

Title: Stearns, Gustav Papers 1906-1967

Call Number: Mss-1397

Inclusive Dates: 1906 – 1967

Bulk: 1.4 cu. ft.

Location: GV, Sh. 021
OS SM "S" (4 items)
OS LG "S" (4 items)

Historical Note: Gustav Stearns, a Lutheran minister, is well remembered for his role as an Army Chaplain with the Red Arrow Division. He served on the Texas border during the Mexican crisis of 1916 and then went with the A.E.F. to France, where he was decorated for gallantry under fire. His Christian treatment of all soldiers, friend and foe alike, won him respect from both sides. He was awarded the Iron Cross by Hindenburg for his work with German POW's. Stearns wrote a book about his experiences, *From Army Camps and Battlefields*, which was very well received. After the war, Stearns served as pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Milwaukee and, later, as chaplain at the Wood V.A. Center. He was also active in civic affairs, taking an active role in the organization of Milwaukee's annual July 4th celebration. He passed away in 1951.

Scope and Content: The records consist of Stearns' correspondence, including a copy of a 1931 letter from German president Paul von Hindenburg thanking Stearns for sending a copy of his book; newspaper clippings; pamphlets, sermons; Stearns' notes on grave sites in France; photographs; and some of his orders from the A.E.F.

Administrative Note: The collection was reprocessed on April 2004 by Kevin Abing.

| Contents | Box # | Folder # |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Biographical Information | 1 | 1 |
| Awards/Diplomas/Military Decorations | 1 | 2 |
| Burials in France | 1 | 3 |
| Church Pamphlets/Publications – General, 1915-1930 | 1 | 4 |
| Correspondence, 1919-1954 | 1 | 5 |
| English Lutheran Church of the Ascension/Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension, 1906-1942 | 1 | 6 |
| Honorable Discharge Papers, 1919 | 1 | 7 |
| Manuscript of Stearns' Weekly Letters from Texas & France, 1917-1919 | 1 | 8 |
| Maps (Military Map of U.S., 1944 & Map of Mexico, 1916) | 1 | 9 |
| Material re: <i>From Army Camps and Battlefields</i> | 1 | 10 |
| Membership Cards | 1 | 11 |
| Mexican Border Service, 1916-1917 | 1 | 12 |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Orders (Military), 1914-1938 | 1 | 13 |
| Pamphlets/Programs – Fraternal & Military, 1906-1950 (1 of 2) | 1 | 14 |
| Pamphlets/Programs – Fraternal & Military, 1906-1950 (2 of 2) | 1 | 15 |
| Pamphlets/Programs – Schools & Miscellaneous, 1931-1942 | 1 | 16 |
| Periodicals – Military, 1931-1952 | 1 | 17 |
| Periodicals – Religious, 1924-1954 | 1 | 17A |
| Personal travel record-France | 1 | 18 |
| Post cards | 1 | 19 |
| Sermons/Addresses | 1 | 20 |
| Sermons/Addresses | 1 | 20A |
| Testimony re: Stearns' Gallantry Under Fire, 1919-1923 | 1 | 21 |
| Veterans Administration Center Material | 1 | 22 |
| Newspaper clippings, 1916-1967 | 1 | 23 |
| Bible presented by Stearns to George C. Nuesse, 1923 | 1 | Loose in box |
| Newspapers – <i>The New Richland Star</i> (Minnesota), 1926-1927 | 2 | 24 |
| Newspapers – Miscellaneous, 1924-1936 | 2 | 25 |
| Memorial Resolutions re: Stearns' Death, 1951 | 2 | 26 |
| Army/Air Force Registers, 1946-1951 | 2 | 27 |
| Over-size Items | Location | |
| Honorary degree from Luther Theological Seminary to Stearns, 1929 | OS LG "S" | |
| Certificate of appreciation from Mitchell Park Sane Fourth Association, July 4, 1939 | OS LG "S" | |
| Resolution from Mayor Frank Zeidler and Common Council to Stearns on his jubilee, Jan. 17, 1949 | OS LG "S" | |
| Roster, Veterans of Three Wars Who Served as Honorary Body Guard to the President of the United States, June 8, 1925 (2 copies) | OS LG "S" | |
| Prayer for Wearers of the Purple Heart for Captain Gustav Stearns, chaplain 127th Infantry, 32nd Division, July 12, 1918 | OS SM "S" | |
| Certificate presented to Reverend Stearns by friends in Lutheran parish in Richland, Minn. On 50th anniversary of his ordination, July 10, 1949 | OS SM "S" | |
| Bachelor of Arts diploma from St. Olaf College, June 16, 1896 | OS SM "S" | |
| Memorial scroll presented on the first anniversary of his death, April 21, 1952 | OS SM "S" | |
| Photos: See M-33; Over-Oversize Military #56-58 | | |