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Veterans of Future Wars Collection, 1936-1947 (bulk 1936-1937): Finding Aid

Summary Information

Call number:	AC010
Location:	Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. Princeton University Archives. 65 Olden Street Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
Size:	3.6 linear feet. This includes one oversize and one photograph box.
Language(s) of material:	English.
Abstract:	The Veterans of Future Wars Collection, consists of materials dating from the organization's parodical foundation as a Princeton-based student movement in 1936 through its eventual petering-out in 1937. The materials beyond the organization's cessation of activities deal with the Veterans of Future Wars' short but emphatic existence. The collection consists primarily of correspondence of the National Council members (all Princeton University undergraduates), the organization's nation-wide Posts, and its various auxiliary support groups. Also included are

speeches and debates, press releases, poems, plays and songs written for the organization, photographs of both official and personal nature, and newspaper clippings.

Table of Contents

<u>Summary Information</u>	1
<u>History of the Veterans of Future Wars</u>	4
<u>Description</u>	4
<u>Arrangement</u>	6
<u>Access and Use</u>	7
<u>Acquisition and Appraisal</u>	7
<u>Processing and Other Information</u>	7
<u>Subject Headings</u>	8
<u>Contents List</u>	
<u>Series 1: Administrative Files, (1936-1937)</u>	9
<u>Subseries 1A: Organizational</u>	9
<u>Subseries 1B: Financial, 1936</u>	9
<u>Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities, 1936</u>	10
<u>Subseries 1D: National Council, 1936-1937</u>	10
<u>Subseries 1E: Regional Files, 1936</u>	12
<u>Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations</u>	15
<u>Subseries 1G: Correspondence, 1936</u>	15
<u>Series 2: Creative works, 1936</u>	16
<u>Series 3: Printed Material, 1936-1948</u>	16
<u>Series 4: Scrapbook, 1936-1947</u>	16
<u>Series 5: Photographs, 1936</u>	16
<u>Series 6: Oversize Materials, 1936</u>	17

History of the Veterans of Future Wars

The Veterans of Future Wars was a non-profit organization founded by a coterie of Princeton University undergraduates in March 1936. The organization's rostrum parodied the concurrent Harrison Bonus Bill, which allowed the veterans of World War I to collect their war-bonuses in 1936 rather than in 1940. Modelling their demands after these “bonus hunting” veterans, the Veterans of Future Wars maintained that given the “inevitability of war”, future soldiers should be given their bonuses, \$1,000 in cash, before the war, so that they could benefit while still alive. An auxiliary women's group formed, first called Future Gold Star Mothers and then renamed to the Home Fire Division, which made a similarly burlesque demand that the government send all future wives and mothers to Europe, so that they might view the future grave sites of their future husbands and sons.

The Veterans of Future Wars consisted of a National Council, based in Princeton and manned by its founders, and a network of nationwide collegiate posts. The National Council was led by Lewis Gorin Jr. '36, National Commander, with Jack Turner '36 as Secretary, Thomas Riggs Jr. '37 as Treasurer, and Robert Barnes '37 for Public Relations. The Veterans of Future Wars resumed after summer recess in September 1936, with Thomas Riggs Jr. '37 as acting Commander. This role, however, was shared with Robert Barnes '37 throughout the next year until its retirement in the spring of 1937.

Although conceived and perceived as national hoax, the Veterans of Future Wars became the country's forum of anti-war sentiment among students. The organization, aside from its women's and “Friends” auxiliaries, had a network of national Posts in the hundreds. Some Posts maintained a burlesque character, while others seriously followed an anti-war platform. Whether in earnest or in jest, the seriousness of the times came into articulation. It is interesting to note that most of the organization's charter members served in the American forces during World War II.

The Veterans of Future Wars attempted to achieve its goals by lobbying in Washington, D.C., which was undertaken by Thomas Riggs Jr. '37. Correspondence was also maintained with influential men in politics and economics. Lewis Gorin Jr. '36 wrote a book, also presented as his senior thesis, Patriotism Prepaid, which outlined the organization and its program. The Veterans of Future Wars was also documented Time magazine's film series entitled “March of Time” (Vol. II, No. 4). They also organized a Treasury Raid on the day the WWI-veterans were to collect their bonuses, and invited the Presidential couple, along with other celebrities. The engagement of the Veterans of Future Wars reckoned the organization's renown.

The Veterans of Future Wars experienced a revival in the fall of 1950, which maintained the platform of pre-paid bonuses to men of draft age. They even upheld the old organization's salute of the “outstretched itchy palm”. This attempt by David Colwell '51, William Lee III '51, and Malcolm Cleland '52, failed, however, suffering from the “stale joke syndrome”. This disease is highly contagious and heart wrenchingly chronic, so don't try this at home unless under proper supervision of Official Joke-Meisters Barney and Edgar. This is the end of the page and of my histo-gloss.

Description

Consists of records of the Veterans of Future Wars, founded by Princeton University undergraduates Lewis Gorin (Class of 1936), Jack Turner (Class of 1936), Thomas Riggs (Class of 1937), and Robert Barnes (Class of

1937). The collections consists primarily of correspondence of the National Council members (the founding Princeton students), the organization's nation-wide posts, and its various auxiliary support groups. Also included are speeches and debates, press releases, poems, plays, and songs written for the organization, photographs of both official and personal nature, and newspaper clippings.

Series 1: Administrative Files, (1936-1937)

Subseries 1A: Organizational

Subseries 1A: Organizational includes the founding papers of the Veterans of Future Wars: its by-laws, manifesto and charter, as well as a waiver signed by the organization's Board of Trustees. Also included is a list of the founders and personal data, put together in 1944. This list includes the founders, activities after Princeton graduation.

Subseries 1B: Financial, 1936

Subseries 1B: Financial consists of a single small black notebook, containing entries dating April 22-29, 1936. Entries include records of expenses and one entry of dues received. There are otherwise no official records of bank or business transactions. Incoming dues from the national posts appear on the membership lists of the regional report sheets.

Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities, 1936

Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities contains correspondence, arranged chronologically between Thomas Riggs Jr. '37 and Representative Maury Maverick from Texas and Representative Herman Kopplemann from Connecticut. Aside from congressional speeches written by Representative Maverick, the folder also holds an act and a bill submitted to Congress by the veterans of Future Wars.

Subseries 1D: National Council, 1936-1937

Subseries 1D: National Council contains folders which document the activities of the National Council members and regional commanders. Material in these folders include correspondence, speeches, and interorganizational bulletins. The files are arranged alphabetically, with all correspondence within arranged chronologically. Little distinction was made between the assigned position and the actual tasks performed which explains the meshing of responsibilities apparent in the individual files of the Council members. This is especially true in regards to Turner, Riggs and Barnes. The files on National Commander Gorin contain papers pertinent to the production, publication and reception of his book on the Veterans of Future Wars, Patriotism Prepaid, his correspondence with Donald Hobart, Commander of the American Veterans Association, correspondence with persons interested in supporting the Veterans of Future Wars, public addresses and appearances, and personal correspondence. The other files are not as extensive and are listed alphabetically according to specific events or tasks and as general correspondence. Each regional commander has one folder containing general correspondence with their posts and in some cases personal correspondence.

Subseries 1E: Regional Files

Subseries 1E: Regional Files begins with a list of the men's and women's divisions and corresponding post commanders, as well as a list of colleges and universities involved in the movement. Posts were handled by region, each of the eight regions was supervised by a regional commander from the National Council. The bulk of the subseries consists of Report Sheets and Correspondence. Report Sheets contain lists of members and the amount of dues collected, which were then submitted by the individual post commanders. Report Sheets are grouped according to region, and are arranged within the folders alphabetically by post. Correspondence is grouped by region and state alphabetically. Within each state file, the correspondence is arranged in chronological order. The correspondence between post commander and regional commander includes administrative and organizational queries, requests for materials and informal updates on post activities.

Correspondence from Alaska, Canada, Spain and Czechoslovakia is also included in the regional file listed as Territories. Also included in this file is material related to the Home Fire Division. From the Regional Files one can secure the names of -the colleges and women involved in the organization.

Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations

Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations contain material on the Friends of the Veterans of Future Wars and the Home Fire Division. The material consists of correspondence of the Friends, organizer Beatrice Winsor with the National Council and the letters of auxiliary members. Included in this subseries is correspondence relating to the renaming of Future Gold Star Mothers to Home Fire Division, which centered around the women's organization at Vassar College. For the researcher interested in the Home Fire Division, there is very little information in this collection pertaining to their infrastructure and leadership, besides the material in this subseries and in the Regional Files.

Subseries 1G: Correspondence

Subseries 1G: Correspondence contains letters of congratulation, letters of monetary contribution and crank letters, which are separated alphabetically by type and within each folder chronologically.

Series 2: Creative works

Series 2: Creative works contains poetry, skits, songs and stories composed and submitted by National Council members, regional post members and admirers. These were to be used in rallies, parades and other veterans of Future Wars functions.

Series 3: Printed material

Series 3: Printed material contains newspaper clippings and magazine articles about the Veterans of Future Wars, arranged in chronological order. Most of the material postdating the organization's cessation of activities was integrated into the collection from the Princeton University Subject Files, Student Activities.

Series 4: Scrapbook

Series 4: Scrapbook was created by Urban Joseph Peters Rushton '36, Southern Regional Commander, to record the activities of the Veterans of Future Wars. materials include clippings (1936-1947), membership cards and Organizational materials used by the Veterans of Future Wars.

Series 5: Photographs

Series 5: Photographs contains original black and white prints of National Headquarters in Princeton, post activities in California and casual shots of National Council members. Also included are negatives which were used for reproduction in works included in the series: Printed materials.

Series 6: Oversize Materials

Series 6: Oversize Materials contains one newspaper article and music scores.

The Veterans of Future Wars collection is divided into five series with relevant subseries as follows:

Series 1: Administrative Files, (1936-1937)

- Subseries 1A: Organizational
- Subseries 1B: Financial, 1936
- Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities, 1936
- Subseries 1D: National Council, 1936-1937
- Subseries 1E: Regional Files
- Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations
- Subseries 1G: Correspondence

Series 2: Creative works

Series 3: Printed material

Series 4: Scrapbook

Series 5: Photographs

Series 6: Oversize Materials

Access and Use

Access

Collection is open for research use.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the University Archivist. Copyright is held by the Trustees of Princeton University.

Acquisition and Appraisal

Provenance and Acquisition

The collection's material concerning the administration of the Veterans of Future Wars is of uncertain provenance. The Princeton University Subject File, Student Activities, holding primarily printed material was integrated into the collection, as well as the scrapbook of U.J.P. Rushton '36. Related Princeton University Library collections include the Scrapbook of Thomas Riggs Jr. '37. Also pertinent to this collection is a lecture given by Professor Richard D. Challener of the Princeton University History Department on the Veterans of Future Wars, which is reprinted in the Princeton Alumni Weekly.

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Veterans of Future Wars Collection, Box and Folder Number;

University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Marta Hanewald in April 1992. Finding aid written by Marta Hanewald in April 1992.

Encoding

Machine-readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 by Techbooks and Cristela García-Spitz on November 03, 2006.

Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Subject Headings

These materials have been indexed in the [Princeton University Library online catalog](#) using the following terms. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

- Princeton University. Class of 1936.
- Princeton University. Class of 1937.
- Princeton University -- Societies, etc.
- Princeton University -- Students -- 20th century.
- Bounties, Military -- United States -- 20th century.
- College students -- New Jersey -- Princeton -- Political activity -- 20th century.
- Student movements -- United States -- 20th century.
- Students and war -- United States -- 20th century.
- Veterans -- United States -- 20th century.
- Correspondence.
- Photographs.
- Press releases.
- Songs.
- Speeches.
- Princeton University

Contents List

Series 1: Administrative Files, (1936-1937)

Subseries 1A: Organizational

Subseries Description

Subseries 1A: Organizational includes the founding papers of the Veterans of Future Wars: its by-laws, manifesto and charter, as well as a waiver signed by the organization's Board of Trustees. Also included is a list of the founders and personal data, put together in 1944. This list includes the founders, activities after Princeton graduation.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
By-laws, 1936	1
List of founders and trustees, 1936/1944	1

Subseries 1B: Financial, 1936

Subseries Description

Subseries 1B: Financial consists of a single small black notebook, containing entries dating April 22-29, 1936. Entries include records of expenses and one entry of dues received. There are otherwise no official records of bank or business transactions. Incoming dues from the national posts appear on the membership lists of the regional report sheets.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Notebook, April 22-29, 1936	1

Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities, 1936

Subseries Description

Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities contains correspondence, arranged chronologically between Thomas Riggs Jr. '37 and Representative Maury Maverick from Texas and Representative Herman Kopplemann from Connecticut. Aside from congressional speeches written by Representative Maverick, the folder also holds an act and a bill submitted to Congress by the veterans of Future

Subseries 1C: Lobbying Activities, 19 ... (Continued)

Wars.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Lobbying Activities, 1936	1

Subseries 1D: National Council, 1936-1937

Subseries Description

Subseries 1D: National Council contains folders which document the activities of the National Council members and regional commanders. Material in these folders include correspondence, speeches, and interorganizational bulletins. The files are arranged alphabetically, with all correspondence within arranged chronologically. Little distinction was made between the assigned position and the actual tasks performed which explains the meshing of responsibilities apparent in the individual files of the Council members. This is especially true in regards to Turner, Riggs and Barnes. The files on National Commander Gorin contain papers pertinent to the production, publication and reception of his book on the Veterans of Future Wars, *Patriotism Prepaid*, his correspondence with Donald Hobart, Commander of the American Veterans Association, correspondence with persons interested in supporting the Veterans of Future Wars, public addresses and appearances, and personal correspondence. The other files are not as extensive and are listed alphabetically according to specific events or tasks and as general correspondence. Each regional commander has one folder containing general correspondence with their posts and in some cases personal correspondence.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
National Commander Gorin, 1936	1
Correspondence	1
Donald Hobart	1
National Economy League	1
<i>Patriotism Prepaid</i>	1
Responses	1
Lippincott Publishing	1
Public Addresses	1
Personal	1
National Secretary Turner, 1936	1

Subseries 1D: National Council, 1936- ... (Continued)

Buttons, Uniforms, etc.	1
Correspondence	1
Treasury Raid	1
National-Treasurer Riggs, 1936	1
Correspondence	1
Report on D.C. Posts	1
Public Relations Barnes	2
Convention Plans, 1936	2
Correspondence, 1936-1937	2
Press Releases, 1936	2
Regional Commanders, 1936	2
William Breese-South West	2
John Paul Jones-Great Lakes	2
Penn Kimball II-New England	2
Archibald Lewis-Far West	2
U.J.P. Rushton-Southern	2
Richard waters-Middle Atlantic	2
Speeches, 1936	2
Bulletins to Regional Posts, 1936	2

Subseries 1E: Regional Files, 1936

Subseries Description

Subseries 1E: Regional Files begins with a list of the men's and women's divisions and corresponding post commanders, as well as a list of colleges and universities involved in the movement. Posts were handled by region, each of the eight regions was supervised by a regional commander from the National Council. The bulk of the subseries consists of Report Sheets and Correspondence. Report Sheets contain lists of members and the amount of dues collected, which were then submitted by the individual post commanders. Report Sheets are grouped according to region, and are arranged within

Subseries 1E: Regional Files, 1936 ... (Continued)

the folders alphabetically by post. Correspondence is grouped by region and state alphabetically. Within each state file, the correspondence is arranged in chronological order. The correspondence between post commander and regional commander includes administrative and organizational queries, requests for materials and informal updates on post activities.

Correspondence from Alaska, Canada, Spain and Czechoslovakia is also included in the regional file listed as Territories. Also included in this file is material related to the Home Fire Division. From the Regional Files one can secure the names of -the colleges and women involved in the organization.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
List of Posts, 1936	2
Report Sheets, 1936	2
Far West	2
Great Lakes	2
Middle Atlantic	2
Middle West	2
New England	2
Rocky Mountain	2
Southern	2
South Atlantic	2
Correspondence, 1936	3
Far West	3
California	3
Oregon	3
Washington	3
Great Lakes	3
Illinois	3
Indiana	3
Michigan	3

Subseries 1E: Regional Files, 1936 ... (Continued)

Ohio	3
Wisconsin	3
Middle Atlantic	3
New Jersey	3
New York	4
Middle West	4
Iowa	4
Kansas	4
Minnesota	4
Missouri	4
Nebraska	4
North Dakota	4
South Dakota	4
New England	4
Connecticut	4
Massachusetts	5
Maine	5
New Hampshire	5
Rhode Island	5
Vermont	5
Rocky Mountain	5
Colorado	5
Idaho	5
Montana	5
Utah	5

Subseries 1E: Regional Files, 1936 ... (Continued)

Wyoming	5
Southern	5
Alabama	5
Florida	5
Georgia	5
Kentucky	5
Louisiana	5
Mississippi	5
North Carolina	5
South Carolina	5
Tennessee	5
South Atlantic	5
Delaware	5
District of Columbia	5
Maryland	5
Pennsylvania	6
Virginia	6
West Virginia	6
South West	6
Arizona	6
Arkansas	6
New Mexico	6
Oklahoma	6
Texas	6
Territories	6

Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations ... (Continued)

Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations

Subseries Description

Subseries 1F: Auxiliary organizations contain material on the Friends of the Veterans of Future Wars and the Home Fire Division. The material consists of correspondence of the Friends, organizer Beatrice Winsor with the National Council and the letters of auxiliary members. Included in this subseries is correspondence relating to the renaming of Future Gold Star Mothers to Home Fire Division, which centered around the women's organization at Vassar College. For the researcher interested in the Home Fire Division, there is very little information in this collection pertaining to their infrastructure and leadership, besides the material in this subseries and in the Regional Files.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Friends of the Veterans of Future Wars, 1936	6
President Beatrice Winsor	6
Correspondence	6
Member	6
Gold Star Mothers/Home Fire Division, 1936	6

Subseries 1G: Correspondence, 1936

Subseries Description

Subseries 1G: Correspondence contains letters of congratulation, letters of monetary contribution and crank letters, which are separated alphabetically by type and within each folder chronologically.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Congratulatory	6
Contributions	6
Crank	6

Series 2: Creative works, 1936

Series Description

Series 2: Creative works contains poetry, skits, songs and stories composed and submitted by National Council members, regional post members and admirers. These were to be used in rallies, parades and

Series 2: Creative works, 1936 ... (Continued)

other veterans of Future Wars functions.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Poetry	6
Short Stories	6
Skits	6
Songs	6

Series 3: Printed Material, 1936-1948

Series Description

Series 3: Printed material contains newspaper clippings and magazine articles about the Veterans of Future Wars, arranged in chronological order. Most of the material postdating the organization's cessation of activities was integrated into the collection from the Princeton University Subject Files, Student Activities.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Newspaper Clippings and Magazine Articles	6

Series 4: Scrapbook, 1936-1947

Series Description

Series 4: Scrapbook was created by Urban Joseph Peters Rushton '36, Southern Regional Commander, to record the activities of the Veterans of Future Wars. materials include clippings (1936-1947), membership cards and Organizational materials used by the Veterans of Future Wars.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Scrapbook, 1936-1947	6

Series 5: Photographs, 1936

Series Description

Series 5: Photographs contains original black and white prints of National Headquarters in Princeton, post activities in California and casual shots of National Council members. Also included are negatives which were used for reproduction in works included in the series: Printed materials.

Series 5: Photographs, 1936 ... (Continued)

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Photographs	7

Series 6: Oversize Materials, 1936

Series Description

Series 6: Oversize Materials contains one newspaper article and music scores.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Oversize Material	8