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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Robert R. Rudd papers

1875-1906

Sc Micro R-6648

Processed by Leslie Harrison.

Summary

Creator: Rudd, Robert R., b. 1860

Title: Robert R. Rudd papers

Date: 1875-1906

Abstract: Correspondence, reports, rosters listing names of troops, ledgers, performance evaluations, and discharge papers, relating to Rudd's command of I Company, 48th Infantry, an all African-American unit fighting in the Spanish-American War, and the administration of Benguet Province in the Philippines. Includes a map of the province and notes on its agriculture.

Physical Location: Sc MG 51

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Language of the Material: English

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Creator History

Black Americans were enthusiastic about helping to fight the Spanish-American War (1898) partly because they identified and sympathized with Afro-Cubans who lived under extreme Spanish oppression. Black volunteers flocked to the recruiting stations throughout the United States, however, they were disappointed for they were rejected or delayed by recruiting centers and were not readily given commissions.

Blacks felt they were well qualified to be awarded commissions and voiced their resentment in newspapers, sermons and by demonstrations. Initially, only organized State National Guard Volunteer units were accepted. This excluded blacks because in the Northern and Western states few blacks were accepted in state units, and the Southern states barred them altogether. Black citizens raised volunteer units with black officers and offered them to the states; however under laws governing

National Guards, such units could not be accepted. Finally, blacks appealed to the President of the United States and to Congress. Congress authorized temporary regiments for blacks, but the War Department insisted upon making all field and staff officers white, while allowing the company grade to be black. The President's call for volunteers, however, was left to the state governor. Thus, the 48th infantry United States Volunteers of Ohio was formed.

`I' Company of the 48th Infantry, commanded by Captain Robert R. Rudd, was comprised entirely of black soldiers, including Rudd himself. In the words of the Regiment Commander Major William P. Duvall, "His [Rudd's] `I' Company was from the first one of the very best in the Regiment." As for Captain Rudd, Major Duvall said that he was "an officer of marked ability and force...the most capable, thorough and efficient among all my Company officers." The 48th Infantry was mustered out of the service after the war as were all volunteer units. `I' company served mostly in the Philippine Islands (1900-1901), administering the Benguet Province of Luzon.

Robert R. Rudd was born in July, 1860 in Nelson County, Kentucky. He began his military career in 1875 by enlisting in the Ohio National Guard and came up through the ranks of the National Guard until he was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1881. He was commissioned as such under the Act of Congress, approved March 2, 1899.

Scope and Content Note

The Robert R. Rudd Papers, 1875-1906 largely record the activities of `I' Company of the 48th Infantry United States Volunteers. The collection is comprised of personal papers, correspondence, roster books, ledgers and a holograph report.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American soldiers
Agriculture -- Philippines -- Benguet (Province)
Spanish-American War, 1898

Geographic Names

Benguet (Philippines : Province) -- Maps
Benguet (Philippines : Province) -- Politics and government
Philippines -- History -- Philippine American War, 1899-1902
United States -- Armed Forces -- African Americans
United States -- History -- 20th century

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Maps

Names

Rudd, Robert R., b. 1860
United States. Army
United States. Army Infantry Regiment, 48th

Container List

b. 1 f. 1 Personal Papers 1875-1901

The series consists entirely of Rudd's discharge papers from various National Guard Units. Some of the discharges are in the form of promotions to higher ranks.

Correspondence

The majority of the series consists of letters and telegrams dealing with official military business, such as supplies, orders, performance evaluations, and requests and details regarding the mustering out of the regiment. Correspondence of note are letters of introduction for Captain Rudd and those in praise of him. This incoming correspondence has been arranged chronologically, the outgoing correspondence also deals with military affairs. Of particular interest, is Rudd's letter, dated 1900, June 5, to his brother, who was also a captain, enclosing a descriptive history of the Igorrotes who inhabited the Benguet District and part of a report he made on the district to the government. The outgoing correspondence is arranged chronologically following the incoming correspondence.

b. 1 f. 2 Incoming 1900-1906

b. 1 f. 3 Outgoing 1900-1901

Military Records

b. 1 f. 4 Roster 1899-1900

There are two Rosters: one (1899) lists the officers of volunteer regiments, and the other (1900) lists the troops serving in the department of the Pacific and the Eighth Army Corps. Included with the rosters are a population census form of 1900 that lists the men in 'I' Company, a transfer notice list and a muster roll.

b. 1 f. 5 Report 1900

A holograph Report (1900), entitled "Agricultural Notes on Benguet," describes the topography of Benguet. A handwritten map of the district is also included in this file.

b. 1 f. 6 Miscellaneous

Ledgers

The subseries consists of five individual books containing additional letters, and telegrams (incoming and outgoing), receipts, orders, supply records, soldiers allotment records, summary court and general court martial records and an inventory of the effects of deceased soldiers. Each ledger is numbered and has an index.

b. 2 f. 1 Circulars written by Captain Rudd 1900-1901

b. 2 f. 2 Circulars and special orders 1900-1901

b. 2 f. 3 Report on guards mounted at La Trinidad 1900

b. 2 f. 4 Record of firing and target practice 1900

b. 2 f. 5 List of deposits made by men with the paymaster 1899-1900