

WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

ARCHIVES

Gravel, Romeo,
Collection

1999.140

Processed by William F. Carroll, C.A.
October, 1999

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Collection Information

Abstract: Romeo Gravel was a native of Southbridge, Massachusetts, who lived and worked in Worcester for many years in the 1910s and 1920s. He was a member of Battery B, 1st Bn., Massachusetts Militia, and served on the Mexican border in 1916, and in France in World War I. Following the war he worked in Haiti for many years. The collection highlights his military career and life in Haiti.

Finding Aids: Finding Aid in print form available in the Repository. Folder/item level control.

Preferred Citation: Archives of the Worcester Historical Museum, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance: Donated by Florence W. Schmalzl, Lakewood, N.M., August 1999.

Access: The Finding Aid is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings (lcsb, gmGPC, tgm, etc.)

Gravel, Romeo Armand, 1891-
Massachusetts. Militia. 1st Battalion Field Artillery. Battery B.
Massachusetts. National Guard. 1st Battalion Field Artillery. Battery B.
United States. Army. 102nd Field Artillery. Battery E.
United States. Army. Officers Reserve Corps.
United States. Army – History – Punitive expedition into Mexico, 1916.
World War, 1914-1918 – Campaigns – France.
World War, 1914-1918 – Atrocities – France – Pictorial works.
Notaries – Massachusetts.
United States – History – World War, 1914-1918.
Haiti – History.
Haiti – Photographs.

Madiou, Thomas – Histoire d’Haiti – 3 v.
LaBranche, Ernest E. – An American Battery in France.
Nelson, John – YD - 26th Division.

Broadsides (aat)
Snapshots (aat)
Gelatin silver prints (aat)
Negatives (aat)

Biographical/Historical Information

Romeo Armand Gravel was born in Southbridge in 1891, of French-Canadian ancestry. He enlisted in Battery B, 1st Battalion Field Artillery, Massachusetts Militia (National Guard) and saw action in the punitive expedition into Mexico in 1916. He was a Corporal, and later a Sergeant. With the expansion of the 1st Battalion Field Artillery when the United States entered World War I, he became 1st Sergeant, and later 1st Lieutenant with Battery E. Both batteries were based in Worcester. With entry into World War I, the unit became part of the 102nd Field Artillery, and Gravel served as 1st Lieutenant in France until the end of the war.

Following hostilities, Gravel moved to Haiti, and was a customs inspector, and is said to have been involved with the Haitian postal service. He returned to United States after a five year stay in Haiti. Throughout this period, he remained in the military reserves, as a First Lieutenant with the Officers Reserve Corps of the United States Army.

In the military service, Gravel's civilian occupation was listed as printer. He also was made a Notary Public in 1921. He was a member of the American Legion and the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association.

Scope and Content

The collection includes military records and documents relative to Romeo Gravel's service with the Massachusetts Militia, the United States Army during World War I, and the post-war Officers Reserve Corps. It also provides documentation of some of Gravel's civilian interests including memberships and his Commission as a Notary Public. The collection also includes numerous snapshots of military scenes and life, and of his life and career in Haiti. The collection includes a number of published works, dealing largely with the history of Haiti, which were acquired during Gravel's years in that country following the war. Newspaper clippings highlight the actions of the United States Army in Europe during World War I, especially the unit with which Gravel served; provide information on the 5th celebration of Armistice Day in 1923; and provide information about the interests of Gravel and his family. The collection includes a number of medals and various decorations Gravel received during military service, his Notary stamp and associated materials, and a leather briefcase and other items used by Gravel as a military courier.

The collection provides insight into the life and interests of Romeo Gravel, in particular his interest in military life and action, as well as his interests in Haiti and its history. The collection also provides insight into the activities of the Worcester based Batteries B and E during World War I, and Battery B during the Punitive expedition into Mexico. It also provides information about the nationalization of State Militia and National Guard units during the war.

Series Description

Series 1: Official documents. Includes military documents relative to the military career of Romeo A. Gravel, including commissions, various certificates, general and special orders, official correspondence, etc. Also includes a few documents relative to Gravel's civilian professional life and other interests.

Series 2: Photographs, etc. Includes photographs, snapshots, negatives, and photomechanical prints, including military-related prints and negatives, and numerous snapshots taken in Haiti. Includes a set of halftone prints with graphic depiction of German atrocities against the French civilian population.

Series 3: Clippings. Includes one scrapbook largely relating to Armistice Day celebration of 1923, and numerous loose clippings of activities at home by Gravel and members of his family.

Series 4: Publications. Includes published works, mostly about Haiti, acquired by Gravel during his years in the country. Some written in French.

Series 5: Artifacts. Includes badges, medals, decorations awarded to Gravel during military service, other items relative to civilian and military career.

Romeo Gravel Collection
1999.140
Series 1, Official Documents

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1999.14.1.1-.4	Application for settlement of Adjusted-Service certificate, 2 copies (2/17/1936 and 5/6/1936); envelope; postcard acknowledging receipt (March 20, 1936). 4 items
1	2	1999.140.1.5-.10	General and Special Orders re military assignments for Romeo A. Gravel, 1917. 6 items
1	3	1999.140.1.11-.25	General and Special Orders and other military documents relative to Romeo A. Gravel, 1918. 15 items
1	4	1999.140.1.26-.44	General and Special Orders and other military documents relative to Romeo A. Gravel, 1919. 19 items
1	5	1999.140.1.45-.52	Documents relative to the military career and record of Romeo A. Gravel, 1916-1919. 8 items
1	6	1999.140.1.53-.61	Documents relative to the military record of Romeo A. Gravel while employed in Haiti, 1924-1928. 9 items
1	7	1999.140.1.62-.73	Documents relative to a claim for disability filed by Romeo A. Gravel, 1924. 12 items
1	8	1999.140.1.74-.77	Documents relative to an application for Adjusted Compensation filed by Romeo Gravel, 1925. 4 items
1	9	1999.140.1.78-.88	Documents relative to post-World War I service in the Officers Reserve Corps by Romeo A. Gravel, 1924-1925. 11 items
1	10	1999.140.1.89	Honorable Discharge: to Romeo Armand Gravel, Sergeant, Battery B, 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, February 4, 1915.

Series 1, continued

1	10	1999.140.1.90	Honorable Discharge: to Romeo A. Gravel, Corporal, Battery B 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, July 7, 1912.
1	10	1999.140.1.91	Commission: Appointment of Romeo Armand Gravel as First Lieutenant, Field Artillery, Officers Reserve Corps, November 30, 1923.
2	11	1999.140.1.92	Commission: Appointment of Romeo A. Gravel as First Lieutenant (Massachusetts) in the National Guard, August 5, 1917.
2	11	1999.140.1.93	Certificate: Appointment of Romeo A. Gravel as Sergeant of B Battery, 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, Militia of Massachusetts, April 6, 1915.
2	11	1999.140.1.94	Certificate: Appointment of Romeo A, Gravel as Corporal, Battery B, 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, Militia of Massachusetts, April 28, 1911.
2	11	1999.140.1.95	Certificate: Appointment of Romeo A. Gravel as Sergeant, Battery B, 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, Militia of Massachusetts, August 19, 1912.
2	11	1999.140.1.96a-b	Certificate: Testimonial to Romeo Armand Gravel, 1 st Sergeant, B Battery, 1 st Battalion Field Artillery, Massachusetts National Guard, for Mexican Border Service, March 26, 1918, by Commonwealth of Massachusetts. 2 copies (1 undated)

Series 1, continued

2	11	1999.140.1.97	Certificate: Testimonial to Romeo A. Gravel, 1 st Lieutenant, E Battery, 102 nd Field Artillery, United
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			States Army, for service in the War with the German Imperial Government and Austria, May 17, 1919, by Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge, Governor and Commander-in-Chief.
2	11	1999.140.1.98	Commission: Appointment of Romeo A. Gravel as Notary Public, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, May 4, 1921, [signed] Channing H. Cox, Governor.
2	11	1999.140.1.99	Certificate: Romeo Gravel of Worcester, a member of American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association, 1923.
1	12	1999.140.1.100	Pamphlet: Army Regulations 340-15, Correspondence, January 20, 1922. 26 p.
1	12	1999.140.1.101	List. American Legion Post 58, Oxford, Massachusetts, with names, addresses, telephone numbers of members. N.d. 2 p.
1	12	1999.140.1.102	Pamphlet: Squadron Handbook / National Headquarters, American Legion. 1936. 48 p.

Romeo Gravel Collection
 1999.140
 Series 2, Photographs, etc.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	13	1999.140.2.1	Broadside: "Soldier's Memorial, 1916 – United States - Mexico; Men who answered the Nation's call; Battery B, 1 st Regiment of Field Artillery, Massachusetts, U.S.A.": Halftone print with names of men in Battery B / Soldier's memorial Association, Washington, D.C. 19 x 23 in.
2	13	1999.140.2.2	Broadside: "The original 'Star-Spangled Banner'": halftone print with words and music / Advertisers Publ. Co., 1914, compliments of Barnard, Sumner & Putnam Co., Worcester. 11 x 14 in.
2	13	1999.140.2.3	Pamphlet: Commemorative 102 nd U.S. Field Artillery, 1917: halftone prints of officers and men of all companies and batteries, with a brief history, 58 p. / University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
2	13	1999.140.2.4a-p	Set of prints "Atrocities committed by the Germans" during 1914-1915: set of 15 halftone prints with cover / by Ferdinand Gueldry, commissioned by the French Government. a. Sommeilles (Meuse) b. Farm of M. ..., Aisne (Military file) c. Luneville, Muerthe-et-Moselle. d. Marqueglise, Oise. e. Triancourt, Meuse. f. Gerbervillier, Muerthe-et-Moselle. g. Nettancourt (Meuse) h. Bouvillers, Muerthe-et-Moselle. i. Senlis, Oise. j. Gerbervillier, Muerthe-et-Moselle. k. Robais, Seine-et-Marne. l. Triancourt, Meuse. m. Sermaize, Marne. n. Neuvy-l'Abesse (Military file) o. Muerthe-et-Moselle. p. cover paper.

Series 2, continued

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| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.5a-b | Romeo A. Gravel, France, 1918 : photographic postcard. 2 items. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.6 | Romeo A. Gravel : Portrait photograph, 3 x 4 ½ in., ca. 1916 / Oliver Studios, Worcester, Mass.
6f Folder. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.7a-b | Romeo A. Gravel : photographic postcard, ca. 1920s / Plante, Worcester, Mass. 2 copies. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.8-.10 | Romeo A. Gravel (?), Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 3 items. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.11-.15 | Unidentified people, ca. 1925 automobile : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 5 items. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.16 | Tobacco seed beds and plantation of Haitian Pineapple Co. at Cap Haitien, Nov. 15, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.17-.23 | Unidentified scenes, Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 in., ca. 1925. 7 items. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.24 | Unloading flour and lumber from lighters on shore at Cap Haitien, Nov. 15, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.25 | Lighter unloading S.S. Flora, Gonaives, Haiti, Nov. 18, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.26 | St. Marc, Haiti, S.S. Flora in harbor, Nov. 18, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.27 | Cactus, Gonaives, Haiti, Nov. 18, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.28 | Lightening ship to shore at Gonaives, Haiti, Nov. 18, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.29 | Washing out salt pork barrels in which honey is to be shipped to Hamburg, Cap Haitien, Haiti, Nov. 16, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |
| | | | Series 2, continued |
| 1 | 14 | 1999.140.2.30 | Savanne de Gonaives, Haiti, Nov. 17, 1928, salt beds : snapshot, 3 x 4 in. |

1	14	1999.140.2.31	Entrance to Cap Haitien harbor, Nov. 17, 1928 : snapshot, 3 x 4 in.
1	14	1999.140.2.32-.36	Scenes at Cap Haitien, Nov. 1928 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 5 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.37-.39	Scenes with S.S. Flora, various Haitian harbors, Nov. 1928 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 3 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.40-.47	Scenes at and around Cap Haitien, Haiti, Nov. 1928 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 8 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.48-.49	Scenes at Port-de-Paix, Haiti, Nov. 1928 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 2 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.50-.55	Scenes at Gonaives, Haiti, Nov. 1928 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 6 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.56-.69	Unidentified scenes, Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 14 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.70-.71	Shrines, Gonaives, Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 2 items.
1	14	1999.140.2.72	Salt beds, Gonaives, Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 in.
1	14	1999.140.2.73	Unidentified Greek Revival building, picket fence in front : collodion print, 3 x 4 in.
1	14	1999.140.2.74	Parade, unidentified military group : snapshot, 3 x 4 in.
1	14	1999.140.2.75	Unidentified woman (Romeo Gravel's mother?) : Carte-de-visite, albumen print / Solomon Labonte, Southbridge, Mass. (1887-1899)
1	14	1999.140.2.76-.81	Couples and groups, many identified, in Providence, R.I. : snapshots, 2 ½ x 4 in. 6 items. Series 2, continued
1	15	1999.140.2.82-.94	Unidentified persons : snapshots, 2 x 2 in. to 2 ½ x 4 in., ca. 1931. 13 items.
1	15	1999.140.2.95-.98	Unidentified persons : photographic postcards, ca.

			1930s. 4 items.
1	15	1999.140.2.99-.190	Unidentified scenes, buildings, groups, individuals, Haiti : snapshots, 2 x 2 in. to 3 x 4 in. 92 items.
1	15	1999.140.2.191-.192	Wanda (otherwise unidentified) : photographic postcards. 2 items.
1	15	1999.140.2.193-.200	Unidentified scenes and people, Haiti : snapshots, 2 x 2 in to 3 x 4 in. 8 items.
1	16	1999.140.2.201-.206	Romeo A. Gravel : snapshots, ca. 1940, 3 x 4 ½ in. 6 items.
1	16	1999.140.2.207	Negatives (for .201-.206)
1	16	1999.140.2.208	Envelope.
1	17	1999.140.2.209-218	Old Orchard Beach and miscellaneous scenes, 1941 : snapshots, 4 x 6 in. 10 items.
1	17	1999.140.2.219	Envelope.
1	17	1999.140.2.220-.221	Romeo Gravel, 1943 : snapshots, 3 x 4 in. 2 items.
1	18	1999.140.2.222	George Dilby Post No. 529, VFW, Somerville, Mass. : 6 ½ x 28 in. photographic print, broken.
1	19	1999.140.2.223-235	Unidentified snow scenes and vacation scenes : snapshots, 3 x 4 ½ in., 1940s. 13 items.
1	19	1999.140.2.236	Envelope.
1	20	1999.140.2.237-.271	Unidentified scenes and people, 1937-1938 : snapshots, 3 x 4 ½ in. 35 items.
1	20	1999.140.2.272	Negatives, 16 frames. Series 2, continued
1	20	1999.140.2.273	Envelope (.237 - .272)
1	21	1999.140.2.274-286	Unidentified scenes and people, 1936-1937 : snapshots, 3 x 4 ½ in. 13 items.
1	21	1999.140.2.287	Envelope.

1	22	1999.140.2.288-.313	Unidentified people, scenes, groups, mostly in Haiti : photographic postcards. 26 items.
1	22	1999.140.2.314-.398	Unidentified people, groups, scenes, mostly Haiti : snapshots, 3 x 4 ½ in. 85 items.
1	23	1999.140.2.399	Military Parade, Main Street, Worcester, opposite City Hall, ca. 1918 : collodion print, 5 x 7 in.
2	24	1999.140.2.400	Negatives, unidentified, some Haiti.
2	24	1999.140.2.401	Envelope (.400)
2	24	1999.140.2.402	Negative book, Mexican border military duty, 37 leaves; unidentified, 13 leaves.
2	24	1999.140.2.403	Negative book, miscellaneous, 36 leaves identified, 100 leaves total, many empty.

Romeo Gravel Collection
1999.140
Series 3, Clippings

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	25	1999.140.3.1	Clippings, mostly Romeo Gravel and family, social and cultural activities; many printed in French; also letters, envelope, advertising.
2	26	1999.140.3.2	Scrapbook : on cover, P.W.E.Co. #96, Chaudenay, France, with two photographs of prisoner of war barracks; contents include Armistice Day, 1923, with clippings, programs of activities, and memoranda.

Romeo Gravel Collection
1999.140
Series 4, Publications

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	27	1999.140.4.1a-b	Pamphlet : "Some interesting observations of Gonaives, Haiti, prepared specifically for information of winter visitors, 1929", 16 p. 2 copies.
1	27	1999.140.4.2	Pamphlet: "YD - 26 th Division", by John Nelson, reprinted from Worcester Evening Gazette, 1919. 16 p.
1	27	1999.140.4.3	Book: "Lessons in Haitian Creole ... ", 1923. 93 p.
1	28	1999.140.4.4	Book: "Le Negre Masque", by Stephen Alexis, 1933. 171 p., in French.
1	28	1999.140.4.5	Book: "Dix contes vrai, chroniques parrees", by Victor Mangones, 1934. Paper, 132 p., in French.
1	29	1999.140.4.6	Bound volume: "An American Battery in France", by Corporal Ernest E. LaBranche : Worcester, Mass., Belisle Publ., 1923. 237 p.
1	30	1999.140.4.7	Coupon. Used as bookmark, for free package Kirkman's Soap Powder, 1924.
2	31	1999.140.4.8	Book: "Histoire d'Haiti", by Thomas Madiou : Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Chanet, 1922. 538 p., in French.
2	32	1999.140.4.9	Book: "Histoire d'Haiti, Book 2", by Thomas Madiou : Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 1923. 428 p., in French.
2	33	1999.140.4.10	Book: "Histoire d'Haiti, Book 3", by Thomas Madiou fils : Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Cheraquit, 1922. 448 p., in French.

Romeo Gravel Collection
1999.140
Series 5, Artifacts

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
(to collections)		1999.140.5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Leather briefcase, with notary seal, stamp pad, blotting paper, pencils and ruler, stencil, stamp "A. Gravel", notebook, dowel piece.* Belt pouch with whistle, compass in box, small waterproof pouch.* Courier bag "1st Lt. R.A. Gravel 102nd F.A." with pencils, ruler, eraser, matches, pad of paper, envelopes, map of France.* Canteen web belt.* Box with American Legion hat, eyeglasses, 50 badges, medals, decorations.