

Stillwater Public Library

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Stillwater, OK 74074

2016.29

United Spanish American War Veterans and Auxiliary, Robert A. Lowry Camp #24, 1926-1971

CREATOR

United Spanish American War Veterans and Auxiliary, Robert A. Lowry Camp #24

EXTENT

Linear Feet: 3.5 feet

Number of Containers: 10

Number of Items: Approximately 573

Number of Digital Files: 2,583, as of July 2019

COLLECTION SUMMARY

The United Spanish American War Veterans and Auxiliary collection consists records describing the activities and members of Payne County's Robert A. Lowry Camp #24 organization from 1926 to 1971.

LANGUAGES

English

PROCESSING ARCHIVIST

Terry Berry, January-June 2019, Archivist

Kitty Pittman, January-June 2019, Digitization

Stacy DeLano, January-June 2019, Finding Aid

Collection Details

Biographical / Historical Note

The United Spanish American War Veterans, Robert A. Lowry Camp #24, operated from 1926-1971 and consisted of local men who served during the Spanish American War (1898-99) and Philippine American War (1899-1902). The organization was named for Robert A. Lowry (September 24, 1859 - March 6, 1920, who served as Captain in the First Oklahoma Territorial Regiment, Company L and who is known as the "Father of Stillwater."

The first meeting of the Robert A. Lowry Camp #24 took place on September 25, 1926, and records note 16 dues paying members and ended on January 14, 1967 with the death of its last member, George Walter Mathews. Notable members included:

- William M. "Billy" McGinty (January 1, 1871 – May 21, 1961) who was a "Rough Rider" and is known for his service at San Juan Hill and membership in the Otto Gray cowboy band.
- Edwin Hazen Brown (January 20, 1862-October 6, 1937) who served as first lieutenant and battalion Adjutant with the 52nd Iowa Volunteer Infantry and as captain and commissary of the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, 3rd Corps. And who was a longtime publisher and editor of the Stillwater Gazette.
- Bion Shively (March 26, 1978-Date of death unknown) whose carriage horseracing experience was documented in the film "Old Man in a Hurry: the True Story of Bion Shively, Oldest Man to Win the Hambletonian Trotting Classic" (<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc13654/m1/>).

The United Spanish American War Veterans, Robert A. Lowry Camp #24 Auxiliary included local women who supported the veterans. The organization began on January 26, 1929 and a notation in the financial records indicates that the last meeting of the Auxiliary took place in 1968, though some records exist until 1971. The Auxiliary provided support for the veteran group and advocated on behalf of the veterans and their widows in obtaining pension funds. Its records also reveal the heartbreaking story of two organizations ending and the woman who kept them going until their last members died.

Although records were kept by numerous members, primary record keepers included Edwin H. Brown, who served as the first Adjutant; Zella Hanner (December 6, 1884-October 15, 1970); and Vella Johnson (August 24, 1888-July 2, 1980).

Collection Description

The United Spanish American War Veterans and Auxiliary, Robert A. Lowry Camp #24, 1926-1971 collection consists of minute ledgers, membership rolls and dues, newspaper clippings, financial records, personal correspondence, photographs, and scrapbooks. Most items are in generally good condition, though scrapbooks have brittle and breaking edges and newspaper clippings caused discoloration through many of the ledgers.

Highlights of the collection include:

- Spanish American War Membership Applications for Robert A. Lowry Camp #24 – 52 membership cards with detailed biographical and military details
- Spanish American War Personal Experiences – 12 cards detailing the personal experiences of the veterans during the Spanish American War and Philippine American War, including that of Rough Rider Billy McGinty.
- Spanish American War Veterans C-number cards – 13 cards with the pension number of the veterans.

Arrangement Description

United Spanish American War Veterans and Auxiliary records are organized into 4 series:

- Series I – Veterans – Boxes 130-131; Membership information followed by records placed in chronological order
- Series II – Financial Records – Boxes 132-133; Chronological order
- Series III – Auxiliary – Boxes 136-139; Largely chronological order
- Series IV – Scrapbooks and Minutes – Boxes 136-139

Series are organized at the folder level and are inventoried at the item level. Future work will include accessioning each item in boxes 134-135.

Separated Materials

No other no record of the organization exist.

Related Materials

None

Location of Originals

The original collection is housed in the Special Collections room of the Stillwater Public Library.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The collection was brought to the attention of the librarian responsible for the Vertical Files in approximately 2005. The children's services staff was cleaning out its storage area. When they located the boxes of material, they brought them to the librarian to be placed in the Vertical files. The materials were in no discernable order and had no preservation. The boxes remained in the adult services offices until 2014 when the library created a Special Collections room. How they library came into possession of the materials is unknown.

Subject Headings

- United Spanish War Veterans
- United Spanish War Veterans--National Auxiliary
- Veterans--Spanish-American War, 1898
- Women--Oklahoma--Stillwater--Societies and clubs.
- Spanish-American War, 1898
- Spanish-American War, 1898--Veterans--Societies, etc.
- Spanish-American War, 1898--Personal narratives
- Veterans--Oklahoma

Processing Note

None

Using the Collection

ACCESS STATEMENT

Collection is open and available for use.

RIGHTS STATEMENT

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PREFERRED CITATION

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Collection Inventory

Please see accompanying excel document.