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Office of the Secretary of State

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PRESS RELEASE

Secretary of State Jim Condos Announces WWI Centennial Research Guide

Montpelier, VT – The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA), a division of the Office of the Secretary of State, is commemorating the 100th anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I and Vermont's response with a new guide for researchers. The guide focuses on records in the Vermont State Archives that reveal the State of Vermont's activities leading up to April 6, 1917, and changes in Vermont life during and after the Great War.

"World War I related records in the state archives provide incredible insight into how Vermont's leaders handled the challenges of a citizenry at war," says Secretary of State Jim Condos. "This guide serves as an introduction to these unique primary sources and also tells the stories of Vermont in the Great War and the Vermonters who lived through it." The World War I records in the Vermont State Archives include governors' correspondence, legislative acts, state fiscal records around wartime expenses, and selective service records. Most of the state's military records were salvaged from the 1945 Montpelier Arsenal fire, which occurred only two days after the Adjutant General appeared before the Vermont Public Records Commission requesting safer storage for its records.

The Vermont Treasurer's Office's file on the notorious Francis E. Fox forgery case is also part of the Vermont State Archives' World War I records. According to State Archivist Tanya Marshall, Fox took advantage of a State initiative to provide war veterans a bonus of ten dollars a month, "He carried out an elaborate scam of forging war veteran certificates as well as signatures on bonus checks." Fox, who also served in the war, ultimately stole \$3,000 of soldier State bonus vouchers from his fellow veterans before being caught and convicted in 1921.

The *World War I Research Guide* is available on the Secretary of State website: <http://bit.ly/2nROEz6>. The public is also encouraged visit the Vermont State Archives to research these and other state archival records in person. The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration is located at 1078 US Route 2 in Middlesex and its Reference Room is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Inquiries can be made by phone, 802-828-2308, and email, archives@sec.state.vt.us, as well. VSARA's mission is to provide, protect, promote, and preserve Vermont public records, in collaboration with other public agencies, for the benefit of the public collectively served.

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