WISCONSIN AND THE GREAT WAR
DIGITIZING AND SHARING WWI MATERIALS

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Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS)
TODAY’S AGENDA

- Introductions
  - You
  - Me
  - Wisconsin Heritage Online

- WWI digital collections in Wisconsin
  - Milwaukee Public Library
  - Neville Public Museum
  - Wisconsin Veterans Museum
  - Books and articles

- Large-scale collaboration
  - Europeana 1914-1918

- Discussion: what next in Wisconsin?
WHAT IS WHO?

- Wisconsin Heritage Online helps Wisconsin libraries, archives, historical societies and museums digitize and share online the unique histories of their communities and our state.

- Sponsored by Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS)

- Supported by a grant from the Nicholas Family Foundation

- Other core partners: Milwaukee Public Library, Wisconsin Historical Society and University of Wisconsin-Madison

- 68 members from across Wisconsin, including local historical societies, museums, academic libraries, public libraries, and special libraries, contribute annual membership dues
WHAT DO WE DO?

- Bring resources together.
  - The wisconsinheritage.org website is a free one-stop search portal for more than 120,000 digital resources from Wisconsin collections, including photos, postcards, maps, yearbooks, scrapbooks, letters, diaries, oral histories, artifacts and much more.

- Provide training and support.
  - Members receive hands-on, in-person training in all the steps involved in building a digital collection.

- Host collections.
  - Database software and server space are available to organizations without the resources to develop and host their own.

http://wisconsinheritage.org
World War I Military Portraits

- Books, photos and index cards compiled by American War Mothers, Milwaukee County Chapter

- 14,000 records currently online; 40,000+ when completed

- In progress, not yet public—launch date Summer 2014
Divisions and Regiments

1st Division
16th Infantry
18th Infantry
26th Infantry
28th Infantry
5th Field Artillery
6th Field Artillery
7th Field Artillery
1st Trench Mortar Battery
1st Machine Gun Battalion
2nd Machine Gun Battalion
3rd Machine Gun Battalion
1st Engineers
2nd Field Signal Battalion
1st Ammunition Train
1st Supply Train
1st Engineer Train
1st Sanitary Train
2nd Field Hospital
3rd Field Hospital
12th Field Hospital
13th Field Hospital

Military Branches

Army
Army - Artillery
Army - Artillery - Anti-Aircraft
Army - Artillery - Coast Artillery Corps
Army - Artillery - Field Artillery
Army - Artillery - Field Artillery - Heavy
Army - Artillery - Field Artillery - Light
Army - Artillery - Heavy
Army - Artillery - Light
Army - Artillery - Trench Mortar Battery
Army - Aviation
Army - Aviation - Balloon Squadrons
Army - Aviation - Bombardment Squadrons
Army - Aviation - Meteorological Squadrons
Army - Aviation - Observation Squadrons
Army - Aviation - Photographic Squadrons
Army - Aviation - Pursuit Squadrons
Army - Band
Army - Cavalry
Army - Chaplains
Army - Chemical Warfare
Army - Chemical Warfare - Gas Service
Army - Depot Brigade
Army - Electrician
Army - Engineer Corps
Army - General Staff Corps
Army - Headquarters
Brown County War History Committee Collection

- 1,721 questionnaires completed by Brown County residents who participated in WWI, plus photos and letters collected from interviewees
- Owned by Neville Public Museum, housed at UW-Green Bay Area Research Center
- Supported by Save our History grant from History™
- Partnership with Preble High School—lesson plans, exhibition

http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/npmh
World War I Database

- 15 volumes containing names and basic information about all 120,000+ men and women from Wisconsin who served during World War I
- Compiled by Wisconsin Adjutant General’s office after the war
- Challenge: arranged by county of residence, so searching is difficult
- Volunteers transcribed data
- Currently in editing phase; going live sometime in 2013
Civil War Database

Using the Database
You can search the database by any combination of Name, Residence, Regiment Number and Type, Company, and Remarks. For more information about the fields and tips on searching, click here. If you notice an error in the database, please click here to learn about the procedure to request corrections. If you have any other questions or concerns about the Database, please contact the Reference Archivist.

http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/CivilWar/Soldiers.aspx
Eyes of the Army: The Life and Letters of World War I Aerial Observer Lt. Mortimer M. Lawrence

- Presented in blog format
- “Transcripts of Mortimer's letters are posted 90 years from the day they were originally written, giving viewers the impression that they are experiencing his day-by-day adventures in real-time.”

http://eyesofthearmy.dva.state.wi.us/blog1.php
Local/county/regimental histories, from Eau Claire, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Marshfield, Sheboygan
- Marquette University Hilltop yearbooks
- Wisconsin Magazine of History

LCSH term: World War, 1914-1918
Europeana Project: Europeana 1914-1918

- “Europeana is a single access point to millions of books, paintings, films, museum objects and archival records that have been digitised throughout Europe.”
- over 20 million objects
- more than 2,000 institutions
- 34 countries
Europeana Collections 1914-1918
- WWI materials from national library collections in eight countries

Europeana 1914-1918
- Compiling WWI family memorabilia and stories
- Collection Days events
- Web-based submissions
“Do you have memorabilia from World War One? Letters, photographs, diaries or recordings? We want to save this material and share it on the Internet so everyone has a better understanding of what the war meant to ordinary families. We will photograph or scan your pictures, objects and documents.”
ScanDays
- Galesville, Independence, Westby and Eau Claire libraries
- in partnership with ResCarta Foundation

Slideshows/viewing events
- Project scanned images; audience identifies people and places, shares stories
- South Wood County, Mineral Point

Has your library offered similar events?
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What types of content are most interesting/valuable to your audience? (records, photos, published histories, etc.)
- Who are the local experts?
- Value of user-generated content?
- Timing:
  - 2014 (centennial of start of conflict)?
  - 2017 (centennial of US entering the war)?
WHAT NEXT?

- Century in the Shadow of the Great War
  An International Centennial Planning Conference
  National World War I Museum, Kansas City, Missouri
  March 22-24, 2013
  http://www.theworldwar.org

- Share your contact info—connect with others

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