Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Breo Freeman World War I Photograph Collection

Dates: 1914-1919

Bulk Dates: 1918-1919

Identification: MS-0488

Creator: Freeman, Breo, 1892-1975

Physical Description: 0.92 linear ft

Language of Materials: English

Repository: Special Collections & University Archives

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Biographical Information:
Breo Freeman was born in Louisiana on September 10, 1892. He studied architecture at the Armour Institute in Chicago, and in 1914 moved to Pasadena where he worked for Harrison Albright. Under Albright, Freeman worked on the music space for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park and on the Spreckels Theatre in San Diego. In 1917, he enlisted with the United States Navy, and was stationed in London where he oversaw repairs to navy vessels. After the war, Freeman returned to Pasadena to resume work as an architect. His most prominent designs include the Los Angeles County Court Building, the Washington Theater in Pasadena, and the R.K. Collins House. He also served as the first president of the Pasadena Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Freeman passed away in 1975. He had a wife and two sons.

Access Terms
This collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Topical Term:
World War, 1914-1918 -- Sources

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Conditions Governing Access:
This collection is open for research

Preferred Citation:
Identification of item, folder title, box number, Breo Freeman World War I Photograph Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Related Materials:
Georgia C. Amsden Papers
Olin Graves World War I Artifact Collection

Arrangement of Materials:
I. Foreign Dignitaries and Admirals (1918-1919)
II. Camp Life and Battlefields (c. 1914-1919)
III. Battleships, Submarines, and Zeppelins (c. 1918)
IV. British and German Landmarks (1918-1919)

Scope and Contents
The Breo Freeman World War I Photograph Collection visually documents soldier life, foreign dignitaries involved in peace negotiations, and the destruction caused by the First World War. Many of the photographs include captions, agency stamps, or hand-written notes on the back. Photographs with agency stamps appeared in various publications during and after the war. The collection is divided into four series: Foreign Dignitaries and Admirals; Camp Life and Battlefields; Battleships, Submarines, and Zeppelins; and British and German Landmarks.

The Foreign Dignitaries and Admirals (1918-1919) document American, British, and French leaders just after the armistice. Several of these photographs contain "Copyright – Central News, London" stamps, referring to the British Central News Agency. Dignitaries include President Woodrow Wilson, King George V, French Premier Georges Clemenceau, British Admiral of the Fleet Sir David Beatty, and American Admiral William Sowden Sims. Highlights include a photograph of Admiral Beatty overseeing the surrender of the German Fleet. The files are arranged alphabetically by folder title.

The Camp Life and Battlefields (c. 1914-1919) series documents Canadian soldier life as well as battle aftermath. The series includes photographs of wounded and dead soldiers, scenes of soldiers in camp and at work, destruction on the battlefield, and images of US trains transporting German cannons. Of particular interest is a photograph of two wounded soldiers with faces wrapped in gauze, as well as a photograph of two soldiers standing in front of a large pile of bombed-out rubble. The majority of photographs in this series say "Canadian Official Photograph" with typed descriptions pasted to the back of the photograph as well as a "Photo Supplied Central News" stamp. This series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Battleships, Submarines, and Zeppelins (c. 1918) document the surrender of the German fleet as well as damages to various naval vessels. The series includes photographs of German submarines, French battleships, battleships awaiting repair at the London docks, and several images of German zeppelins in Lakehurst, New Jersey. Highlights include an image of a German submarine "on show" in the Thames in front of the Tower Bridge. Although many of the submarine photographs contain Central News stamps and/or typed descriptions pasted onto the back of the photograph, none of the photographs of German zeppelins or battleship damage and repairs are stamped.

The British and German Landmarks (1918-1919) consist of two photographs of London crowds on the London Bridge and in front of the Queen Victoria Monument, as well as souvenir photographs of German castles along the Rhine River. There is also an image of a train station in New Jersey. This series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

| Box 1, Folder 1          | Admiral of the Fleet Sir David Beatty November 21, 1918 |
| Box 1, Folder 2          | Admiral William Sowden Sims 1918                       |
| Box 1, Folder 3          | President Woodrow Wilson and French Premier Georges Clemenceau 1919 |
| Box 1, Folder 4          | President Woodrow Wilson, King George V, and the First and Royal Families c. 1918-1919 |
| Box 1, Folder 5          | Canadian Soldiers and Battlefields c. 1914-1919        |
| Box 1, Folder 6          | German Cannon on Train c. 1918-1919                    |
|                          | Battleships, Submarines, and Zeppelins c. 1918         |
| Box 1, Folder 7          | British and German Submarines c. 1918                  |
| Box 1, Folder 8          | Surrender of the German Fleet November 21, 1918        |
| Box 1, Folder 9          | German Zeppelins at Lakehurst, New Jersey              |
| Box 1, Folder 10         | Ships awaiting Repair at London docks 1918             |
|                          | British and German Landmarks 1918-1919                 |
| Box 1, Folder 11         | German Castles along the Rhine c. 1918-1919            |
| Box 1, Folder 12         | London Landmarks with Crowds c. 1918-1919              |
| Box 1, Folder 13         | New Jersey Railroad Station - Ceremony 1918             |