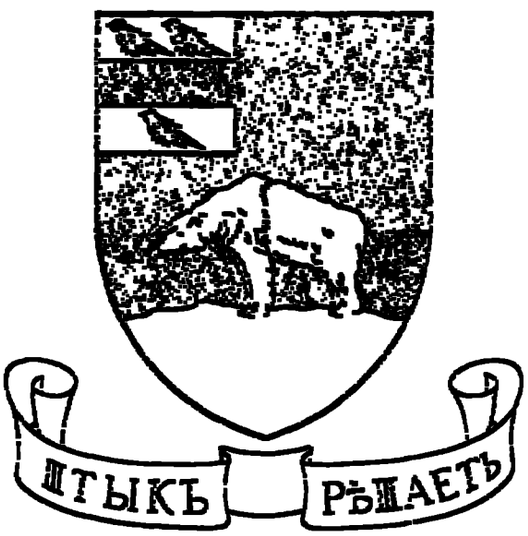


339th INFANTRY

MICHIGAN'S POLAR BEARS

Two years ago Richard Doolen, our Field Representative, got in touch with officers and members of the Polar Bear Association and invited them to give to the Collections materials relating to their service in the American Expedition to North Russia during 1918 and 1919. Their generous cooperation resulted in our receiving a very significant body of letters, diaries, maps and photographs, and newspaper clippings on that subject. After Mr. Doolen resigned to continue his graduate studies, Marvin Petroelje, his successor, obtained additional papers.

In order to make known the experiences of Michigan men in this largely neglected phase of the World War, we asked Mr. Doolen to write an account of it. Using mainly contemporary personal writings, he has vividly portrayed the experiences of the Polar Bears in a most inhospitable region. His story is principally about individuals and their reactions to the severe weather, the Bolsheviks, the friendly peasants, living conditions, and their feeling of having been forgotten. The Bibliographic Essay contains an account of source materials and some biographical information about the men whose letters and diaries he read. We are very grateful to those who by the gift of their papers have made possible this publication and to Mr. Doolen for having used them in a masterly fashion.

F.C.B.

MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
Bulletin No. 14 September, 1965

COURTESY OF DETROIT NEWS

Returning Polar Bears Parade on Belle Isle, July 4, 1919.

MICHIGAN'S POLAR BEARS

The American Expedition to North Russia 1918-1919

RICHARD M. DOOLEN

The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, 1965

Michigan's Polar Bears

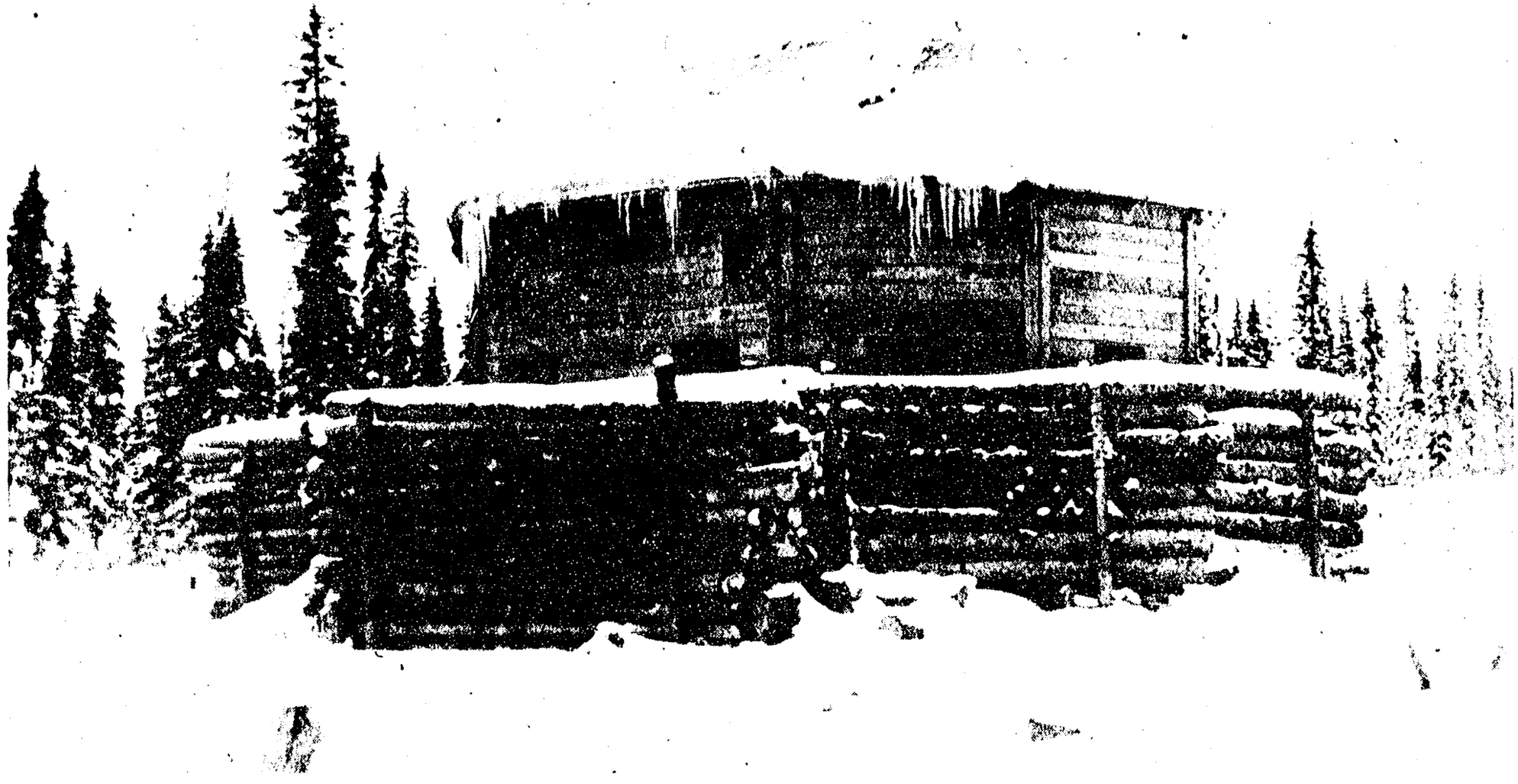
For most members of the American armed forces in Europe, the signing of the armistice with Germany in November, 1918, meant the end of combat and the realization that soon they would be reunited with their families at home. But for one contingent of United States servicemen, the end of fighting in western Europe signified very little at all, for its work had only begun. These were the men of the American Expedition to North Russia, the "Polar Bears," who, with their British, French, Canadian and assorted other allies, still faced many months of combat before they too could return from the war. Sent to Archangel in the early days of September, 1918, these Americans would remain for some nine months before finally being withdrawn in June, 1919; yet during that time few if any would ever understand precisely why they were there.

Although the exact nature of the Polar Bears' mission was unclear, there was never any question as to the identity of their opponents, the armies of Soviet Russia. When the Polar Bear Regiment arrived in Archangel, the Bolshevik government had been in power for less than a year, had withdrawn Russia from the Allied side by making a separate peace with Germany, and was now involved in civil war with several anti-Communist "White" Russian armies. President Wilson, previously committed to a policy of non-intervention in Russia's internal affairs, had opposed American participation in the expedition. However, under heavy French and British pressure, and

with the understanding that the expedition would have only certain limited objectives related to the successful conclusion of the war with Germany, he at last consented in July, 1918, to the use of American soldiers. These were to number approximately 5,500 men who would join smaller detachments of English, French and other Allied troops under British command in the Archangel region. A large proportion of the American troops were men from Michigan, members of the 339th Infantry Regiment. In addition to the 339th, the American force comprised the First Battalion of the 310th Engineers, the 337th Field Hospital and the 337th Ambulance Company, all from the 85th Division, which had been trained at Camp Custer, near Battle Creek, Michigan.

They were deployed on a front, shaped roughly in the form of a horseshoe, with Onega on the White Sea, and Pinega, on the river of the same name, as its respective western and eastern limits. The lines extended south from Archangel to positions held by the Third Battalion on the Vologda-Archangel railroad, and the First Battalion on the Dvina River with its tributaries, the Emtsa and Vaga. The point of farthest penetration inland was Ust Padenga, in the group of villages immediately south of the town of Shenkursk.

Many of the difficulties encountered by the Polar Bears were the problems of all combat soldiers. Supply and shelter, weather and sanitation are considerations in the operations of any modern army, and the expedition to North Russia was no exception. In a December memo to his platoon commanders, Captain Otto Odjard requested that all men be told to bathe and change their underclothing at least once a week. This order, he noted, was to be complied with "in spirit as well as in letter," but it is questionable whether men at the front were often able to execute either the spirit or letter of this type of order as the campaign wore on.



Standard 8-man Blockhouse. Vologda Ry. Verst. 444.

On arrival in Archangel, those Americans destined for the Dvina front were transported upriver on old coal scows. Numbers of the men on board were seriously ill, a situation not surprising in light of Clarence Scheu's description:

> Suffering Sea Cooks, what a rotten hole they have dumped us into now, coal dust 2 inches thick, damp, filthy dungeon. We are sleeping on bottom of scow, no light, ventilation, or anything . . .

A two-day issue of rations for the American troops, as described by one participant, included one can of corned beef, one can of meat and vegetables, an ounce of tea, three and one half ounces each of sugar and rice or beans, eight ounces of bacon, and hardtack. However, when on the move, or under severe battle conditions, the soldier's diet might be reduced to hardtack and bully beef, or whatever he could obtain from the peasants in the way of smoked fish, black bread or vegetables.

Weather conditions were unusually severe; temperatures of fifty degrees below zero were recorded by some of the men in mid-winter, and in December and January daylight lasted for only a few hours. Attacking Russian soldiers wearing white smocks in order to blend with the snow-covered landscape, might creep close to the Allied lines before being observed, and difficult terrain often combined with the Russian climate to make the soldier's lot particularly uncomfortable. One veteran recalled that in September, 1918, he had "slept in a swamp all night and it was raining so we had no place to lay, so we did not do any sleeping but walked back and forth all night to keep from freezing." When weather conditions became most severe in the coldest winter months, frostbite was added to the list of customary army medical problems, and deep snow made troop movement not only cumbersome but hazardous. Near Chenova, in March, 1919,

American and British troops were described as "thoroughly overcome with fatigue" after advancing five hundred yards in the face of heavy enemy machine gun fire, through snow up to their waists.

To a considerable extent, however, the expedition into northern Russia was trying, not because of the combat dangers, or other predictable problems associated with military operations, but rather because of the uncertainty as to the purpose of the mission. E. M. Halliday entitled his account of the Polar Bears' exploits *The Ignorant Armies,* and the title is singularly appropriate, for it calls attention to the sheer frustration experienced by men trying to understand why they had been dispatched to Russia in the first place. Officially, they and the other Allied detachments had originally been sent to the Archangel region to guard the military supplies stored there and keep them out of German hands; or to prevent the establishment of a German submarine base in the area. There was also talk of reconstructing a second front in the east, and of somehow restoring Russia to the coalition of nations fighting the Central Powers.

However, after the armistice with Germany was signed, the expedition could only take on more and more of the character of an anti-Bolshevik force, seeking to aid the White armies in breaking the Communist hold on Russia. Since this latter aim was never clearly expressed, it is not surprising to find American soldiers wondering why their services were needed in this remote corner of the world when the fighting in western Europe had ended. That the expedition had never really captured the imagination of the men involved is indicated by a portion of a letter written home in February, 1919, by an American lieutenant:

> [I] suppose that by this time the country is swarming with returned soldiers. They must be getting them out of France, at a pretty good rate. They certainly did some

> fine work over there. How I wish that I had been fortunate enough to get over there. How would you like to take a day off to go to the circus, get as far as the big tent, then be turned around and spend your day in one of the sideshows . . . ?

This same lieutenant, Charles B. Ryan, attended a lecture by DeWitt Poole, the American chargé d'affaires. The title of Mr. Poole's talk was "Russia: Why We Are Here," but the American lieutenant thought it might be summed up in the familiar expression: "We're here because we're here." "I sometimes wonder," another American soldier noted in a diary entry, "if the US will ever wake up to the fact that they have a regiment over here, on guard."

The problem of maintaining morale was further complicated by the propaganda activities of the Bolsheviks, who piled leaflets where American soldiers might find and read them, and on occasion used more direct means. Sergeant Gordon Smith recorded in September, 1918, that a "Bolo" had come out under a white flag to deliver a lecture on Bolshevism and to tell the Americans that the Russians did not want to fight them. According to Lieutenant Harry Costello, a Bolshevik orator appeared in the darkness one November night and shouted to the Americans, asking why they were fighting them and declaring that they were fellow-workers.

In Costello's opinion, the Soviet propaganda efforts were quite unsuccessful, because the hardworking men from the farms and factories of Michigan saw the Bolshevik leaders not as fellow "toilers," but as cruel and shiftless men "who turned the evils of Romanoff rule into anarchy, murder, rape and pillage." American soldiers in the expedition realized the dangerous nature of Bolshevism, he believed, and expected that at some time in the future they might again be called upon to play their part in crushing the Communist menace.

An abhorrence of Communism and a conviction that

it must never become a danger to the United States were doubtless shared generally by these American soldiers. It did not follow, however, that each man would feel altogether sure of his own immediate role as an opponent of the Russian Revolution on Russian soil. "Now is the time" wrote Lieutenant Ryan in a letter of April 7, 1919, to finish off the Russian Communists "and incidentally, get a few of our homegrown Bolsheviks." The men of the 339th had seen what Communism meant and "it ought to be unhealthy for any agitators to start their propaganda in the shops around Detroit." But what if the Russian people themselves were either apathetic or actually in opposition to this western effort to save them from Communism? In February, Lieutenant Ryan had noted in his diary:

> There is a rumor that they have arrested 300 civilians in Archangel. What are we doing here anyway. The people won't help themselves. They are nearly all Bolsheviks. If this is not interfering with Russian politics I miss my guess.

If the Lieutenant found the Russians' lack of enthusiasm disappointing, another American soldier took a perhaps more realistic point of view. Running through the diary of Sergeant Silver Parrish, there is a deep feeling of sympathy and understanding for the Russians, a feeling which he apparently took no pains to hide. He saw them as industrious but downtrodden people, seeking only to throw off the yoke of their oppressors: "After being up here fighting these people I will be ashamed to look a union man in the face, for the way they have been treated by their government and the Cossacks is a dirty crime." Parrish was sure that the majority of the people were in sympathy with the Bolsheviks, and he did not blame them for that. In fact, he admitted, he and his platoon had been called Bolsheviks themselves because they signed

a petition "protesting against conditions and fighting the Bolo after the Germans had quit."

These were not the words of a malingerer or slacker, for men like Parrish obeyed their orders even when they seemed to bring tragedy to innocent people. Told to destroy a Russian village in November, 1918, because of possible danger from snipers, Parrish relates that he and his men carried out the order even though "My heart ached to have the women fall down at my feet and grab my legs and kiss my hand and beg me not to do it. But orders are orders, . . . so I done my duty." Nor could there be any questions of this man's courage; Parrish boasted that his platoon had "the best fighting record of any platoon in the battalion," and he himself was decorated in the course of the campaign by the British government.

As the long, frustrating winter months drew to a close, there were exaggerated reports in late March, 1919, of mutiny among the American soldiers. The difficulty hinged upon a certain amount of grumbling among members of Company "I" who had been away from the front on rest, and were being ordered to load sleds for their return to combat. The men believed, as did many of their comrades, that the Russians themselves were not making a sufficient effort on their own behalf, and could not see why they had to do their fighting for them. The men did carry out the orders after only a short delay, and were the next day in battle with the Bolsheviks, but newspapers in the United States played up the story with a considerable amount of sensation. What is significant in the incident is not that discontent should begin to be manifested, but rather that no more serious incidents were reported; for at this same time there were far more dangerous cases of actual mutiny among the other Allied soldiers, including both the French and British.

There is, however, some evidence that discontent among the Americans had become a major consideration

Traveling "deluxe" in Russia—Tegra.

by the end of winter. The protest petition to which Sergeant Parrish referred and which he apparently authored was drawn up in the early days of March. He reports that he was called on the carpet before his colonel, who read the articles of war to him and informed him that his offense was punishable by death. In describing this petition in his diary entry for March 4, Sergeant Parrish noted that it requested the reason why Americans were fighting the Bolsheviks; why there was not better treatment with regard to food, mail and medical attention; why there was no heavy artillery; and why the Americans were under British command. The petition may also have contained, or was accompanied by, a second statement by the men, threatening to refuse to advance any farther after March 15. In the back pages of the Parrish diary such a statement is included in a petition headed Resolution Number One, and directed to "the commanding officer of Archangel district." The two may be quite distinct documents, and the second, perhaps, was never actually submitted, for it is difficult to reconcile such a threat and its effect upon the British command, with the award to Parrish on March 18th of the British Military Medal. Still, we have the testimony of Lieutenant John Cudahy that either this or a similar incident occurred involving a threat by the American soldiers at Toulgas to "walk out." He placed it in February, but he was speaking from several years hindsight, and may have confused the exact date. Cudahy was not critical of the men involved, for he saw them as individuals who were familiar with peacetime industrial strikes used as weapons for expressing disapproval, and who, when told the implications of mutiny, realized their error and never again engaged in such a protest.

The attitude of the men becomes more understandable when placed in the context of other events at the time. In late February, President Wilson had announced his

intention finally to withdraw the American troops from Russia. This news very quickly reached the men at the front. Now it was but a question of awaiting British replacements and adequate transportation home, and thus further bloodshed must have seemed particularly senseless. In the back of the Kenneth Skellenger diary, there is the following entry, dated March 9, 1919, and addressed "to the Bolsheviki soldiers":

> officially we Americans know we have been ordered out of Russia by our President.
>
> We are under the damned British control until May 17th. This we do not understand. We are only fighting for our lives. There are practically no English soldiers in the front lines or in Russia.
>
> We would join hands with you to down crowned heads. It is all for the majority of human beings.
>
> The US soldiers hear many stories about the inhuman "Bolo" but we do not believe *all* we hear.
>
> Homes and dear wives wait for us and no doubt for you.
>
> We won't make an attack on you. If you wait 2½ months we will be out of Russia.
>
> Signed Soldier Boys of the U.S.

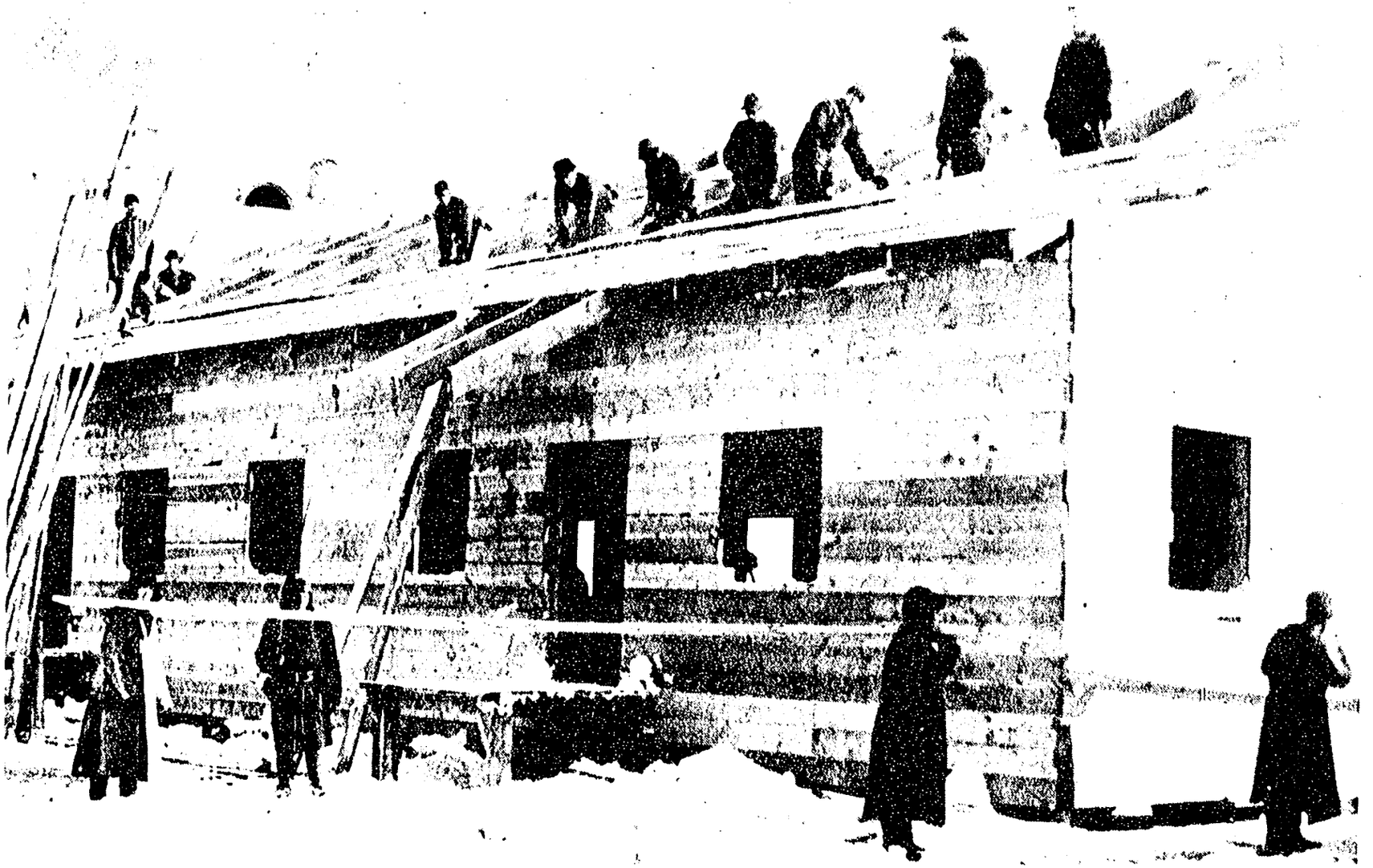
Both the Parrish petition and the entry cited above evidence the antipathy which American soldiers in the expeditionary force felt toward the British command. Colonel George Stewart, the highest ranking American officer present, was himself not popular, but the subordinate American officers appear generally to have been liked and respected by their men. On the other hand, only General Ironside, after November the overall Allied commander, seems to have escaped the almost universal American censure of British officers, too many of whom, it was believed, perhaps unfairly, had found snug office jobs behind the lines in Archangel while Americans did all the fighting at the front. It was also charged that the British soldiers sent to Russia were not physically fit,

but rather worn-out veterans from the western front, and this belief, along with incidents like the accidental shelling of Allied lines by British artillery, made the situation very tense at times.

To some Americans, the British appeared insensitive to ordinary standards of decency. Sergeant Costello remembered that in the evacuation of Shenkursk, the British advised leaving the wounded behind; but the Americans and Canadians would not agree, and the wounded were saved only after considerable argument. In October, 1918, an American recorded in his diary that while serving on guard duty he found in front of the British officers' barracks a box marked "from the USA for the boys at the front." The box was empty and he believed the British had themselves appropriated its contents. Feeling apparently remained bitter to the very end; "[The] English will be driven back into the White Sea soon," noted Sergeant Gordon Smith in June, 1919, "Hurrah! I hope so!"

Relations between the French and American soldiers were on quite a different plane. Here there were both respect and comradeship transcending any language difficulties, and nurtured by a mutual dislike of the British. Probably, only the valiant units of Canadian artillerymen rivalled the French "poilus" in the hearts of the American troops.

Toward the Soviet soldiers, the Americans seemed to hold a certain measure of respect, quite apart from any dislike of their Communist leaders. These were no cowardly opponents, declared Lieutenant Ryan, and all that was necessary to be convinced of that was to see them coming at you as you waited behind your machine gun. The Americans came to believe that stories of Bolshevik atrocities perpetrated against captured Allied soldiers were much exaggerated. In their account of the expedition, Joel Moore and Harry Mead noted that the



Michigan Barracks—Archangel.

atrocity stories were often part of the British propaganda efforts, designed to arouse American soldiers against their opponents. But, as they pointed out, "Brave men do not need to be fed such stuff. Distortion of facts only disgusts the man when he finally becomes undeceived."

More than respect was involved in the Polar Bears' regard for the Russian peasants, with whom they were often in close contact, to the extent of being quartered with them under the same roof. There were unpleasant aspects to living in the moujiks' houses, particularly the ever-present cockroaches and the absence of adequate ventilation; but on cold winter nights, complaints were probably very few as the men bedded down around the huge brick ovens, a prominent feature of rural north Russian homes. Residents of Archangel, and Russian urban dwellers generally, may have been suspect in the eyes of the American soldiers as shirkers or Bolshevik sympathizers, but for these simple peasants there was kindness and understanding.

On Christmas eve, in the village of Chemova, some of the men of "B" Company decorated a fir tree with packages containing canteen items of cigarettes, sugar and tea, then invited in the peasants to share in the celebration. Clarence Scheu, in describing the festivities, remarked that in the middle of the party, "seven or eight Russians approached us and swore fidelity to the Americans present, and boy how they can swear. We reciprocated likewise and passed the cigarettes, stripped the tree to the children, bid all 'da da' . . . and turned in a tired but happy lot." Scheu also remembered giving money toward the rebuilding of a Russian schoolhouse.

American doctors, too, made their own contribution to the peasants' welfare. Captain Henry Katz noted that a Shenkursk newspaper had commended American medical men for visiting the villages around that city

and caring for the people during an influenza epidemic in November.

Sergeant Parrish's interest in the Russian people was particularly keen. Much of his diary is devoted to vivid descriptions of battlefield encounters with the Bolsheviks, but there are also informative and amusing accounts of the day-to-day activities of the peasants with whom he so deeply sympathized. These were simple, hardworking people, he noted, and with hearts of children. Neither moral nor immoral, they were "nearly unmoral," and saying things which would embarrass an American but which were customary for them. If one had seen women and children costumed like these people on a stage, said Parrish, it would have been laughable, but here in this context, it brought forth only sympathy for them, and loathing for those who kept them in such poverty and ignorance.

The sergeant devoted considerable attention to the peasants' crops, the appearance of their homes, and their diet, which, as he described it, seems to have consisted primarily of such items as potatoes, fish, berries and mushrooms. One institution he found especially admirable, and thought it might very well be copied in the United States. This was the bathhouse, a log structure similar to the saunas used by the people of neighboring Finland. Tiers of steps or benches were placed near a large kettle of water heated over a stone furnace.

> When the water is hot, they get in there and throw water on the hot rocks and its makes hot steam. They then get on this bench or steps and if they want to perspire very freely they get up to the top and if not they stay down low. Then they wash and pound each other with some little leafy twigs. The whole family together, men, women, girls and boys. (I guess we will have to start Baths like that in America.)

Russian marriages, the sergeant decided, were more business propositions than sacred undertakings. "If you are a man and want a woman, you go to her parents and if you have enough money to put with hers you get her whether she wants you or not." Women had the same privilege of purchasing husbands if they desired and had the money to do so.

For amusement, the peasants sometimes made use of a "teeter-totter affair," which Parrish had observed in operation and which he wryly described:

> One girl gets on one end and one on the other and one jumps up and comes down on the board which throws the other one up in the air 2 or 3 feet high. She then in turn lands on her end and away goes the other girl and they keep it up until they get tired or break a leg.

Not all the Americans involved, perhaps not even most, were deeply interested in the daily life of the peasants. Probably few grew so attached to them as did Sergeant Parrish. But shared Christmas celebrations, the work of American medics in the villages, kindnesses to Russian children, and living under the same roof with the peasants were experiences not soon to be forgotten on either side.

On the other hand, if the expedition's underlying purpose had really been to save the people of Russia from Communism, there can have been little satisfaction felt by these American soldiers who had given so much under such trying circumstances, and who were at last taken out of Russia in the summer of 1919. What had they really been able to accomplish in their nine months tour of duty? How long would the shaky anti-Communist North Russian government in Archangel be able to last once the British too had withdrawn? Not long, as events were soon to show. What value, then, did the intervention

Young Russians getting Leftovers at English Kitchen—Kanatsbor.

in Russia by the western powers actually have? "When we came away," wrote Sergeant Costello, "many of us wondered if we had not succeeded by our failure to crush it [Communism] in translating this whole Bolshevist business into a national movement."

Combat in Russia had been an experience testing not only fighting abilities, but, to an unusual degree, the stamina and morale of the soldiers involved. If the task was left unfinished, it was surely not the fault of these who had served at the front. In any case, it was good to be going home. Gordon Scheu described the Polar Bear troopship's arrival in Boston harbor:

> We are all set and ready to disembark at a moment's notice, everyone on edge on deck, and [the] rails are crowded with troops watching; [we] pass Boston lighthouse at 8 p.m. Sight Revere Beach, brightly illuminated at 9 p.m. A mighty cheer goes up from the ship. Its all over now, we're home.

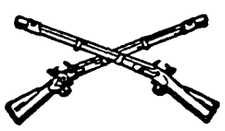
In July Detroit staged its reception for the returning Polar Bears. Eleven hundred men of the 339th, showered with roses and other summer flowers, marched in parade around Belle Isle, then were treated to a picnic lunch, complete with fried chicken and ice cream. The letter addressed to the men by Detroit's Mayor James Couzens read in part:

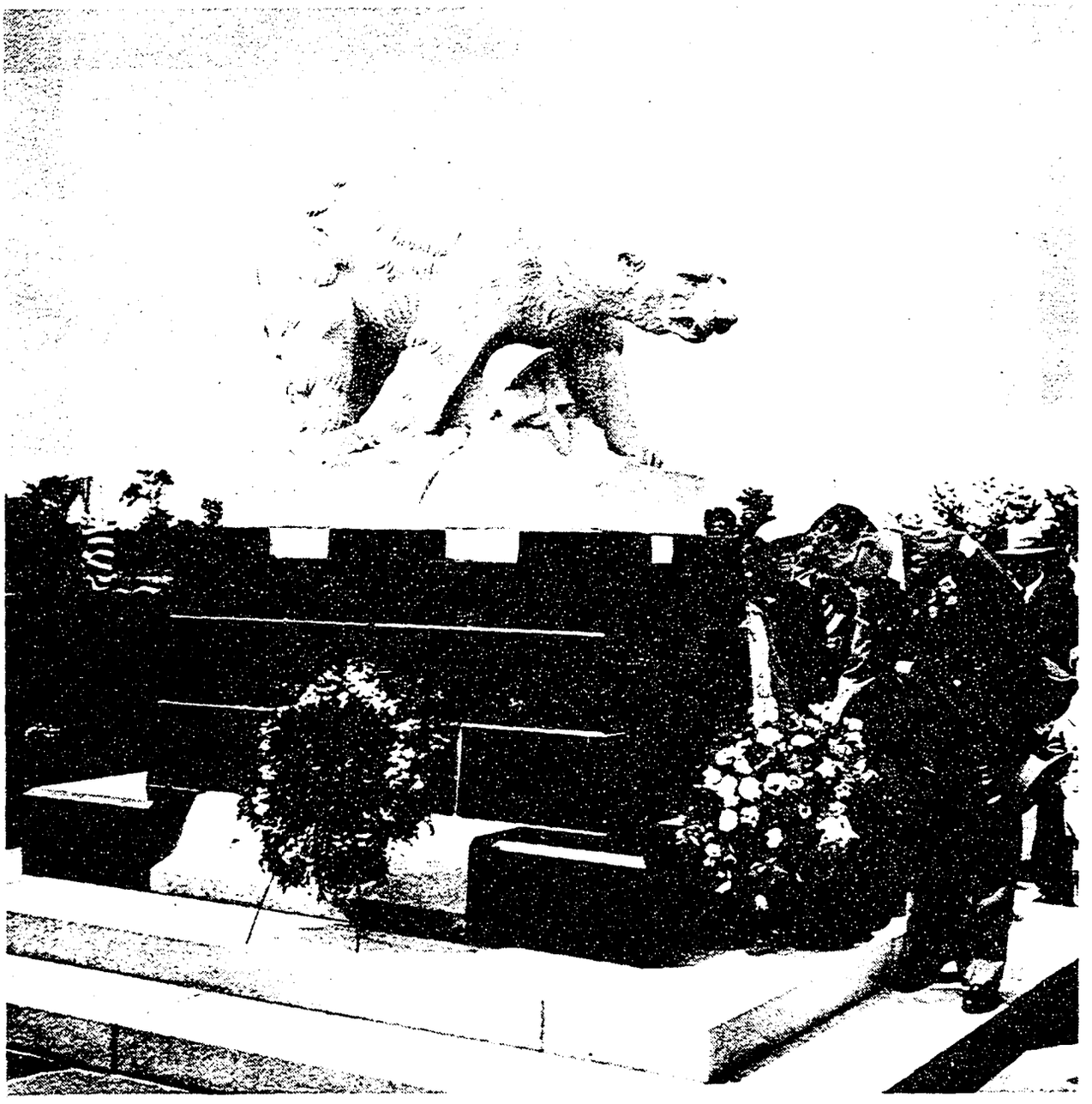
> When you enlisted, you could not foresee what would be your part in the struggle. You know only that your country needed you and that you were ready, body and soul, to give yourself to her. You enlisted. You played your part. And now, looking back over these long months, you can see how your share in the cause must be estimated—not by your rank, not by the accident of your going abroad or staying home, not even by your wounds and suffering, but solely by the devotion and unselfishness with which you carried on the work, great or small, that was entrusted to you.

In July, 1929, a commission appointed by Michigan Governor Fred W. Green left for Russia to supervise the recovery and return of the bodies of Michigan men who had fallen during the campaign and been buried in Russia. The commission included Gilbert T. Shilson, of Lansing, as chairman; Roy Derham, an Iron Mountain attorney; Walter Dundon, President of the Polar Bear Association; and John C. Evans and Michael J. Macalla, both of Detroit.

Macalla has written an interesting account of this commission's work in Russia, a copy of which is on deposit in the Michigan Historical Collections.

Altogether, the remains of eighty-six men were recovered for reburial in the United States, and of these, fifty were interred in the Polar Bear Plot of White Chapel Memorial Cemetery in Troy, Michigan.





Polar Bear Monument, Troy, Michigan.

Bibliographic Note

Among the published accounts of the Polar Bears' campaign in northern Russia are several by participants, including Harry J. Costello's *Why Did We Go To Russia?* and *The History of the American Expedition Fighting the Bolsheviki,* by Joel R. Moore, Harry H. Mead and Lewis E. Jahns. Published in 1920, the year after the Expedition's return to America, these works are especially valuable for the strong feelings expressed and for the many details, still fresh in the minds of the writers. Lieutenant Colonel Moore, who had collaborated with Mead and Jahns on the work noted above, also published a separate account of the expedition in the July, 1926 issue of *Infantry Journal.* The article is ably written and illustrated with pictures and maps.

In 1924, another participant, Lieutenant John Cudahy, published anonymously his *Archangel: The American War With Russia.* Like the other personal accounts, this book is interesting for its reflection of the attitude of a member of the expedition, but as E. M. Halliday has pointed out, Cudahy sometimes approached incoherence in his emotional descriptions of battlefield situations. Halliday's own recent work, *The Ignorant Armies,* is an excellent account by a non-participant. Published in 1958, it affords a lucid narrative of the military aspects of the campaign, but also provides information on contemporary international politics which helps to place the expedition in its historical context. Also important are Halliday's bibliography and his discussions of sources for individual chapters, helpful guides for those interested in the general subject of the Polar Bears.

In 1963 the Michigan Historical Collections of The University of Michigan, believing that the exploits of the Polar Bears might yet be more adequately researched, undertook a project of locating and preserving source materials pertaining to the campaign. With the enthusiastic cooperation of John Boren and the other officers and members of the Polar Bear Association, the Historical Collections began the program of unearthing the diaries, letters, photograph albums, camp newspapers, reminiscences and other materials, which detail the actions and feelings of Michigan men involved in that strange early combat between soldiers of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Polar Bear materials, preserved under the name of each man whose papers have been placed in the Michigan Historical Collections, are continually being supplemented by additional papers. They comprise both a lasting memorial to the men who served, and a significant resource for historical research. Through examination of these materials, it is hoped that a more complete understanding and appreciation of the individual soldier's reaction, both to his task and to his environment, may finally be attained.

One of the largest of the Polar Bear collections is that of "A" Company's Lieutenant Hugh D. McPhail, a Petoskey, Michigan man, holder of the British Military Cross. The McPhail Papers consist in part of scrapbooks in which a broad assortment of items is found, including a clipping containing an interesting letter from McPhail to his mother, a poem by Clayton Hutchinson entitled, "A Soldier's Christmas in Russia," and clippings pertaining to the alleged "mutiny" of March, 1919. There are also orders, citations, casualty lists and a field message book containing memos and dispatches, some written in Russian, from Captain Otto Odjard.

Diaries kept during the expedition are found in the

papers of George Albers, Edward Flaherty, Silver Parrish, Charles B. Ryan, Clarence G. Scheu, James B. Sibley, Kenneth A. Skellenger, Gordon W. Smith, and Edward Trombley. The diary in the Albers Collection is not that of Albers, but rather is anonymous, possibly kept by Fred Kooyers of "E" Company. Albers, of Muskegon, Michigan, was taken prisoner by the Soviets and held in Moscow for some six months. Included in his collection are papers relating to the Howard H. Pellegrom Post, Number 3734, of the Veterans of Foreign Wars for the years 1940–1945, and also a safe-conduct from his Soviet captors permitting him to travel out of Russia.

The Edward Flaherty Collection contains a field diary, detailing the activities of Company "H" on the Onega front, and a large number of pictures of the American troops and their North Russian surroundings photographed by the American Red Cross. A particularly useful journal is the diary of Silver Parrish, a xerox copy of which is in the Michigan Historical Collections. Parrish, now a Bay City resident, served with "B" Company on the Dvina River front. The diary combines battlefield notes with extensive comments on the life of the Russian peasantry.

A diary together with a large number of letters written home to Detroit have been preserved in the papers of Lieutenant Charles B. Ryan. Ryan, holder of the British Military Cross and the French Croix de Guerre, commented in his writings on the Russian people, the progress of the expedition, and the friction between American and British officers.

The Clarence G. Scheu diary is a day-by-day account running from July, 1918, to July, 1919. Scheu, serving on the Dvina front with Company "B", recorded vivid descriptions of combat experiences, and also conditions on board the troopship *Nagoya* and the river scow transporting the Americans to the fighting front. Comments

on the daily routine of the soldier at the front and his attempts to maintain some standards of comfort and cleanliness are found in the diary of James B. Sibley. The Sibley Papers also contain items pertaining to the termination of the 339th's service in Russia and its return to Detroit.

The petition addressed to the Bolshevik soldiers is found in the diary of Detroiter, Kenneth A. Skellenger, a member of "A" Company. Also included in the Skellenger Papers is a lengthy letter written home on April 10, 1919, containing comments on rations, mail deliveries and other concerns of the men at the front.

A xerox copy of the Gordon W. Smith diary is preserved in the Polar Bear collection. The Smith diary contains a day-by-day account of the activities of Company "D", in which Smith served as a platoon sergeant, and also clippings, maps and a company roster. A roster for the second platoon of "A" Company is found in the papers of Edward Trombley of Bay City, who was awarded the British Military Medal for advancing under enemy fire to rescue wounded comrades. The Trombley Papers include clippings, a diary and two letters which he received while serving in Russia.

Information supplementing that found in diaries and correspondence is contained in other types of personal accounts. There is, for example, a typescript copy of a Detroit *Free Press* article by Glen L. Shannon. Shannon, a private with "F" Company, and a member of the editorial staff of the Grand Rapids *Herald* before his induction, wrote the article in March, 1919, after his return from Russia. In the article he commented extensively on conditions in Archangel when the American troops first arrived.

In the papers of Jay H. Bonnell, a Bay City Polar Bear, there is a typescript of a reminiscence of the expedition. In addition, the Bonnell Collection contains an album

of photographs covering military aspects of the campaign and also views of Archangel and northern Russia. There is also a short reminiscence in the papers of E. D. Bruce, together with several songs composed by Bruce pertaining to the Polar Bears.

Of considerable significance is Captain Henry Katz's resumé of medical activities in northern Russia. This four-page contemporary account describes the work of American medical men in treating sick and wounded among the military, and also in ministering to Russian civilian victims of influenza.

The papers of John Boren, another Detroiter, pertain not only to the 1918–1919 campaign itself, but also to the later activities of the Polar Bear veterans. A number of clippings are among the materials, some having to do with the eventual return of the bodies of those who had fallen and been buried in Russia. There is also a Red Cross pamphlet containing useful Russian words or expressions, and a number of postcards with views of Archangel and of France.

Pictures of Archangel are also found in the papers of B. F. Broaddus and Alex Heath. In the Broaddus Collection, there are newspaper clippings concerning the Polar Bears' return to Detroit, and a menu for Thanksgiving Day in Russia. A map detailing lines of communication on the Dvina River front is part of the Heath Collection.

Two letters from General Edmund Ironside, the highly respected British commander of the Allied forces, are included in the papers of Detroit's Captain Otto Odjard. The Odjard Collection also has a list of British decorations awarded to American and other Allied soldiers serving in the Archangel campaign. Odjard himself was awarded the British Military Cross.

In addition to the published memoirs and other works already cited, numerous other printed items pertaining to the Expedition have been deposited in the Historical

Collections. These include *A Compendium of the Life of the Polar Bear Association, Embracing the Constitution, By-Laws and Notes of General Interest; also Names of Past Presidents and Honorary Members,* prepared by Michael J. Macalla, Hugh D. McPhail and Adolph Anselmi; and a file of the programs for the biennial reunions of the Polar Bear Association. In addition, there are ten issues (December, 1918 to May, 1919) of the *American Sentinel,* published in Archangel by the Red Cross for the American troops, and five issues of the *Trident,* published on board the USS *Von Steuben,* containing a well-written summary of the campaign. Similarly, there are two numbers of the *Duckboard,* published at Camp Ontanezen, France, with articles pertaining to the return of the Polar Bears from Russia and their combat there.

In 1923, Dorothea York's *The Romance of Company 'A'* was published. This work is not fiction, as the title may imply, but rather a fairly comprehensive account of one company's role in the North Russian campaign. Finally, there is a story of the expedition, *The Defense of Ust Padenga,* by Daniel H. Steele, printed in the October 20, 1922 issue of *The American Legion Weekly.*