

Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections
University of South Carolina Libraries

**Samuel Bloom World War I Archive, 1917-
1920**

Collection: Mss. 2004:2

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Samuel Bloom World War I Archive, 1917-1920

Collection Number: Mss. 2004:2

Creator: Samuel Bloom, 1895-1976

Extent: 11 boxes

Administrative Information

Provenance: Gift, 2004. Donated in 2004 by Bloom's sons, Dr. Robert A. Bloom of New York City, NY, and Mr. Jack Bloom of New Rochelle, NY.

Processed by: Patrick Scott, 2004

Access Restrictions: Open to research. Much of the manuscript material is on highly acid paper; it has been transferred to mylar sleeves, and has suffered little damage so far, but requires limited, careful handling, until it can be copied or digitized.

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Scope and Contents Note

Samuel Bloom, born in the Ukraine in 1895, emigrated with his family to New York in early childhood. In October 1917, shortly after graduating from City College, as he was starting a teaching career as a high school substitute, he was drafted in the US Army, serving as a private (later private first class and company signaller) in Company L, 325th Infantry Battalion. In April 1918, he went with his company to France (by way of England), training with the English behind the Somme front (during the later part of the German spring offensive), then going to signal school, before rejoining his company for the AEF counter-offensive on the Lorraine front in July 1918. After weeks in a defensive sector, in trenches under shelling, he participated in the St. Mihiel offensive (September 12-14, 1918) followed by open warfare in the Meuse-Argonne offensive (from September 26, 1918), through Cornay (October 6), Fleville (October 11), and the

Aire River, till he was wounded by shrapnel in the left hand on October 16, and sent back to a field hospital; his company continued fighting through November 1, when, out of an initial strength of 1000 men, the company had 137 men left, including only four officers (1 major and three captains). Bloom spent some time in a convalescent camp, and with casual companies, but in February 1919 he was transferred to the American School Detachment at the University of Montpellier, where he received a diploma for courses in French literature and international law, before returning to the U.S. for demobilization in July 1919. His war experience reinforced him in radical social views and may have hindered his career teaching civics, history, and at one time math, in New York high schools. He published a textbook *Economic Citizenship* (College Entrance Publishing, 1935), and also taught night school to immigrants. He died on Long Island in 1976.

The archive covers the experience during and after World War I of PFC. Samuel Bloom (1895-1976). It includes Samuel Bloom's diary in the months before the war, and either diaries or the draft of a book recounting his war experience; weekly letters home (often of 8 or 10 pages) to his parents in New York; letters from the family to him (usually written by his brother Hyman) recounting family and current political events in New York; letters to him from friends, both in the army and back home; army documents; material on the Army School Detachment at the University of Montpellier in spring 1919 (including seven issues of the newspaper, the *Soldier-Student*); soldiers' guides for leave in Paris and elsewhere, and other guidebooks; and a group of postcards.

Related Materials

The Joseph M. Bruccoli Great War Collection

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Container List

Series I: War records

Box 1

Army paybook

Form letters from King George V (facsimile) and General Pershing.

Telegrams on wound (December 12 1918) and arrival in Norfolk (July 24 1919)

Material relating to return to the US on SS Calloa, July 1919.

Forms on Government War Risk Insurance.

Prayerbook for Jewish Sailors and Soldiers (khaki)

Book of Psalms, Jewish (Khaki)

Army Songbook (? Bureau of Libraries, AEF).

Letter and forms from American Jewish Committee, Office of War Records

Jewish Veterans of America membership card

Photo certificate from WWI attesting to Samuel Bloom's service and the fact that he was wounded. Size 15 1/2 x 19.

Dog tag that says "Samuel Bloom Pvt. Co. INF. 1899965".

A cluster pin with stars, a female figure, and the word "NANCY".

A round medal with ribbon and bars "St. Mihiel, Meuse - Argonne, Defensive Sector.

A souvenir locket with five Monte Carlo pictures inside.

Series II: Diary and memoirs, 1917-1919

Box 2

Diary, 1917: in *Lawyer's Diary 1914* (red cloth binding).

MS Summary of war experience with dates (6 pp.)

MS War memoirs (100 pp. plus).

Series III: Correspondence

Box 3

55 letters and 44 postcards from Samuel Bloom to his family, April 1918-July 1919.

For a digital image from Bloom's letter on the Armistice, November 11, 1918.

Box 4

33 Letters to Samuel Bloom from Hyman Bloom and the Bloom family, 1918-1919:

32 typed letters sent by Hyman Bloom

1 handwritten letter (February 3, 1919) from Morris Bloom.

Box 5

26 Letters and 5 postcards to Samuel Bloom from other friends, 1918-1919.

Correspondents include: Joe Baron, Max Fidler, Benjamin (Bennie) Glassberg, W. A.

Gluckerman, Isidore Heller, J. Jospe, Ira B. Levine, B. Milhaus, Nathan Rivkind, Abe Speel, Joe

Tropp, Philip Wasserman.

Series IV: American School Detachment, Montpellier

Box 6

Documents, programs, guidebooks, etc. from American School Detachment, University of Montpellier, March-June 1919, including:

Orders for detachment to study (February 25, 1919)

Diploma (June 30, 1919)

Brochure on course offerings for foreign students, 1919-1920 (2 copies)

Brochure about the American School Detachment.

Program for concert by the ASD Student Players (May 31, 1919)

Annuaire de l'Universite et Livret de L'Etudiant (Annee Scolaire 1917-1918)

ASD Student Excursion Ticket

Program for Reception for the American Students (1919; 42 pp., wrappers)

Map, postcards, book of souvenir postcards

Box 7

Student publications from American School Detachment, University of Montpellier, 1919:

The Mistral, Published by the American Students at The University of Montpellier (yearbook)

Seven issues of *The Soldier-Student*, the Official Organ of the American Students at the University of Montpellier (weekly newspaper): Vol. 1, no. 1 (March 22, 1919); no. 2 (March 29, 1919); no. 5 (April 19, 1919); no. 8 (May 10, 1919); no. 9 (May 17, 1919); no. 10 (May 24, 1919); no. 12 (June 7, 1919).

Series V: Pamphlets

Box 8

A. 10 Guidebooks and Souvenir Booklets for Paris, including:

Paris for Englishmen and Americans (Galleries Lafayette)

Paris in a Week (Hachette)

Le Pantheon de la Guerre

B. 3 Guides to Spoken French

C. 8 Pamphlets on War Aims, etc., including:

Van Viorst, *France Our Ally* (YMCA 1918)

Bougle, *Qu'est-ce que Le Bolshevisme* (Paris: n.d. [1919])

Box 9

20 Guidebooks and Souvenir Booklets (other cities)

Guides include: Arles, Cette, Cote-d'Azur, Langres, Marseille, Monaco, Monte Carlo, Nice, Reims, Saint-Nazaire.

War-related items include:

Chateau-Thierry: La Guerre 1914-1918

Dijon (YMCA 1918)

Nimes Leave-Area American Expeditionary Force, 1918-1919
Saint-Mihiel Repris par les Americains aux Allemands

Series VI: Maps and Photographs

Box 10

Note: photos are in poor condition and should not be handled without prior clearance.

Map of trenches (blue mimeo)

Photo of Company L, 325th Infantry (Camp Upton, after return in 1919: Bloom not in photo).

Group photo of members of the Army School Detachment, Montpelier.

Photo of troops massed on decks of troop ship.

Three (3) 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 photos of Samuel Bloom in uniform - some kind of postcard form. One has writing on the back.

One photo of Samuel Bloom and friend - postcard form with writing on the back. Also 3 1/2 x 5 1/2.

Four (4) photos approx. 2 3/4 x 3 3/4. Sam may be in one or two.

One photo approx. 2 3/4 x 3 3/4 of Samuel Bloom and 3 others on a beach. Writing on the back.

Three (3) photos approx. 3 1/2 x 5 - Various soldiers.

One photo 3 1/2 x 3 1/2 of two soldiers.

Series VII: Miscellaneous

Box 11

Propaganda Souvenirs: Village before and after German Occupation

Foldout of German and French

Garcon d' hotel Boche (2 copies)

Embroidered cards

Card about Roulette from Monte Carlo

104 Postcards, chiefly of France, without inscriptions (duplicating some in Box 3 sent to family)