

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the summer of 1918, President John Henry MacCraken made arrangements with the U.S. War Department to provide a training camp on the Lafayette College campus where men could prepare for military service in mechanical trades. These men were housed in the dormitories and the old chapel in the west wing of South College was transformed into a mess hall. The War Department paid the college for providing this vocational training, room, and board at "Camp Lafayette."

By September of 1918, United States legislation was passed to establish the Student Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.). This program was designed to maintain the supply of trained men in the War Department. Contracts were entered between many colleges throughout the country and the government. President MacCraken, who figured prominently in the formation of the S.A.T.C., was made Director for the Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and District of Columbia region. On October 1, 1918, Lafayette College joined many academic institutions across the country and inducted five hundred and seventy-nine student/soldiers into service. Soon after the formal training of the S.A.T.C. program began that fall, the Spanish influenza swept across the crowded campus. Phi Gamma Delta and Delta Upsilon fraternity houses became the camp hospitals for nearly 140 men. The epidemic was responsible for five deaths on campus.

The Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918 and Camp Lafayette soon demobilized, discharges were made, and the college was deserted. The final official military act was a parade of Camp Lafayette through the streets of Easton on December 7, 1918. By January of 1919, former students returned to campus and regular courses were reestablished. Once the college was reopened and student activities resumed, Lafayette made military training a regular part of the curriculum by establishing the Reserve Officers Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) on campus.

The World War I records of Lafayette College trace the evolution of military training on campus during the period of 1918-1919. President John Henry MacCraken is the prominent correspondent in much of this War Department documentation.

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder

- 1 Camp Lafayette – Contracts, 1918
- 2 Camp Lafayette – Correspondence, 1918
- 3 Camp Lafayette – Finances, 1918
- 4 S.A.T.C. – Contracts, 1918
- 5 S.A.T.C. – Correspondence, 1918
- 6 S.A.T.C. – Finances, 1918

**STUDENT ARMY TRAINING CORP
RECORDS, 1918-1919**

**SKILLMAN LIBRARY
LAFAYETTE COLLEGE**

- 7 S.A.T.C. – Settlements, 1918-1919
- 8 S.A.T.C. – Miscellaneous, 1918
- 9 R.O.T.C. – Correspondence, 1919
- 10 R.O.T.C. – Miscellaneous, 1919