



New York State Archives

**New York State Temporary State War Ballot Commission
Address Notifications and Absentee Ballot Application Cards
B1521**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series consists of records received from service men and women seeking to vote in the 1944 general election. The bulk of the records are post cards requesting absentee ballots or notifying the commission of a change in military address. The series also includes envelopes in which official election war ballots were mailed to the commission (or to county boards of election). No actual ballots are present in the series.
Creator:	New York (State). Temporary State War Ballot Commission
Title:	Address notifications and absentee ballot application cards
Quantity:	2.4 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1944
Series:	B1521

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Administrative History

The War Ballot Commission was created by Chapter 183 of the Laws of 1944 to facilitate voting by members of the U.S. Armed Forces in the 1944 general elections. The law continued a state war ballot commission to cooperate with federal agencies to create, distribute, and collect war ballots for federal, state, and local elections to guarantee the right to vote of members of the armed forces during wartime. The commission was authorized to prescribe the form and subsidize printing of ballots and envelopes to be used at the election. War ballots were to be received by the commission not later than noon on November 3, and forwarded to respective boards of elections and canvassed on Election Day, November 7, 1944.

The commission received and acknowledged requests for a war ballot, and forwarded the voter's name for placement on the register of war voters of her/his home county. A ballot was mailed commencing September 7, 1944 to those whose names appeared on the War Register. After marking the ballot, the voter folded it into an envelope with a voter oath on the verso (affirming age, citizenship, and residency requirements). The oath was signed by the voter and endorsed by an official or officer. This signed and sealed envelope was then enclosed in an official election war ballot envelope and mailed (postage free) to the commission or the county board of elections. Voters were to notify the commission promptly of any change in military address, stating their home address as well.

The commission's four members, two Republicans and two Democrats (members of the legislature were not eligible), included William T. Simpson (chair), Neil M. Lieblich, George M. Clancy, and William T. Larkin. Terms expired on April 1, 1945.

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Scope and Content Note

The series consists of records received by the commission from war voters to participate in the general election on November 7, 1944. Voters included members of the United States Armed Forces, American Red Cross, or other U.S. service organization attached to units in World War II, who resided in New York State but cast absentee ballots while on military duty. Records include approximately 6,000 post cards (and a few dozen manuscript letters) mailed to the commission's Albany office requesting absentee ballots or notifying the commission of a change in military address; and also approximately 2,000 envelopes in which official election war ballots were mailed to the commission (or to county boards of election). No actual ballots are present in the series.

Most of the cards were produced by the U.S. War Department and distributed to soldiers to file notification of a change in military address, or as application to receive an official absentee voting ballot. Cards may include soldier's name; rank/grade; serial number; company/unit; military address; former military address; resident address at time of induction; and signature. Cards requesting absentee ballots sometimes provide date of birth. The empty cancelled ballot envelopes carry the name and return military address (and sometimes the serial number) of the voter. There is a very small amount of non-voting related material present, including clippings of individual actions, reports of battle engagements, or other events. It is unclear how or why these were retained.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

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

Administrative Information

Custodial History

This accession resulted from a project by Archives staff in 1997 to accession or integrate estrayed or unidentified records.

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Access Terms

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Card files
- V-mail
- Voting
- Envelopes
- Certifying ballots
- Women in war
- World War, 1939-1945--Postal Service
- Soldiers--Suffrage--New York (State)
- New York (State)
- Postcards
- Absentee voting