1922
	(5 folders)
BOX 378	Nov. 1922-Feb. 1924
	(6 folders)
BOX 379	Feb. 1924-Dec. 1925
	(4 folders)
BOX 380	Feb. 1925-Oct. 1926
BOX 381	Oct. 1926-Dec. 1927
BOX 382	Jan. 1928-May 1929
	Memoranda, Jan. 1919
	Bulletin No. 1 American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Dec. 1919
	Covenant, League of Nations Commission Text
	Military Study: Joshua and Moses
BOX 383-387	Indexes
BOX 388-392	Part II: Family Correspondence, 1864-1933
	Letters by Bliss family members, including correspondence with his wife.
	Arranged by name of correspondent.
BOX 388	Anderson, Maria Hill, 1864-1879
	Bliss, Eleanora Anderson, 1881-1933, undated
	(12 folders)
	Bliss Eliakim R. Jr., 1917
BOX 389	Bliss, Goring, 1914, 1918
	Bliss, Mary Ann Raymond, 1870
	Knopf, Adolph, 1919, 1923-1925
	(2 folders)
	Knopf, Eleanor Bliss
	1891-1912
	(9 folders)
BOX 390	1913-1919
	(14 folders)

Part II: Family Correspondence, 1864-1933

Container	Contents
BOX 391	1919-1924 (11 folders)
BOX 392	1924, 1964, 1968, undated (9 folders) Invitations
BOX 392	Part II: General Correspondence, 1892-1927 Letters sent and received. Organized chronologically.
BOX 392	1892-1927
BOX 393	Part II: Speech and Article File, 1909-1927 Speeches, articles, and related material. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 393	Speeches, 1918-1924 Articles, 1920-1927 (4 folders) Miscellany, 1909-1916
BOX 393	Part II: Miscellany, 1907-1929 Printed matter. No arrangement. Printed Matter, 1909-1929 (4 folders)