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## Roswell A. Calin Collection

Digital

1907-1963 (*Bulk:* 1917-1919)

1 box (0.25 linear foot)

Call no.: MS 1086



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Shortly before his twentieth birthday in 1918, Roswell "Ross" Calin joined the 44th Coast Artillery Corps and was sent overseas for service. Arriving in France in August 1918, Calin took part in the St. Mihiel offensive and was wounded in action. He returned to his home in Providence, R.I., early in 1919 and was active in veterans' organizations for years, including serving as Rhode Island State Adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans in the mid-1920s.

The Calin collection consists of two scrapbook "volumes," now disbound, assembled by Ross Calin to document his experience in the First World War. Labeled a "memoir," the volumes consist primarily of photographs and postcards (including many real photo

postcards) depicting American troops in the field, war damage, and sites visited by Calin in France. Also included are a selection of medals received by Calin, including a Victory Medal with St. Mihiel clasp, and some newspaper clippings, primarily from the post-war years.

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## Background on Ross Calin

Ross Calin was born in Providence, R.I., on Mar. 1, 1898 (sometimes listed as 1897), to Swedish immigrants Aron and Emma Calin. The son of a paperhanger, Calin was working as a jeweler's engraver when the United States entered the First World War.

Appointed a corporal to the Headquarters Company of the 44th Artillery (Coast Artillery Corps) after enlisting on February 5, 1918, Calin was sent overseas in August to join his unit as it was called into action. In his first month in France, he saw combat with the American 1st Army in the St Mihiel offensive and then the Meuse-Argonne Campaign. Although the specifics are unclear, he was apparently wounded in action, possibly at or just after St. Mihiel, and was cared for in hospital in France until finally receiving orders to depart from the port of Brest in February 1919.

After the war, Calin returned home to Providence, never living further from the city than Johnston or North Providence. An active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and a Rhode Island State Adjutant in the Disabled American Veterans in 1923-1925, he was listed in city directories as a student in 1920-1922, and then as a salesman, credit manager, and after World War II, as owner of a painting company. He may have been married briefly in the mid-1920s, and in September 1930, he married Myrtle G. Arnold, with whom he raised a family of two daughters, Barbara and Joann. Ross died at the age of 82 in March 1980, and is buried along with his wife, parents, infant sister, and daughters in Oakland Cemetery, Cranston.

## Scope of collection

The Calin collection is comprised of two scrapbook "volumes," now disbound, assembled by Ross Calin to document his experience in the First World War. Labeled a "memoir," the volumes consist primarily of photographs and postcards (including many real photo postcards) depicting American troops in the field, war damage, and sites visited by Calin in France. The majority of war-time images relate to operations near Saint Mihiel where American forces figured prominently, including Apremont, Hattonchatel, Montsec, Menil la Tour, Nancy, Seicheprey, and Thiacourt.

Also laid in are the order her received to join the 44th C.A.C., a small number of newsclippings during and after the war relating to Calin's work with veterans' organizations, and a selection of medals received for his service and post-war activities, including a World War I Victory Medal with clasps for St. Mihiel and "Defensive Sector," a Rhode Island State Guard veteran's medal, two World War II E (efficiency) pins, and a D.A.V. pin. A Croix de Guerre that he apparently received in October 1918 was not part of the collection. Although the organization within the volumes was disturbed and may have been fairly arbitrary, we have chosen to retain it when possible, apart from sorting some of the postcards.

## Inventory

Memoirs, vol. 1

1929

Roswell A. Calin: Portrait in uniform

1918



Ross Calin, 1918

Folder 1

**Photographs and postcards**

1918-1919

29 items

Folder 2

Mostly post-war images of sites in France, former barracks, and reception back home.

Newspaper clipping

1956

Folder 3

On low voter turn-out in local election in which Calin served as a warden.

Memoirs, vol. 2

1929

Ross Calin Memoirs, book 2 [covers]

1918-1919

Folder 4

News clippings

1907-1963

Folder 5

Military orders

1917, 1928

Folder 6

Includes Headquarters 44th Regiment Coast Artillery Corps memorandum to Organization Commanders, Jan. 1, 1919; General Orders No. 1, Camp Pontanezen, Dec. 4, 1918; Train regulation, Dec. 25, 1918; Camp instructions no. 3, Dec. 23, 1918; and Lieutenant's shoulder bar.

**Medals**

1918-1919

5 items

Folder 7

Includes two photographic portraits of Calin in uniform, medal as honorary commander of UTA, Rhode Island State Guard World War I medal, U.S. Victory medal with clasps for St. Mihiel and Defensive Sector.

**Medals (post-war)**

1918

6 items

Folder 8

Includes E Award pins (1943, 1945); Veterans of Foreign Wars Post Commander (Boston), 1922; National Army and Navy Club President, 1924; Disabled American Veterans of the World War, RI State Adjutant, 1923; watch fob as National President of the Silver Button Association for veterans wounded in action, 1919-1922.

Postcards: Brest (France)

1918-1919

21 items

Folder 9

Postcards: Paris (France)

1918-1919

9 items

Folder 10

**Photographs (Mounted on album pages)**

1918-1926

18 items

Folder 11

**Photographs (loose and real photo postcards)**

1918

25 items

Folder 12

Photographs (mounted collotypes)

1918

43 items

Folder 13  
Photographs (loose collotypes)  
1918  
31 items  
Folder 14

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## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Gift of Ed and Libby Klewkowski, May 2018.

### Digitized content

Selected images have been digitized and may be viewed online through SCUA's digital repository, Credo.

### Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, June 2019.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use (More information )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

Saint-Mihiel, Battle of, Saint-Mihiel, France, 1918--Photographs  
United States. Army. Coast Artillery Corps. Regiment, 44th  
World War, 1914-1918--Photographs

### Contributors

Calin, Roswell A. [main entry]

### Genres and formats

Medals  
Photographic postcards  
Photographs  
Postcards

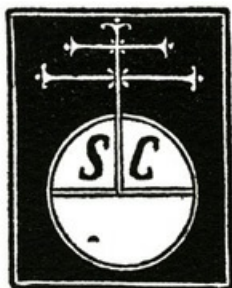
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