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ABILENE, KANSAS

HELMICK, CHARLES G.: Papers, 1912-85

Accessions 93-10 and 93-10/1

Processed by: TB

Date Completed: February 2001

The papers of Major General Charles G. Helmick were deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library by his son Charles G. Helmick Jr. in January and August 1993.

Linear feet: -1  
Approximate number of pages: 550  
Approximate number of items: 20

Charles Helmick Jr. signed an instrument of gift for the papers on February 8, 1993. Literary rights in the unpublished writings of General Helmick in this collection and in all other collections of papers received by the United States have been donated to the public. Under terms of the instrument of gift, the following classes of items are withheld from research use:

1. Papers which constitute an invasion of personal privacy or a libel of a living person.
2. Papers which are required to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and are properly classified.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Major General Charles G. Helmick was born at Fort Sherman, Idaho, in July 1892, the son of Eli A. Helmick who was an army officer. Charles Helmick entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1909. Shortly before graduation in 1913 he was found to be colorblind. Since this disability precluded a naval career, Helmick was instead appointed a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Field Artillery of the U.S. Army. He served in France with the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion during World War I and later served in a number of field artillery posts in the U.S. During World War II he was the artillery commander of V Corps which participated in the Normandy Invasion. Due to his naval training, Helmick was able to effectively coordinate naval gunfire from the ships off the coast of Normandy until the shore batteries became established. After the war Helmick commanded Fort George Meade, Maryland, from 1945 to 1946, and served as commander of the New England Subarea of the First Army from 1950 to 1952. He retired from the army in July 1952 and died in December 1991, aged 99 years.

The papers of General Helmick are a fragmentary collection which contain few details of his career. The earliest document is a notebook he kept in 1912 while on a training cruise at the U.S. Naval Academy. An interview by his grandson in 1983 contains his recollections of his early life, his training at the Naval Academy, and his early military career, including his service on the Mexican Border and in France during World War I. Information on his later career is given in two brief outlines, one prepared by the Army in 1950 and one prepared by his family after his death.

The bulk of the collection consists of a copy of the memoirs of General Helmick's father, Eli A. Helmick. Eli Helmick graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1888. He served in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, in the Philippines during the Philippine Insurrection, and in France near the end of World War I. He also served at various times with the Inspector General's office. He eventually became a major general and served as Inspector General of the Army from 1921 to 1927. Helmick prepared an account of his life in 1935, titled From Reveille to Retreat. His descendants edited the manuscript for publication and had it copyrighted. The manuscript contains a detailed account of army life in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## CONTAINER LIST

Box No.    Contents

1            Biographical Data

From Reveille to Retreat (1) [chapters 1-3; family background; early life; Kansas State Agricultural College 1880-83; US Military Academy, 1884-88]

From Reveille to Retreat (2) [chapters 4-8; frontier posts in Washington; Indians; Columbian Exposition in Chicago 1893; teaching in Michigan; Fort Reno, Okla.; Spanish-American War; Cuba]

From Reveille to Retreat (3) [chapters 9-11; life in Cuba; transfer to Philippines 1901; Philippine Insurrection]

From Reveille to Retreat (4) [chapters 12-18; Philippines; John J. Pershing; return to US 1903; Alaska; Fort Leavenworth, Kan, 1908-09; Army War College, 1910; Indiana; Texas; Inspector General's office, 1911-13]

From Reveille to Retreat (5) [chapters 19-22; Mexican border, 1914-16; Inspector General's office, 1916-18; General Leonard Wood; command of 8<sup>th</sup> Inf Div, 1918; move to France]

From Reveille to Retreat (6) [chapters 23-26; Brest, France; return to US 1919; Inspector General, 1921-27; essay on leadership at West Point]

Interview 1983

Naval Academy Cruise Diary 1912

END OF CONTAINER LIST