

William Hamilton Felton, Jr., collection

AFC 2001/001/8383

Guides to the Collections in the Veterans History Project



**Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
December 2003**

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017655240>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadvhp.vh017006>

Processed by Sandra Savage

Finding aid encoded by Irene Lule, June 2017

Collection Summary

Title: William Hamilton Felton, Jr., collection: Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Inclusive Dates: 1917-1918

Call No.: AFC 2001/001/8383

Creator: Felton, William Hamilton, Jr., 1889-1956

Extent (Photographs): 1 photograph.

Extent (Manuscripts): manuscripts: 75 items

Language: In English.

Location: Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017655240>

Summary: The William Hamilton Felton, Jr., collection documents Felton's United States Army Coast Artillery Corps service during World War I. Born in Macon, Georgia, Felton was stationed in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; Fort Monroe, Virginia; and throughout France. He was commissioned as a First Lieutenant and promoted to Captain. Felton died on May 28, 1956. Dating 1917-1918, the collection contains correspondence to Felton's wife, Luisa, and a photograph of Felton with another soldier.

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

Felton, William Hamilton, Jr., 1889-1956.

Felton, William Hamilton, Jr.,--Correspondence.

Morrison, Polly Felton

Organizations

American Folklife Center

Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Subjects

World War, 1914-1918--Personal narratives, American.

World War, 1914-1918--Veterans.

Form/Genre

Manuscripts.

Personal correspondence.

Photographs.

Arrangement

Arranged into two series: Manuscripts and Photographs. Materials are arranged alphabetically by type of record.

Acquisition

Accessioned, 2003.

Related Material

George Gibson Felton Collection (AFC/2001/001/08340), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadvhp.vh017006.8340>

Copyright Status

Duplication of collection materials may be restricted.

Access and Restrictions

Collection is open for research; access restrictions apply. To request collection materials, please contact the Veterans History Project at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Preferred Citation

William Hamilton Felton, Jr., Collection (AFC/2001/001/8383), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Bibliography

Ralph Lovett. "US Coastal Artillery Officer Uniform Group W.H. Felton Jr. of Macon, Georgia." Accessed June 22, 2017. http://www.lovetartillery.com/US_Coastal_Artillery_Group.html.

The Georgia Trust. "Hay House History." Accessed June 22, 2017. http://www.georgiatrust.org/historic_sites/hayhouse/history.php.

Biographical Note

William Hamilton Felton, Jr. was born on September 20, 1889, in Macon, Georgia, to Judge William H. Felton Sr. and Mary Ellen Johnston Felton. Felton's grandparents, William Butler Johnston and Anne Clark Tracy, were the original owners of the Johnston-Felton-Hay House, a prominent home in Macon. After their deaths, Felton's parents came into possession of the house in 1896. Felton attended the University of Virginia (UVA), where he joined Beta Theta Pi and the UVA track team. He married Luisa Gibson on January 16, 1915, and their first child, William Hamilton Felton, III, was born on November 25, 1915.

Felton began his service with the United States Army Coast Artillery Corps in 1917. He reported to training camp at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. He remained there until moving to Fort Monroe, Virginia, in late September 1917. In early January, he embarked from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Europe. Following his arrival in France, he moved from camp to camp frequently. During this period, he served as a First Lieutenant with the Coast Artillery Corps. Felton received additional training to become a mechanical officer, attending school in Southern France, where he was far removed from the front. In mid-September 1918, he contracted influenza and remained hospitalized until late September. By November 1918, Felton had rejoined his unit and been promoted to Captain. As of December 1918, Felton remained in Europe.

After his discharge from the Army, Felton returned to Macon and took over the operations of the family farms. His second son, George, was born on March 23, 1920. After the deaths of his parents, Felton sold the Johnson-Felton-Hay House to another family in 1926. Felton's first son, William Hamilton Felton, III, died on October 15, 1946. William Hamilton Felton, Jr. died on May 28, 1956.

Scope and Content

The William Hamilton Felton, Jr., collection documents Felton's United States Army service during World War I. Dating 1917-1918, items include correspondence and a photograph.

The correspondence is nearly entirely comprised of letters from Felton to his wife, Luisa. Letters begin during Felton's time in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in September 1917 and end in December 1918, while Felton is still in Europe. Topics include camp and military life in Fort Oglethorpe, Fort Monroe, and France; general updates regarding well-being; homesickness; Felton's personal thoughts on France and World War I; and Felton's relationship with his wife. A telegram from a woman

identified only as Sarah to Luisa regarding Felton's safe arrival in Europe, dated January 18, 1918, is also included. The undated photograph is an image of Felton, in uniform, with another unidentified soldier.

Description of Series

Container

Series

Series I: Manuscripts

Series II: Photographs

Container List

Container	Contents
Series I: Manuscripts	
BOX-FOLDER MSS426/1-3	Correspondence, 1917-1918 3 folders MS01: 47 letters to Luisa, Felton's wife, Camp Chattanooga, Tennessee; Fort Monroe, Virginia; and France (8/27/1917-12/23/1918) and three postcards, to Luisa, France (1/2/1918 - 8/9/1918). A few letters are undated. Topics include camp and military life in Fort Oglethorpe, Fort Monroe, and France; general updates regarding well-being; homesickness; Felton's personal thoughts on France and World War I; and Felton's relationship with his wife.
BOX-FOLDER MSS426/4	Correspondence, January 12, 1918 1 folder MS02: Telegram, New York. The telegram is from a woman identified only as Sarah to Luisa regarding Felton's arrival in Europe.
BOX-FOLDER MSS426/5	Correspondence, September 27, 1917 1 folder MS03: Correspondence to the veteran from a woman identified only as Mrs. Gibson.
Series II: Photographs	
BOX-FOLDER MSS426/6	Original photographic print, undated 1 folder PH01: Photo of the veteran and a friend in uniform.