

Researching Papers on the Russian Brigades in the French Military Archives

Written by Guelton Frederic

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Annotation

This article reviews problems connected with storage and organization of SHD fonds containing information on the Russian expeditionary corps in France. There is a large number of documents originating from the Administration of Military Department, the High Command and other French governmental agencies. These documents, kept in about 200 boxes in the Historical Division of the French Ministry of Defense, are, as well as those of the military archives in Russia, integral for remembrance of the Russian soldiers who fought against the enemy on the French territories. This article is the first synopsis of these documents. The documents are organized according to the following three principles: (1) documents are to be arranged in chronological order ; (2) documents that are at some point to be considered 'archives' must be kept by their 'generator', or, in other words, author or sender; (3) documents are to be catalogued according to the 'hierarchical' principle that dominates the classification scheme of archival materials and guarantees qualitative research. The article identifies the types of revealed documents : they range from personal letters and short diplomatic dispatches to big folders with 'political' cases. Documents can be broken up in the following groups: documents in Russian, Russian newspapers and press-cuttings, letters, indexes of names, documents pertaining to military organizations, operational documents, general purpose management documents, military intelligence reports, dispatches and newsletters, prefects' reports and monthly reports of the Public Information Division, notes from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France to the Ministry of Defense of France, folders with completed and directed to ratification office work documents, naturally-occurring assemblage of documents («Russian base» archive in Laval, for example). The fonds also contain materials on the Russian officers and soldiers who decided to serve in the French army, as well as information on the distribution of Russian soldiers between the Russian Legion, work groups, groups sent to Algeria and prisoners incarcerated on Ile-d'Aix. Archival documents for 1919 bear on Soviet

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protests against the Russian brigades participation in the combat operations in Macedonia, on the problems of the Russian brigades repatriation. In the documents of Military Department of France the liabilities of Russian soldiers who entered the Legion are mention, the need to study the differential signs used in Russian Legion and to reseach the fates of the soldiers who stayed in France is stressed.



Keywords

SHD, GQG, Russian expeditionary corps, Archival fonds in Russian and French, World War I, France, Russia

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You can read completely article in the russian historic-archival magazine “The Herald of an Archivist”. Read more about terms of subscription [here](#) .

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