



## Guide to the Robert O. Blood Papers, 1917-1954

### Administrative Information

**Title and Dates:**

Robert O. Blood Papers, 1917-1954

**Repository:**

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

**Collection Number:**

2007.003

**Author of Finding Aid:**

Lorayne Billings

**Creator:**

Blood, Robert O., 1887-1975

**Language:**

The materials in this collection are in English.

**Extent:**

1 box

**Abstract:**

Papers of New Hampshire Governor Robert O. Blood from the period 1917 to 1954. The collection is primarily composed of military orders and records, newspaper clippings, correspondence, and miscellaneous ephemera.

## Access and Use

### **Acquisition Information and Provenance:**

The Robert O. Blood Papers were a gift of Horace S. Blood on September 8, 1997.

### **Processing Information:**

This collection was processed by Lorayne Billings in 2007. The finding aid was written by Lorayne Billings in 2007.

### **Access Restrictions:**

Available for research.

### **Location:**

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

### **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:**

No special physical characteristics or technical requirement exist for this collection.

### **Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:**

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Researchers are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

### **Preferred Citation:**

Item title, Robert O. Blood Papers, 2007.003. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date Accessed.

## Collection Overview

### **Biographical Information/ Administrative Information:**

Robert Oscar Blood was born on November 10, 1887 in Enfield, NH, the son of a farmer and railroad worker. He attended Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Medical School, receiving his M.D. in 1913. He then set up a practice in Wells River, VT, and then Concord, NH, in 1915. He married Pauline Shepard in 1916 and had three children: Robert, Jr., Horace, and Emily.

In August 1917, he enlisted as a lieutenant in the United States Medical Corps and served in a field hospital on the front line as an orthopedic surgeon. He was promoted to Captain in 1918. He was known for his bravery and his surgical skills. He was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross and Croix de Guerre. He was discharged in April 1919 as a Lieutenant-colonel, having served in France with the 26<sup>th</sup> (Yankee) Division. He had been recommended for promotion to Major the month before and he received the promotion in June. He returned to his practice as a surgeon in Concord, a position he then held for 56 years.

Robert Blood entered politics as a Republican in 1935 as a New Hampshire Representative and then as a Senator in 1937. He served as President of the Senate from 1939 to 1940. He was elected Governor in 1940 and reelected in 1942, while also maintaining his full-time medical practice. Blood served as Governor during World War II (1939-1945), a time when war restrictions curbed state spending. During his term he was known for his frugality. He reduced the state debt, leaving the office with a six million dollar surplus.

As Governor, Blood pioneered state travel controls, set up the state Council of Defense, promoted benefits for veterans, initiated the state worker classification system that guaranteed vacation and sick time, made the office of Attorney-General a full-time job, and put the state on a biennial budget. During his frequent travels throughout the state, he was the only governor known to have had a time bed on the rear seat of his car, so he could nap when on long-distance speaking engagements.

Blood tried for a third term for as governor, but was defeated in 1944. He also ran for United States Congress in 1946 but lost to Norris Cotton.

Blood was also active in real estate and dairy business. He held offices in the National Ayrshire Breeders Association, was active in veterans affairs, held religious offices, and held offices in humanitarian agencies. He remained interested in politics and attended every Republican Convention until 1960. Blood died in Concord in 1975 and is buried in Blossom Hill Cemetery.

**Collection Scope and Content Note:**

The Robert O. Blood Papers are composed of items related to Blood's military service and Blood's time as Governor of New Hampshire. The majority of the collection is military material that includes correspondence, orders, and records. There is some correspondence from Blood's time as Governor, which also contains letters and newspaper accounts of the passing of Blood's daughter, Emily, in 1943. There are some miscellaneous documents from after Blood left the Governor's office.

**Arrangement:**

The Robert O. Blood Papers are organized chronologically.

**Contents List**

- Folder 1      Military papers, 1917  
Assignment as Orthopedic Surgeon in the 26<sup>th</sup> Division; itinerary to report to duty in a Field Hospital in France
- Folder 2      Military papers, January – April 1918  
Inventory list of property; report from Robert Blood to Chief Surgeon regarding tour of duty that included mustard gas attacks, methods of care, and delays in the transportation of the wounded; memorandum on treating the wounded for shock
- Folder 3      Military papers, May – August 1918

- Report from Robert Blood on the use of gas masks; reports on gas poisoning; memo on the epidemic of influenza; procedures for a military offensive in battle
- Folder 4 Military papers, September – December 1918  
Receives the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in France
- Folder 5 Military papers, 1919  
Includes service discharge
- Folder 6 Miscellaneous military papers  
Menus, reports from the War Department
- Folder 7 Military promotions
- Folder 8 Correspondence, 1941  
Congratulatory letters on his election to Governor of New Hampshire; mostly New Hampshire related papers and correspondence; some transcriptions of speeches
- Folder 9 Correspondence, 1940, 1942, 1944
- Folder 10 Emily Blood's death related materials, 1943
- Folder 11 Miscellaneous, 1952-1954

## Subject Terms

### **People:**

Blood, Robert O., 1887-1975

### **Organizations:**

New Hampshire. Governor

United States. Army. Infantry Division. 26<sup>th</sup>

### **Subjects:**

World War, 1914-1918

### **Locations:**

Concord, NH

France

### **Occupations:**

Governors.

Physicians.

## Related Materials

The New Hampshire Historical Society holds another collection related to Robert Blood, 2015.005.