

Tasker Howard Bliss CorrespondenceSC 01435

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1841-1909

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 01435

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1841-1909

Language

English

Creator

Bliss, Tasker Howard, 1853-1930

Extent

0.06 Linear Feet

Repository

Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

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Biographical / Historical

United States Army General. He was born in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1875, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, and assigned to the 1st Artillery. He was called back to West Point in 1876 to teach French and artillery tactics. After the Custer massacre; he appealed to West Point Superintendent, Major General John M. Schofield for active service in the West, but Schofield made him remain until he had finished his four years' tour as instructor. Since the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War he had employed spare hours in the study of Russian in order to get first-hand information about the campaign. Schofield found a lecture he delivered upon it so excellent that he asked him to expand it for publication. In 1880, he was promoted to First Lieutenant. From 1884 to 1885, he served as an adjutant of the Artillery School at Fort Monroe; later he taught at the Naval War College from 1885 to 1888. Here he made so distinctive an impression that he was sent on a mission to get information about military schools in England, France, and Germany. When General Schofield succeeded General Philip H. Sheridan as commanding general of the army, he chose him as his aide and as inspector of artillery and small-arms target practice. He served in this post from 1888 to 1895. Promoted to Captain in 1892. His desire for a change from Washington official life was balked when Secretary of War Daniel Lamont who did not want to part with his services in the War Department, made him his special assistant from 1895 to 1897. Then he served as a military attache to Spain in 1897. Just before the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, he was promoted to Major and soon to Lieutenant Colonel of Volunteers. During the Puerto Rican Campaign of the war, he was the chief of staff to Major-General James H. Wilson. After the war, his administrative record and his knowledge of the Spanish language and Spanish ways recommended him for the difficult task of chief of the Cuban customs service during the occupation of Cuba. In 1901, he received his first star, and was made a Brigadier General in the Regular Army in 1902. In that same year, when the Cuban Government took over all administration, Secretary of War Elihu Root brought him to Washington as an adviser in reorganization of the army under a general staff system. In November of 1902, at the request of Secretary of State John Hay, he proceeded to Cuba to negotiate the important Cuban reciprocity treaty, which he wrote so definitively in the final draft that it was subject to practically no changes. He was president of the Army War College from 1903 to 1905. He next served as the commander of the Departments of Luzon and Mindanao, Governor of Moro Province and then commanded the Philippine Division. He returned as the head of the Army War College from 1909 to 1910. He then commanded the Departments of California, the East and the South, respectively. He served as assistant Chief of Staff of the Army under Major General Hugh L. Scott from 1915 to 1916. In November 1915, he was promoted to Major General. He served as Chief of Staff of the Army from September 22, 1917 to May 18, 1918. He was made a temporary general in October, 1917. His importance to the war effort is exemplified by the fact that President Woodrow Wilson retained his services after he had passed the mandatory retirement age of 64. He was a delegate to the Paris Peace Conference of 1918, where he signed the Treaty of Versailles. He was relieved as chief of staff on May 19, 1918, and the following day received the brevet rank of General, thus making him the last American soldier ever to receive a brevet commission. Returning home, he was the governor of the Soldiers' Home in Washington, D.C. from 1920 to 1927. He was a member of the editorial board of Foreign Affairs, to which he contributed several articles. He retired in 1930 and was made a full General on the retired list by Congress. He died in Washington, D.C.. Bio by: Ugaaltheway

Content Description

Collection of letters written to his wife, Nellie, a Colonel in the Army, while he traveled across the United States. There are also letters to and from other family members included in this collection.

Keywords

United States -- Army

Description of Subordinate Components

Letters

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/269955

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 103 (Box)

Container 1 (folder)

Language English

Letters

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/269956

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 103 (Box)

Container 2 (folder)

Language English