Introduction

The Archives Branch supports the professional military education requirements of Marine Corps residential and distance learning programs. The Archives is the chief repository for reporting units, as well as for the personal papers of current and veteran Marines. The Archives is open without appointment to both military and civilian patrons. Patrons may bring laptops, digital cameras, and scanners for personal use.

The Archives Branch is located at 2044 Broadway Street, Quantico, VA 22134

Phone: (703) 784-4685. Email: mcu_archives@usmcu.edu

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of George Barnett
Collection Number: COLL/1635
Accession Number: 2001-1635
Physical Characteristics: 9 standard legal size document boxes; 3 oversized folders; 3.75 linear feet
Span Dates: 1800-1959
Language: English
Creator: George Barnett, 1859-1930
Marine Corps Service: 1883-1923

Administrative Information

Restrictions: Collection is open to all researchers

Preferred citation: Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information:
Papers of George Barnett, [Folder heading], COLL/1635, Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division, Quantico, VA

Provenance: George Barnett’s papers were donated to the Marine Corps Museums Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps after his passing by his wife, Leila Montague Barnett. The papers were transferred from the Marine Corps Historical Center to the Marine Corps Archives and Special Collections Branch at Quantico on 25 January 1999.

Biographical Sketch

George Barnett, 12th Commandant of the Marine Corps, was born in Lancaster, Wisconsin on 9 December 1859. He was appointed to the Naval Academy from that state on 27 June 1877, and later admitted with the Class of 1881. Barnett was also a part of the first academy class to provide officers to the Marine Corps. After spending two years at
sea as a cadet midshipman he was transferred to the Marine Corps and was appointed a second lieutenant on 1 July 1883.

Barnett's early career entailed duty at the various Marine Barracks in the eastern part of the United States and served several tours of sea duty. In April 1905, Barnett received a promotion to lieutenant colonel. He attended the Naval War College in 1906 and served as Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Navy Yard in Washington for a period of one year when he was again placed in command of an expeditionary battalion which sailed on board the USS Minneapolis for Havana, Cuba, where it landed and became part of the Army of Cuban Pacification. Barnett returned to Washington DC in November of 1906.

After commanding the Marine Barracks in Washington for a period of one year, he was transferred to Marine Corps Headquarters and was shortly afterwards ordered to command the Marine Detachment, American Legation, Peking, China. Upon completing his tour of duty in the Far East he returned to the United States during the summer of 1910 and assumed command of the Marine Barracks, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was promoted to the rank of colonel on 11 October of that year. Barnett subsequently received duty orders to Cuba and then to organize the First Advanced Base Brigade of Marines at Philadelphia.

Barnett was appointed Major General Commandant of the Marine Corps on 25 February 1914 for a period of four years during the U.S. occupation of Haiti and Santo Domingo, intervention in Mexico and involvement in World War I. He was the first Commandant to be appointed on a four-year term in accordance with a law passed the previous year. He was promoted to brigadier general on 29 August 1916.

During World War I the Marine Corps expanded to more than three thousand officers and approximately 75,500 enlisted men. In addition to maintaining the occupation of Haiti and the Dominican Republic and reinforcing the regular stations of the Marine Corps, two brigades of Marines were deployed to France, while other Marine units occupied parts of Cuba, and another Marine brigade was held in reserve in Galveston, Texas. Large training centers were also maintained at Quantico, Virginia, and Parris Island, South Carolina. Brigadier General Barnett also saw the Marine Corps through the difficult period of demobilization and reorganization at the close of the First World War. For his outstanding service, he was honored by the French Government by being made a commander of the Legion of Honor, and he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the Secretary of the Navy.

He was relieved as Commandant of the Marine Corps on 30 June 1920, by order of Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. On 5 March 1921 he was given the regular rank
of Major General. He spent the remaining years of his active service as Commanding General of the Department of the Pacific.

Major General Barnett retired on 9 December 1923, having reached the statutory age limit of sixty-four years. He died on 27 April 1930 in Washington, DC, and was buried in the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, in a section reserved for the members of the Naval Academy Class of 1881.

**Scope and Content Note**

The Papers of George Barnett consist of materials related to his career with the United States Marine Corps beginning with his appointment as a Midshipman at the United States Naval Academy in 1877 and through his retirement as a Major General in 1923. The dates of the collection range from 1800-1959.

Included in this collection are official and unofficial documents acquired by Major General George Barnett over the course of his military career. Of particular note are Series 1 and Series 5. The correspondence in Series 1 relates to his activities as Commandant, particularly the inquiry of Marine Corps activities in Haiti and correspondence addressed to Barnett’s wife, Leila Montague Barnett for special requests and favors on the part of active-duty Marines. Series 5 contains memoirs for George Barnett and Leila Montague Barnett. Original copies of “Soldier and Sailor Too” containing Barnett’s annotations and edits are maintained separately for preservation purposes. Other items of interest in this series include photographs and newspaper articles regarding Barnett’s appointments as Commandant.

The collection is arranged by subject headings and chronologically within each series. Subject headings were imposed by the processor. Series in this collection include: Correspondence, George Barnett’s Personal Notes, Honors & Awards, Ephemera, Memoirs, Newspaper Articles, and Photographs. The size of the collection is approximately 3.75 linear feet.
List of Series

Series 1. Correspondence, 1800-1937
   1.1 George Barnett, 1800-1927
   1.2 Leila Montague Barnett, 1917-1937
Series 2. George Barnett, Personal Notes, 1918-1920
Series 3. Honors & Awards, ca. 1881-1927
Series 4. Ephemera, ca. 1918-1934
Series 5. Memoirs, 1871-1959
   5.1 George Barnett, “Soldier and Sailor Too”, George Barnett, 1877-1921
   5.2 Leila Montague Barnett, “Command Performance”, 1871-1959
Series 6. Newspaper Articles, 1837-1949
Series 7. Photographs, ca. 1881-1924

Series 1. Correspondence, 1800-1937
Arrangement: Chronological by date

This series consists of correspondence produced/received by George Barnett and his wife Leila Montague Barnett. Most of the material relates to Barnett’s experiences as a young junior officer, Marines Corps operations overseas, thoughts on Barnett’s appointment, removal, and reappointment as Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the future of the Marine Corps during this period. The letters from subseries 1.2, LeilaMontague Barnett, compose the largest portion of this series. Incoming correspondence is interfiled with outgoing correspondence in both subseries’ 1.1 and 1.2.

Series 1.1 Correspondence, George Barnett, 1800-1927
Arrangement: Chronological by date

This subseries consists of personal correspondence produced and received by George Barnett and are addressed to commanding officers, higher ranking officials within the department of the Navy and Marine Corps, colleagues, friends, and acquaintances. Topics of discussion include military affairs; politics; day to day activities and duties while stationed at the Naval Guard House in Sitka, Alaska; maneuvers at Culebra in 1914; Marine operations at Vera Cruz; China; Haiti; San Diego, California, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; organization of Fifth and Sixth Marine Regiments, Battle of Belleau Wood (World War I); letters of a congratulatory nature sent on the occasion of appointment of George Barnett as Commandant of the United States Marine Corps; the treatment of Marines by Naval officers in 1800; Marine clubs; American Legion posts; report on Marine Troops in France from John J. Pershing; Haitian Inquiry ordered by Secretary of Navy Josephus Daniels in regards to “indiscriminate killings’ of Haitian bandits; disappearance of Gregory Kennerk; Marine Corps League; and well wishes, statements of shock and outrage, as well as Barnett's appreciation of thanks for the well wishes all relating to his relief as Commandant in 1920. Incoming correspondence is interfiled with outgoing correspondence.
Series 1.2 Correspondence, Leila Montague Barnett, 1917-1937
Arrangement: Chronological by date

This subseries consists of personal correspondence composed and received by Leila Montague Barnett. Topics of discussion include Christmas packages sent to Marines; the status of enlisted Marines who found themselves in trouble with the Corps for whom the writers were requesting special favors; requests for assistance in obtaining commissions and expediting of discharges; the removal of her husband as Commandant in 1920; the publication of John Houston Craige's military travel memoir *Cannibal Cousins* in 1933; and pleas for leniency for Marines who were found to be absent without out leave. This subseries also contains speeches given by Mrs. Barnett in which she discusses the Marines' service and sacrifices during World War I; the establishment of the Graves Registration Service; care of the dead on the field of battle; burial of dead at Belleau Wood; the identification of the dead; and the establishment of national cemetery in France. Incoming correspondence is interfiled with outgoing correspondence.

Series 2. George Barnett, Personal Notes, 1918-1920
Arrangement: Chronological by date

This series consists of George Barnett’s personal notes about individuals he needs to write and/or telephone, information about John Otto Siegal who deserted on 16 June 1919, a listing of presents received and from whom, an unidentified listing of individuals and organizations, a pay bill as finally agreed to in conference and reported to the house, Saturday, 8 May 1920, and a partial, unidentified, story of events during World War I.

The second portion of this series contains items of a more serious nature. They include directions as to how George Barnett is to be listed in the Navy Register, supplies and cost required to equip the Marine Corps (30 June 1918), expenditures for the fiscal year 1919, the American Brigade of Marines at Bois de Belleau, National Rifle Association competition in France, Certain Naval Lessons of the Great War (7 January 1920), the Marine Corps entering World War I, the Marine Corps' record of preparedness and achievements, and an extract from the report of the subcommittee for investigation of conduct and administration of Naval Affairs.

Series 3. Honors & Awards, ca. 1881-1927
Arrangement: Chronological by date

*See also Oversize Folder 1*

This series consists of Honors and Awards received by George Barnett relating to his service with the United States Marine Corps. Specific items include: Navy Distinguished Service Medal, certificate issued by the Society of American Patriots, the National Order of the Legion of Honor issued by the French Republic, certificate issued by The American Junior Naval and Marine Scout, three Ordre National de la Legion D’Honneurs, certificate issued by The United States of America Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Cade-Midshipman Certificate issued by the United States Naval
Academy (1883), graduation certificate issued by the United States Naval Academy (1881), and promotion certificates (1st Lieutenant to Major General).

Series 4. Ephemera, ca. 1918-1934
Arrangement: Chronological by date

This series consists of ephemera acquired by George Barnett during the later portion of his career. Specifically, the series contains the following items: notes, a newspaper photograph and various invitations that relate to the military and social life of George Barnett. The photograph is of the officers of the Corp's Expeditionary Regiment at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 1911. Other items include a membership card to the Society for the Prevention of Calling Sleeping Car Porters, a program book for a 1934 memorial service in memory of Major General George Barnett, a Christmas greeting to the Officers and Men of the Marine Corps from Major General George Barnett (21 December 1918), and programs/invitations collected by George Barnett during his tour of Guam, Japan, and San Diego in 1922.

Lastly, this series contains the lyrics to "A Marine Chanty." The tune appears to be written circa 1918-1920s, "Follow the U.S.A. Marines" by Preston Gibson (ca. World War I), the musical score and lyrics to "Perry" (although not directly identified, it can be assumed that the reference is to Admiral Matthew C. Perry), and the poem "Bois de Belleau" written at the 6th Marines Headquarters upon the occasion of a dinner in honor of General Harbord, Commanding the Marine Brigade 10 July.

Series 5. Memoirs, 1871-1959
Arrangement: By Author

This series contains the memoirs belonging to George Barnett, “Soldier and Sailor Too” and Leila Montague Barnett’s memoir, titled, “Command Performance. The collection contains (4) copies of George Barnett’s memoir and a single copy of Leila Montague Barnett’s memoir.

Series 5.1 George Barnett, “Soldier and Sailor Too”, 1877-1921
Arrangement: By Author

This series contains chapters 1-33 of the original manuscript and annotations of George Barnett's autobiography, titled, "Soldier and Sailor Too". The autobiographical account begins with Barnett's admission to the Naval Academy in 1877 and ends 1 June 1921, at a time when Barnett assumed command of the Department of the Pacific. The manuscript is approximately 434 double-spaced typed and handwritten pages. This series also contains individual unidentified chapters, missing pages, (1) unbound copy, (1) softbound copy, and (1) hardbound copy of the memoir. The final items consist of a biographical sketch of Major General Commandant George Barnett dated 25 January 1918, a chronological outline of his career dated 21 June 1918, an updated version dated 30 October 1918, and a 2d edition of "Naval Reconnaissance Instructions for the Reconnaissance of Bays, Harbors and Adjacent Country". This (267) page book was
prepared by direction of The Secretary of the Navy by Colonel Dion Williams, USMC, and published by the Washington Government Printing Office in February 1917.

**Series 5.2 Leila Montague Barnett, Command Performance, 1871-1959**

Arrangement: By author

This subseries contains a copy of Leila Montague Barnett's memoir "Command Performance, 1871-1959." The memoir chronicles Leila Montague Barnett's life as a civilian and as a "Marine" married to George Barnett. In addition, there appear to be portions of the memoir missing as well as unidentified chapters and copies of some pages from Mrs. Barnett’s “Row on Row” speech.

**Series 6. Newspaper Articles, 1837-1949**

Arrangement: Chronological by date

*See also Oversize Folder 1*

This series consists of newspaper articles of interest to, and collected/acquired by Major General George Barnett. Topics include the following: 1881 United States Naval Academy classmates, Barnett's appointment as Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1914, activities of the United States Marine Corps, Barnett's re-appointment as Commandant and activities during World War I, inquiry into the indiscriminate killing of Haitians by Marines in 1919, Barnett's removal and John Lejeune's appointment as Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1920, (7) editions of the newsletter "The Whisper." Volume 1 Number 1 is dated 9 March 1919, Barnett’s retirement, death, and subsequent funeral. Additionally, the series contains a single 17 September 1927 edition of the New York Herald's American Legion Section. The paper discusses the celebrations and the exploits of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I.

Lastly, the series contains an article "Morale and Marines" by Albert S. McLemore dated May 1919. The article was printed in the Marine Magazine and includes a message from Mrs. George Barnett to "Mothers and Families of Each one of Those Who Died That We Might Live."

**Series 7. Photographs, ca. 1881-1924**

Arrangement: Chronological by date and topic

*See also Oversize Folder 1*

Images in this series are comprised of black/white and color photographs of Major General George Barnett, family, relatives, friends, professional associates, and locations for the years 1881-1924. They depict the locations where Barnett was stationed throughout his career, people he associated with throughout his life, official portraits, Marine Corps activities and campaigns. In general, major photographic locations include: Marine Corps Barracks, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; World War; Somme, France; Thiecourt, France; Meuse, France; Belleau Wood, France; Lucy-le-Bocage; St. Mihiel, France; Soissons, France; St. George, France; and general photographs of France;
Italy; and Germany. Other items are of a homecoming parade in New York; group portraits, portraits of Naval Academy Classmates from the Class of 1881; and Secretary of the Navy, Edwin Denby’s tour of Guam. A very limited number of photographs contain any descriptive information.

**Box List**

**Box 1**

**Series 1. Correspondence, 1800-1937**

**Series 1.1 George Barnett, Correspondence, 1800-1927**

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel William Ward Burrows Letter, September 22, 1800</td>
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<td>Naval Guard House Log Book, Sitka, Alaska, 1884-1886</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1910-1914</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Letters received on Occasion of Appointment as Commandant, 1914</td>
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<td>Letters received on Occasion of Appointment as Commandant, 1914</td>
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<td>Letters received on Occasion of Appointment as Commandant, Undated</td>
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<td>Landing Operation Maneuvers at Culebra, January-February 1914</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1915</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1916</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1917</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Letters received on Occasion of Appointment as Commandant, 1918</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1918</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 29 June 1918</td>
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**Box 2**

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, Haiti Inquiry, 1920</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, Relief as Commandant, 1920</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, Relief as Commandant, 1920</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, West Coats and Return, 1920</td>
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<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1921</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1923</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, 1926-1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The Near Lord Josephus Returns to Finish the Navy</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>George Barnett, Correspondence, Undated</td>
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Series 1.2 Leila Montague Barnett, Correspondence, 1917-1937

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Box 5
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Folder 6    Leila Montague Barnett, Correspondence, 1935-1937
Folder 7    Leila Montague Barnett, Correspondence, Undated
Folder 8    Elizabeth Poe Correspondence, Undated
Folder 9    Leila Montague Barnett, Speech, 28th Continental Congress
Folder 10   Leila Montague Barnett, Speech, “The Crosses: Row on Row”

Series 2. George Barnett, Personal Notes, 1918-1920
Folder 11   George Barnett, Personal Notes, ca. 1919-1920
Folder 12   George Barnett, Memorandums & Special Reports, 1918-1920

Series 3. Honors & Awards, ca. 1881-1927
Folder 13   George Barnett, Honors & Awards, ca. 1914-1927
Series 4. Ephemera, ca. 1918-1934

Folder 14  Ephemera, ca. 1918-1934
Folder 15  Ephemera, Poetry & Music Lyrics, Undated
Folder 16  Ephemera, Tour of Japan and Guam, 1922

Box 6

Series 5. Memoirs, 1871-1959

Series 5.1 George Barnett, “Soldier and Sailor Too”, 1877-1921

Folder 1  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 1-3
Folder 2  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 4-8
Folder 3  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 9-12
Folder 4  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 13-16
Folder 5  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 17-22
Folder 6  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 23-26
Folder 7  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Chapters 27-33
Folder 8  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Individual Chapters
Folder 9  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Missing Chapters

Box 7

Folder 1  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Unbound
Folder 2  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Bound Copy
Folder 3  “Soldier & Sailor Too”, Hardbound Copy
Folder 4  George Barnett, Biographical Sketch and Chronology of Service
Folder 5  “Naval Reconnaissance Instructions for the Reconnaissance of Bays & Harbors, & Adjacent Country”, 2d Edition

Series 5.2 Leila Montague Barnett, Command Performance, 1871-1959

Folder 6  Leila Montague Barnett, “Command Performance”, 1871-1959

Series 6. Newspaper Articles, 1837-1949

Box 8

Folder 1  Newspaper Articles, United States Naval Academy, Class of 1881
Folder 2  Newspaper Articles, Appointment as Commandant, 1914
Folder 3  Newspaper Articles, 1914-1916
Folder 4  Newspaper Articles, World War I & Re-appointment as Commandant, 1918-1919
Folder 5  Newspaper Articles, 1919-1920
Folder 6  Newspaper Articles, Haiti Inquiry, 1920
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Folder 8  Newspaper Articles, 1924-1929
Folder 9  “New York Herald”, 1927
Folder 10 Newspaper Articles, 1918-1932
Folder 11 “The Whisper” Newsletter, 1919-1949
Folder 12 Newspaper Articles, Death and Funeral, 1930

Series 7. Photographs, ca. 1881-1924

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Folder 10 Belleau Wood, World War I
Folder 11 World War I, Rheims
Folder 12 St Georges, Lourdes, France, World War I
Folder 13 St Mihiel, World War I
Folder 14 Soissons, World War I
Folder 15 World War I, Veaux
Folder 16 World War I, Verdun
Folder 17 World War I, Luxembourg
Folder 18 World War I, Marines in Germany

Box 10
Folder 1  World War I, Marines in Germany
Folder 2  World War I, Marines in Germany, Altweid
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Folder 6  World War I, General Neville Inspection
Folder 7  Italy, World War I
Folder 8  Parade In New York, World War I
Folder 9  Portraits of Naval Academy Classmates
Folder 10 Secretary of the Navy Denby Tour
Folder 11 Group Portraits, ca. 1923
Folder 12 Marine Barracks, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Folder 13 Various
Oversize
Oversize materials are identified as materials that are too large to fit in a standard legal size (8½ × 14 inches) folder.

Oversize Folder (Located in Map Case 1, Drawer 4, Left)

Folder 1:

This folder contains the following: Daughters of the American Revolution Certificate issued to Leila Montague Barnett on 7 May 1927, certificate issued by The American Junior Naval and Marine Scout, (3) Ordre National de la Legion D’ Honneur, Certificate issued by The United States of America Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Cadet-Midshipman Certificate issued by the United States Naval Academy, Graduation Certificate issued by the United States Naval Academy, Promotion
Certificates (1st Lieutenant to Major General), single issue of The Erie Gazette (9 February 1837).

Folder 2:
This folder contains group photographs of the following: The American Junior Naval and Marine Scout Recruiting Station for the United States Marine Corps, Foreign Legation Guard Officers, Peking, China (1908-1911), colors of the 5th and 6th Machine Gun Battalion and 1st Marine Aviation Force being presented to General George Barnett (1919), Banquet given by Japan to the Class of 1881, USNA, Tokyo (4 July 1922), Marine Corps Day Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco (31 July 1915), Banquet 40th Anniversary Class of 1881, USNA, Hotel Lafayette, Washington DC, (31 May 1921), Officers of the Legation Guard, Peking, China (1914), George Barnett Memorial at the United States Naval Academy (1934), sketch of Major General George Barnett, sketch of political cartoon “The Noble Marine”, sketch of political cartoon “Young Man, You’re some Shooter”, portrait of Wendell C. Neville, Rear Admiral B. Bulah, Rear Admiral C.R.P. Rodgers, General George Barnett, Pitt Scott, and various other unidentified Marines. Other items include photographs of various social and dinner events and a poster signed by the members of the Bohemian Club (11 October 1923).

Folder 3: