

Guide to Diary of World War I Red Cross Canteen worker Florence Bishop C0393

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1918-1920



Title Statement

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Subtitle: Diary of World War I Red Cross Canteen worker Florence Bishop

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0393

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/681

Unit Date

1918-1920

box

1 (folder)

Language

English .

Abstract

Personal diary of Florence Gardner Bishop recounting her experiences serving as a Red Cross Canteen worker in France during World War I.

Creator

Bishop, Florence G.

Extent

.1 Linear Feet 1 folder

Physical Location

R 72, C 3, S 6

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Public Domain. There are no known restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Purchased by Lynn Eaton from Caroliniana Rare Books in June 2023.

Processing Information

Processing completed by Meghan Glasbrenner in September 2023. Finding aid completed by Meghan Glasbrenner in September 2023.

Preferred Citation

Diary of World War I Red Cross Canteen worker Florence Bishop, C0393, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries

Historical Information

Founded by Clara Barton in 1881, the American Red Cross is a global humanitarian organization led and supported by volunteers. At the outbreak of World War I, it was still a small organization, but by the end of the war in November 1918 it had grown into a major organization with global recognition.

The American Red Cross Canteen Service was established in Europe during World War I to address transportation difficulties and congestion at railroad junctions that were impacting the ability for soldiers to receive sufficient meals prior to disembarking. The service, which over the course of the war was staffed by roughly 55,000 women volunteers, provided refreshments to both United States and allied (French, Italian, and British) troops near the front lines and along railway junctions. By the end of 1917, the service was operating 85 full canteen depots, 15 station restaurants, and 430 smaller canteens. In France, canteens were serving nearly a million men a month either in transit or on leave in Paris. By the end of the war in 1918, the service was operating 700 fixed canteens.

Scope and Content

Personal diary of Florence Gardner Bishop of Troy, New York recounting her experiences serving as a Red Cross Canteen worker in France during World War I. Diary contains entries detailing Florence's transatlantic travel to France, time working at the Red Cross Canteen, and return to New York at the end of the war. The diary consists of 142 pages, with entries beginning on July 13, 1918; 70 pages covering November 21, 1918 – February 8, 1919 taken from a separate book and placed in the front half of the diary for storage. In addition to covering her daily work schedule, the diary also describes her social activities, including visits and sightseeing trips with colleagues and soldiers, and romantic involvements with an officer referred to as "H.N.S." or "Sterling."

Inscription written on the inside front cover by Florence reads: "This is a diary of my trip to Europe as a Red Cross Canteen worker. Rewritten [underlined] at home April 1920 – changed a bit – original written in haste with a pencil –". Pages have been removed from the front half of the diary, possibly containing the pencil

written version Bishop references in her inscription, but no content appears to have been lost.

Related Materials

The Special Collections Research Center holds other diary collections, such as the William Darke Briscoe Civil War diaries collection, and other collections related to World War I, including the Underwood and Underwood World War I press photographs.

Keywords

Diaries

World War, 1914-1918

World War, 1914-1918 -- Women -- United States

France

American National Red Cross. Canteen Service

Bibliography

"140 years of service: Women an important part of American Red Cross history." 2021. American Red Cross. June 10, 2021. <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2021/women-an-important-part-of-american-red-cross-history.html>.

"American National Red Cross Records." n.d. OAC: Online Archive of California. Accessed September 27, 2023. <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt1h4nd13n/>.

Browe, Amanda. 2014. "From the Archives: Women of the Canteen Service." American Red Cross. March 6, 2014. <https://redcrosschat.org/2014/03/06/from-the-archives-women-of-the-canteen-service/>.

Arrangement

This is a single item collection.