



New York State Archives

**New York State Defense Council Correspondence of County
Home Defense Committees A4235**

New York State Archives
222 Madison Avenue
Albany, NY 12230
archref@nysed.gov
URL: <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series consists of memoranda, letters, and resolutions sent to county home defense committees from the New York State Defense Council, and also correspondence from the various committees sent to the Council reporting on their organizing and program efforts. Topics include: assuring a workable system of transportation; monitoring food production and conservation; enrolling men for home defense; providing needed labor for defense industries; and supervising instruction in personal hygiene, first aid, and economy in the home.
Creator:	New York (State). Office of Parks and Recreation
Title:	Correspondence of county home defense committees
Quantity:	2 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1917-1918
Series:	A4235

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Arrangement

Alphabetical by county, therein alphabetical by correspondent or subject and then in reverse chronological order.

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Scope and Content Note

The series consists of memoranda, letters, and copies of resolutions sent to county home defense committees from the State Defense Council, and also correspondence from the various committees to the council reporting on their organizing and program efforts. These efforts were coordinated statewide and with federal authorities through the state council, which was responsible for coordinating the mobilization of the state's resources and fostering cooperation among state and local agencies in the war effort.

Through planning by the Adjutant General's office, the county was made the unit for mobilization of the state's resources during wartime. Each of the 62 counties was represented by a committee of seven known as the home defense committee. As reflected in the correspondence in this series, county committees worked to assure a workable system of transportation; monitor food production and conservation; enroll men not eligible for the National Guard for home defense; provide needed labor for defense industries; and supervise instruction in personal hygiene, first aid, and economy in the home.

Some correspondence in the series concerns organizing and designating members of subcommittees or special projects, and clarifying procedures. The resolutions were typically taken upon the recommendation of the Council of National Defense. In addition to the correspondence, the contents of two folders at the beginning of the series are of special note. The first contains copies of form letters sent to the county committees, usually from the council's Assistant Secretary Frederic E. Foster to those chairing the committees. Taken together, these letters give an overview of many of the project areas coordinated by the state council upon plans devised by the Adjutant General's office. The second folder contains lists that comprise a directory of county home defense committees and selected subcommittees.

County home defense committees maintained similar correspondence files on several areas pertinent to war relief efforts. As reflected in the series, these areas included: work with the state council's Division of Health and Hospitals providing free medical treatment for enlistment applicants rejected because of curable physical defects; arranging routes for a motor convoy traveling across the state; providing information on and issuing licenses for non-war construction, and reporting to the state on building projects upon which post-war deferment was requested (most of the reports in the series are marked "Blank"); curtailing unnecessary retail deliveries and the practice of returning goods, as a means to prevent diversion of workers from war work; establishing "Return Load Bureaus" for motor truck express lines, to make truck travel more efficient, relieve railroad congestion, and assure prompt delivery of short-haul shipments to manufacturers and shippers; and conducting recruitment appeals and enrolling applicants in the United States Ship Yards Volunteer program.

Correspondence also documents home defense committees' cooperation with the Liberty Loan program; federal exemption and enlistment boards; Herbert Hoover's food conservation pledge and "cleanup campaign" (to reach American homemakers); federal collection of the personal income tax; and the U.S. War Department's plans (subsequently discontinued) for a pictorial history of war work.

The series also includes several lists. Lists of the state's county home defense committees (some of which are corrected copies) generally include county, committee mailing address, and name of chairman and/or secretary. There is also a list reporting on the council's free medical treatment program, with information including county name; number of applicants; number later qualified (for military service); number failed to report; payments; and services donated. Another list shows organizations active with the county defense committees in the deliveries curtailment campaign.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Container, folder, and roll lists are available at the repository.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

Microform is available at the New York State Archives through interlibrary loan.

Access Terms

- Coordinating emergency services
- Resolutions (administrative records)
- New York (State)
- Lists (document genres)
- Recruiting and enlistment
- New York (State)--History
- Form letters
- War and emergency powers
- Civil defense
- World War, 1914-1918
- World War, 1914-1918--Health aspects
- World War, 1914-1918--Economic aspects
- Building permits
- Shipbuilding
- State-local relations
- Transportation, Military

- War and society
- Liberty bonds
- Administering government policy
- Letters (correspondence)
- Monitoring infrastructure
- Coordinating citizen participation
- Patriotism
- Memorandums
- Industrial mobilization
- Food conservation
- Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964
- Foster, Frederic E.