

Ira K. Wells, World War I soldier

Around 1919, the Kansas State Historical Society and the American Legion solicited biographical information from returning veterans (primarily members of the 35th and 89th infantry divisions) and the families of those who died in service, notably from the Gold Star Mothers. Each veteran or family member was asked to provide letters, photographs, a biography, and military records. This file contains information on Ira K. Wells, Major, Judge Advocate General's Department.

Creator: Wells, Ira K.

Date: 1918-1921

Callnumber: World War I Coll. #49, Box 48 Kansas Soldiers

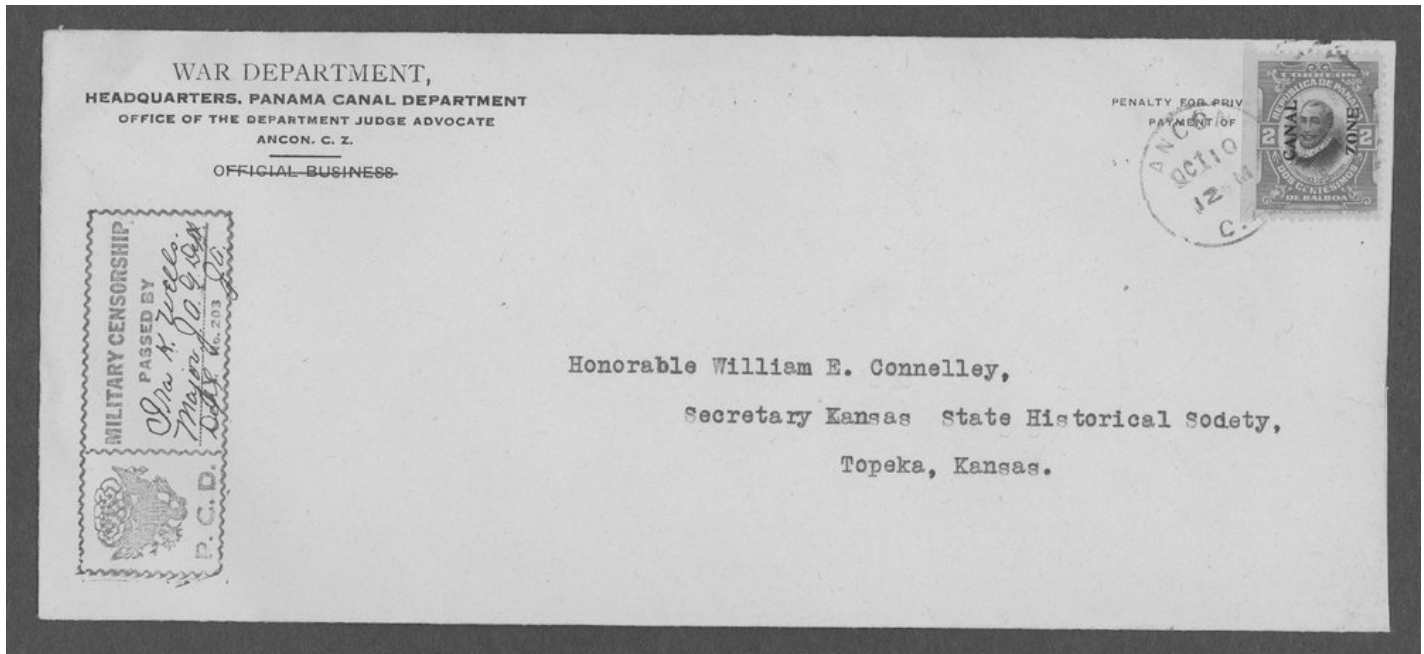
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KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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IN REPLY
REFER TO

HEADQUARTERS PANAMA CANAL DEPARTMENT
ANCON, CANAL ZONE

October 10th, 1918.

Honorable William E. Connelley,
Secretary Kansas State Historical Society,
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Connelley:-

The announcement of the annual meeting of the Kansas State Historical Society has just reached me here, and not being able to be present will at least acknowledge receipt of the same.

I have been down here since March as Department Judge Advocate of the Panama Canal Department of the Army. I am missing out in the actual warfare, but nevertheless am trying to fill my place and do my duty where needed.

This is a most wonderful country and climate. I notice that my old friend John P. Cone of Larned is dead. Sometime when I return I can write you an interesting article in regard to him, as he was one of the oldest newspaper men in the state and has taken an active part in upbuilding the press of Kansas.

Hope sometime to return and take an active part in our great society and help to render you the assistance you should have from every true lover of Kansas.

With best regards and wishes I remain,

Very Respectfully Yours,

Ira K. Wells.

P. S. Thinking that you might not be able to place me would state that my home is at Seneca Kansas and I am a life member of your society. Have been in the army as a Major in the Judge Advocate General's Department for the past ten months.



October 31, 1918

Major Ira K. Wells,
Ancon, Canal Zone.

My dear Mr. Wells:-

I received your favor of the 10th inst., saying that it would be impossible for you to attend the annual meeting of the Kansas State Historical Society. I remember you very well indeed and shall be glad to have a visit from you when you come back to Kansas. Our annual meeting went off all right and without any fraction whatever.

I have met John P. Cone and have a notice of his death clipped from the paper. I shall be pleased to have you write us an article concerning Mr. Cone when you get back.

You say you are in a wonderful country and climate. If there is any printed matter concerning that country and climate I should be much pleased to have you send us copies. We gather everything we can concerning any quarter of the earth.

When you get back we will be glad to enroll you on our honor list. We are trying to secure a roll of every man who has performed any military service.

Very truly yours,

Secretary



LAW OFFICES
OF
IRA K. WELLS
SENECA, KANSAS.

August 26th, 1921.

Honorable Wm. E. Connelly,
Secretary Kansas State Historical Society,
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Connelly:-

Some time ago I promised to send my military history to you together with a photograph but have neglected it, and as I am about to leave Kansas again for Porto Rico where I have been appointed United States Attorney, I am sending you this information herewith, including photograph.

If I find anything that I think would be of interest to the society in Porto Rico I will send it to you and if at any time there should be any information you desire or I can serve you or the society in any way I wish you would write me.

With best regards and wishes I remain,

Very Truly Yours,

Ira K. Wells.

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MILITARY HISTORY OF IRA K. WELLS

SIENNECA, KANSAS.

Commissioned as Major in the Judge Advocate General's Department of the United States Army on November 14th, 1917. Commenced active service on December 2nd, 1917 and detailed for duty in the office of the Provost Marshal General at Washington, D. C. and remained on duty there until March 7th, 1918, when he was relieved and pursuant to orders of the War Department he was assigned as Department Judge Advocate of the Panama Canal Department of the Army, and reported for duty to Brig. General R. M. Blatchford, Department Commander of the Panama Canal Department of the Army at his headquarters in Ancon, Canal Zone, on March 16th, 1918. Continued on duty as Department Judge Advocate from March 16th, 1918 to June 2nd, 1920, when pursuant to orders of the War Department he was relieved from duty there and ordered to report at the United States Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, as Judge Advocate, and reported to Brig. General James H. McRae, Commandant, on June 16th, 1920, where he remained until his discharge from the Army on December 31st, 1920.

While on duty in the Panama Canal Department of the Army and in addition to his duties as Department Judge Advocate he was by Major General C. W. Kennedy, Department Commander detailed as Provost Marshal of the Panama Canal Department, relieving Major Norman Randolph, 33rd Infantry in that position. This position he also held until his departure from the Canal Zone on June 2nd, 1920, having command of Companies A. and B. Military Police and of E. Company 33rd Infantry, and during the strike of the colored employees of the Canal Zone in January 1920 had command of 300 enlisted men from the Coast Artillery Corps. In September 1919 in addition to his duties as Department Judge Advocate and Provost Marshal he was detailed by the Department Commander as Acting Department Intelligence Officer and Morale officer, which positions he held for four months, during the absence of the regular officer in charge of that work.

He was honorably discharged the service of the United States on December 31st, 1920 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, having served 37 months.



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August 29, 1921

Mr. Ira K. Wells,
Seneca, Kansas.

My dear Mr. Wells-

I thank you for your favor of the 26th inst. enclosing me biographical sketch and an account of your services in the late war, together with your photograph. This will be filed with our material concerning the war and preserved, and when Kansas begins the publication of material concerning her soldiers at least some part of it will be published. I have made an effort to get money for this purpose from every legislature but have not succeeded. There will be enough ex-service men in a legislature one of these days to appeal to for this publication. Then we will get it started.

I saw in the paper the announcement of your appointment to a position in Porto Rico and wish to congratulate you on that fact. I also thank you for your kindly offer to send us anything you may find of interest in Porto Rico. We shall be glad to have whatever you send us.

With best regards

Sincerely yours,

Secretary