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## Inventory of the John Amar Shishmanian papers

Finding aid prepared by Rita Morin

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**Title:** John Amar Shishmanian papers

**Date (inclusive):** 1879-1946

**Collection Number:** 41003

**Contributing Institution:** Hoover Institution Archives

**Language of Material:** English, French, and Armenian

**Physical Description:** 1 manuscript box, 2 oversize boxes, 1 envelope (3.2 linear feet)

**Abstract:** Correspondence, printed matter, photographs, and memorabilia relating to the Armenian-Turkish conflict at the end of World War I, and to the Armenian question at the Paris Peace Conference.

**Physical Location:** Hoover Institution Archives

**Creator:** Shishmanian, John Amar, 1882-1945.

**Access**

The collection is open for research; materials must be requested at least two business days in advance of intended use.

**Publication Rights**

For copyright status, please contact the Hoover Institution Archives.

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], John Amar Shishmanian papers, [Box no.], Hoover Institution Archives.

**Acquisition Information**

Acquired by the Hoover Institution Archives in 1941.

**Accruals**

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. To determine if this has occurred, find the collection in Stanford University's online catalog at <http://searchworks.stanford.edu/>. Materials have been added to the collection if the number of boxes listed in the online catalog is larger than the number of boxes listed in this finding aid.

**Biographical Note**

John Shishmanian was born in 1882 in Lexington, Kentucky, to George N. and Lucy McClelland Shishmanian. Shishmanian grew up in Constantinople, where his father worked as a missionary. He graduated from Robert College and returned to the United States to attend university. Shishmanian graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1903, then studied law at the University of Virginia from 1903 to 1906 and registered at Stanford University in the fall of 1910.

Preceding the entrance of the United States into World War I, Shishmanian went to France as a member of the American ambulance field service. He then enlisted in the French Army and rose to the rank of second lieutenant, the highest rank possible for a non-citizen. Following action at the Battle of Verdun, Shishmanian and other French officers were sent to Cyprus to prepare Armenian volunteers for the French Armenian Legion, later known as the Légion Arménienne.

The Légion Arménienne served along the Eastern front in Palestine, Syria, and Cilicia in southeastern Anatolia. For his actions in the Palestine campaign, Shishmanian was awarded the Croix de Guerre medal. In June of 1920, with his term of service completed and the disbandment of the Légion Arménienne, Shishmanian was asked by the French to remain in Adana, Turkey, for three months, from June 10 to September 10, 1920. Shishmanian's task was to organize local Armenian volunteers to defend Adana from attacks by Kemalist rebels.

Despite his success in Adana, Shishmanian was placed under arrest by the French on September 22, 1920, and expelled from Cilicia. It is unclear whether this was due to Shishmanian's refusal to follow an order or the changing policies of the French in the region. Shishmanian's freedom was eventually secured through the interventions of his parents and Jouett Shouse, then undersecretary of the U.S. Treasury. Shishmanian returned to the United States and lived the remainder of his life in Fresno, California.

In recognition of these Armenian volunteers, the French government gave certain assurances to the Délégation Nationale Arménienne based on an Allied victory. In particular, the Cilicia region would become an autonomous Armenian republic under French protection. At the conclusion of the war, the peace treaty terms defined at the Paris Peace Conference did not create an autonomous Armenian republic, and control of the region was ceded to the new Republic of Turkey.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The papers are comprised of correspondence, documents, printed matter, and photographs related to Shishmanian's service in the French Army during World War I, the Armenian-Turkish conflict, and the Armenian question at the Paris Peace Conference.

The correspondence focuses on Shishmanian's service in the French army, including a handwritten letter from Viscount Allenby, the commander-in-chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, and a letter of thanks from Boghus Nubar, chairman

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of the Armenian National Assembly. In addition there is the correspondence of Georgia Cutler, sister of Leland W. Cutler a trustee of Stanford University and President of the Board.

Translations of the original documents are sometimes available.

The majority of the 130 photographs document Shishmanian's time as an officer in the Légion Arménienne during World War I. There are also photographs of his time in France prior to enlisting in the French army, notable Armenians, and photos obtained from the Kaloustian family depicting Armenians living along the Euphrates river. Additionally there is a photograph of Lucy McClelland Shishmanian in 1879 and one of John Shishmanian in 1944.

#### **Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920)

Armenian massacres, 1915-1923.

World War, 1914-1918--Peace.

Armenia (Republic)--History.

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#### **Correspondence, 1917-1946, undated**

Box/Folder 1 : 1-2

##### **General correspondence, 1917-1934**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English, French, Armenian and Turkish.

Box/Folder 1 : 3-4

##### **Georgia Cutler correspondence, 1941-1946**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

Includes authorized statements from Shishmanian to Cutler.

#### **Documents, 1919-1920, circa 1918, undated**

Box/Folder 1 : 5

##### **Military related papers, 1919-1920**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English, French, and Armenian.

Box/Folder 1 : 6

##### **Délégation Nationale Arménienne, 1920**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English and French.

Box/Folder 1 : 7

##### **Memorandum to the Ottoman delegation, 1919**

Box/Folder 1 : 8

##### **Notes, 1920**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English and French.

Box/Folder 1 : 9

##### **Maps, circa 1918**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English, French, and Armenian. Drawn by Shishmanian.

Box/Folder 1 : 10

##### **Armenian folksong, undated**

Box/Folder 1 : 11

##### ***The Last Dance*, undated**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

Written by Minas Tcheraz and translated into English by Shishmanian for the Armenian Mirror-Spectator newspaper.

#### **Printed material, 1919-1943, undated**

###### **Scope and Contents note**

In English and Armenian.

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Box/Folder 1 : 12           **Treaties, 1920**  
Box/Folder 1 : 13           **"The Armenian Question Before the Peace Conference," 1919**  
Box/Folder 1 : 14           **Magazines, 1921-1943**  
Box/Folder 1 : 15           **Bulletins and pamphlets, 1942-1943, undated**  
Box/Folder 1 : 16           **Clippings, 1919-1943, undated**

**Scope and Contents note**

Arranged alphabetically and thereunder chronologically.

Box 2

**Newspapers, 1919-1934**

**Scope and Contents note**

In English and Armenian. Arranged chronologically.

Box 2

**USSR in Construction, magazine, 1932**

Box 2

**Flag, undated**

**Photographs, 1879-1944 (bulk, 1903-1920)**

Box 3                       **Pre-World War I photographs along with ones taken in France, Cyprus and Palestine, 1879-1944**

**Scope and Contents note**

Formerly located in Envelope A

Box 3                       **Photographs taken in Palestine and Syria, 1918-1921**

**Scope and Contents note**

Formerly located in Envelope B(1)

Box 3                       **Photographs taken in Adana, Syria and Egypt, 1919-1920**

**Scope and Contents note**

Formerly located in Envelope B(2)

Envelope mC               **Photographs of notable Armenians, along with photographs of Musa Dagh commemoration at Suez, Egypt, 1920, undated**