

# JOSEPH S. GORDON WORLD WAR I COLLECTION

## OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

<b>Repository:</b>	Crandall Public Library. Folklife Center Glens Falls, NY.
<b>Creator:</b>	William J. Gordon
<b>Title:</b>	Joseph S. Gordon World War I Collection
<b>Dates:</b>	1919; 1940
<b>Abstract:</b>	Two framed World War I items.
<b>Quantity:</b>	Two framed items
<b>Identification:</b>	Archives & Manuscripts: Personal and Family Collections

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Joseph Suraph Gordon was born in Keeseville, NY, on 21 September 1894. He was a son of Moses and Emily Gordon.<sup>1</sup> He was the youngest of his parents' nine surviving children (out of 12). By 1905 the family had moved to Glens Falls. On August 22, 1917, Joseph enlisted at Schenectady in Company K, 2<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry. He served overseas from May 17, 1918 to December 21<sup>st</sup> of that year. He participated in engagements at Dickebusch, Bellicourt, Oisme Risdge and Kimmel Hill. He was wounded severely on September 21, 1918, with shrapnel to the lung. He was returned to the United States on the ship "Baltic" in December 1918 with soldiers "sick and wounded" from "Base section #3, base hospital 204, Hursley, Eng." Nonetheless, at the time of his discharge on January 31, 1919 he was consider 0% disabled.

It is unclear where Joseph Gordon was and what he was doing in the years immediately after the war. Family lore says he went to Russia (with the military?), punched out an officer and was sent to Alcatraz, which was then a military prison. He escaped and was presumed drowned. He was covered by a blanket pardon of veterans issued by President Woodrow Wilson, whereupon he returned to his family.

In 1925 Joseph was living with his widowed mother and his brother Arthur in Fort Edward. Joseph and Arthur were plumbers. He has not been found in the 1930 or 1940

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<sup>1</sup> Family tree on ancestry.com says that the parents were French Canadian and originally known as Moise Godin and Emelia Montagne. This is quite possible, but unconfirmed.

censuses, but in 1942 he was living in Whallonsburg, in Essex County, NY (World War 2 Draft Record).

Returning to family lore, it is said that Mrs. Rose Sturgess, widow of L. Burton Sturgess, was having some work done on her house at 54 Murray Street. She remarked to the plumber (Joseph's brother Ai Gordon), that she had once had a sweetheart whose name was Gordon. The fact that Rose was in Glens Falls, and a widow, was transmitted to Joseph in Essex County and he immediately rushed to Glens Falls. Joseph and Rose were married on 24 December 1946 in Kingsbury, Washington County, NY. They appear to have returned to Essex County, as that is where they died: Rose in 1972, and Joseph in 1980.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE RECORDS**

Two framed items relating to the service of Joseph S. Gordon in World War I.

## **INDEX TERMS**

**Places:** Glens Falls, Warren, NY

**Subjects:** World War I  
Soldiers  
Wounded soldiers  
Company K  
2<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry

**Important People:** Joseph S. Gordon

**Form/Genre:** Framed two-dimensional objects.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Preferred Citation:** Joseph S. Gordon World War I Collection  
The Folklife Center at  
Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls, NY.

**Accession Information:** Donated by William J. Gordon  
399 Buttermilk Falls Rd.  
Fort Ann, NY  
August 7, 2018

**Processing Information:** Arranged and described by Erica Wolfe Burke, 2018.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

1. Framed discharge paper for Joseph S. Gordon. 14 inches x 17 ½ inches. The print was designed by Edwin Howland Blashfield (1847 – 1936). The print was commissioned by President Woodrow Wilson to honor the wounded and fallen soldiers of the World War. It was completed in 1919 and awarded to every soldier that was killed or wounded in action. In essence it was given to every recipient of the Purple Heart. Across the top of the print are the words, “Columbia Gives To Her Son The Accolades Of The New Chivalry Of Humanity”. Next we see Columbia, a woman in flowing robes holding a sword and knighting a Doughboy in combat dress. You can see our flag waving in the background along with other soldiers standing at attention. The print has the artists’ signature with the year 1919 in the lower right corner. At the bottom of the print Joseph S. Gordon’s name and unit are written in calligraphy. Below that the artist wrote “SERVED WITH HONOR IN THE WORLD WAR AND WAS WOUNDED IN ACTION”. It closes with President Wilson’s signature. The backing of the framed print is part of a movie poster, announcing three movies: “Susan & God”; “All This and Heaven Too”; and “No Place to Go.” These films were released in 1939 and 1940.

2. Framed poster “Men Who Answered the Nation’s Call,” 19 ¼ inches x 25 inches. The poster lists the members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry, N.G.U.S., Company K, Home Station-- Glens Falls. Joseph S. Gordon is listed as a private. The list occupies the center of the page, headed by an oval portrait of Woodrow Wilson. Above it is another oval “Left Vacant for Your Picture.” Beneath an arch which says “Soldier’s Memorial” are pictures of men in uniform, a nurse, and Columbia. Surrounding the arch and the list are pictures of soldiers at war: marching, riding horses, driving mules, signaling, boarding a ship, and so on. At the bottom of the sheet is a small banner saying “Copyrighted and published by the Soldier’s Memorial Association, Washington DC.” The backing on this piece is cut from a cardboard poster for Avalon Cigarettes, featuring a sultry dark-haired beauty with a rose in her hair. Avalon cigarettes were introduced in 1921 and sold until 1963.

Warrensburgh Historical Society also has a copy of this poster.