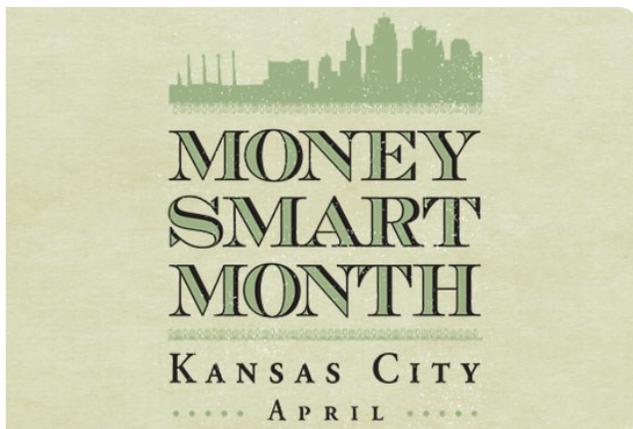


April 2017

Money Smart Month Workshop *Labor Forum: What are Your Pay and Benefit Rights as an Employee?*

April is Money Smart Month and the National Archives, in partnership with the United States Department of Labor, will host a **free workshop** for the public on labor rights **Tuesday, April 11 from Noon - 3:00 p.m.** Experts from the Department of Labor will cover a variety of pay and benefit topics as knowing your rights as a member of the workforce is critical.



Specific areas covered will include: retirement and health benefits, whether your pay is legal under Federal law, tools for evaluating jobs and total compensation packages, and protections for whistleblowers. This free public workshop will equip you with important tips that will enhance your knowledge of your rights when employed by a private employer. **Reservations are required by calling 816-285-1857.**

Kansas City Dreamin': Music in the Shadows Film and Discussion

On **Tuesday, April 25 at 6:30 p.m.**, the National Archives, in partnership with the Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group, will host a film screening and discussion of *Kansas City Dreamin': Music in Shadows*. Post-film discussion will be led by **Diallo French** and special guest, **Bobby Watson**. A free light reception will precede the program at 6:00 p.m.

This new documentary film by local artist Diallo French pays tribute to Kansas City's rich musical heritage. The film centers on jazz legend Bobby Watson and spotlights many black and white music images, while serving to highlight Kansas City's Jazz-era heyday in the 1930s and the importance of Kansas City to the evolution of jazz. The 40-minute film features segments and photos of Kansas City musical natives Charlie Parker, Marva Whitney, Janelle Monae, and Tech N9ne. *This program is presented in partnership with the Greater KC Black History Study Group.*

Reservations are requested for this **free film program** by calling 816-268-8010 or emailing kansascity.educate@nara.gov. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted five business days prior to events.



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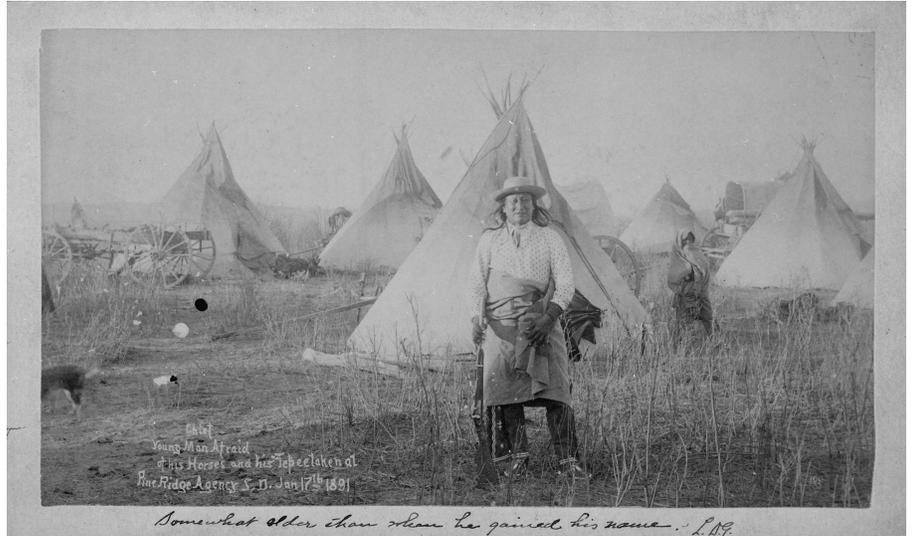
Upcoming Events

Unless noted, all events are held at the National Archives 400 W. Pershing Road Kansas City, MO 64108

- APRIL 4 - ALL DAY:
ELECTION DAY POLLING SITE
- APRIL 6 - ALL DAY:
FACILITY CLOSED
- APRIL 11 - NOON
MONEY SMART MONTH WORKSHOP: KNOW YOUR LABOR RIGHTS WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
- APRIL 25 - 6:30 P.M.
MUSIC DOCUMENTARY AND DISCUSSION: KANSAS CITY DREAMIN': MUSIC IN SHADOWS WITH DIALLO FRENCH AND BOBBY WATSON

News and Notes

- **Tuesday, April 4 - Election Day** - The National Archives at Kansas City will be a polling site on Tuesday, April 4 for school district and municipal ballot issues. Researchers and exhibit visitors should plan accordingly as parking could be limited.
- **Thursday, April 6 - Facility Closed** - The National Archives at Kansas City will be **closed on Thursday, April 6** for special events happening at the National World War I Museum and Memorial. Roads around the Archives, and Union Station District will be blocked for the Centennial Commemoration of the First World War. Live web streaming for this event will be available [here](#).
- **Thursday, April 6 at 6:00 p.m. or 9:00 p.m. (Central Time) - Education Webinar** - Join education staff from the National Archives for a free professional development webinar about bringing Native American viewpoints and primary sources into your lesson plans. Staff will share several simple ways to bring Native American stories, viewpoints, and primary sources into your students' lives. Learn about what is already created that you can just drop into your regular lessons - and what is coming in the near future. This workshop will focus on lessons, primary sources, and examples from the Pine Ridge and Standing Rock Sioux. The National Archives offers a one-hour Professional Development certificate for attending. Some school districts and libraries accept these certificates for required Professional Development credit, check with your district in advance. To register, email distancelearning@nara.gov.
- **Underground Railroad Discussion** - In case you missed the February 27 program about the history and significance of the Underground Railroad, it is now available for viewing on C-SPAN American History channel's web site, [here](#).
- **Primarily Teaching Summer Workshops** - Applications are now being accepted for the National Archives Primarily Teaching Summer Workshops for educators. Several location across the United States will host workshops this summer. Apply online via: <https://www.archives.gov/education/primarily-teaching>



Above: Chief Young Man Afraid of His Horses and his tepee taken at Pine Ridge Agency [Sioux], 1/17/1891. Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, American Indians, 1881 - 1885; National Archives at College Park. National Archives Identifier 533072.

Are you connected to the National Archives at Kansas City?



Due to the increased costs of printing and postage the National Archives will rarely send information through U.S. postal mail. We encourage our patrons to use electronic mail and social media to connect with us. Our Facebook address is www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity. In addition, you can tweet us via Twitter @KCArchives or #KCArchives.



All information about upcoming events and programs is emailed to patrons through our electronic mailing list. If we do not have your address on file, please send an email with your preferred address to kansascity.educate@nara.gov or call 816-268-8000. By providing your address, you grant the National Archives at Kansas City permission to send you information about upcoming exhibitions, special events, and programs. Per the Privacy Act of 1974, we will not share your personal information with third parties.



Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

The Propaganda Paper Distributor

Editorial note: In 2017, the United States will commemorate the 100th anniversary of its involvement in World War I, known as The Great War. Throughout 2017, in each issue of this monthly newsletter, the National Archives at Kanas City will highlight materials from our holdings that illustrate various aspects of the War - either on the home front or abroad.

Toward the end of World War I, the United States Army began testing an unmanned balloon and “propaganda distributing device” that would drop propaganda leaflets over enemy territory. Balloons had been tried before, but with limited success. Airplanes were better for distance, however if an airplane was shot down and the pilot captured, the German government would put the pilot on trial, often with harsh prison sentences given to the pilots.

The testing of the unmanned balloon and propaganda distributing device took place at the Balloon School at Fort Omaha, Nebraska, during the last months of the war. Captain R. C. Pierce was tasked with creating a device that would drop sheets of paper behind enemy lines. When the unmanned balloon landed it would self-destruct, destroying the balloon and everything on board.

On September 17, 1918, Lt. Colonel H. B. Hersey of the Signal Corps stationed with the U. S. Army Balloon School, Fort Omaha, Nebraska wrote to the Director of Military Aeronautics a letter explaining how hard it would be to create an unmanned balloon carrying a propaganda distributing machine.

On November 5th, 1918, Lt. Colonel W. S. Wuest of the Signal Corps stationed with the U. S. Army Balloon School, Fort Omaha, Nebraska, wrote to the Director of Military Aeronautics giving a detailed explanation of the device created by Capt. Pierce. He wrote, “The paper distributor is actuated by a weight motor, the weight of the paper and device unwinding on wire suspensions furnishing the power. The time of starting the paper distribution and the speed of the distribution is controlled by the clock shown. The device weighs ten pounds but when equipped with water proof cover and hand grenade, weighs fifteen pounds.”

A report from pilot A. Leo Stevens dated November 22, 1918, tells of the test flight of the device. The report notes, “The ‘Propaganda Paper Distributor’ seemed to work perfect in every respect and there was sufficient printing matter left to have lasted 3 hours longer.” Unfortunately, the “Sand Box Altitude Control” did not work quite as well and stopped working after the first hour. It was discovered that “the batteries had weakened, making it impossible to collect any more data.”

A second test was completed by Stevens on November 24, 1918. The report states, “The object of this flight was to test out the ‘Pierce Sand Box Altitude Control.’ We remained in the air for 6 hours and 15 minutes and found that during this entire time that the “‘Altitude Sand Box Control’ worked well in every respect.”

Upon the war’s end the balloon testing program stopped. A memorandum from Stevens sent to Colonel A.L. Fuller at the Department of Military Aeronautics dated November 30, 1918 states, “As requested by the Department, I have discontinued all experiments with ‘Propaganda Balloons’.” Stevens also noted that the remaining balloon supply inventory could be used for training and testing during peace time.

After the war, former Captain of the Air Service R. C. Pierce would improve the “Propaganda Distributing Device” into an advertising gimmick. It never caught on for extensive use due to the expanded availability of airplanes. For more information about the U.S. Army Balloon School records, visit the [National Archives Catalog](#).

(Continued on next page.)

2061-a

C.O., U.S. Army Balloon School, Ft. Omaha, Nebr., Sept. 17, 1918, - To: Director of Military Aeronautics, (Training Section, Balloon Branch).

1. Returned. The propaganda balloon question presents more difficulties than would appear at first even to an experienced balloonist. A man who has never worked with balloons would probably have no realization of the difficulties to be overcome in securing a successful literature distributing balloon. Experience has shown that even with an experienced pilot in a free balloon that it requires constant care and the exercise of good judgment to remain a long time in the air. From this it will be seen that some mechanical arrangement must be devised which will take the place of well trained human judgment in keeping the balloon at the proper altitude for a long journey.
2. In addition to this there is the easier problem, but still one which represents quite a number of difficulties, and that is the proper distribution of the literature.
3. It will, I believe, require quite a considerable amount of experimentation in order to get a balloon and outfit which will carry on this work in a satisfactory manner.
4. If it is desired to have us take up this work here at Fort Omaha we will be glad to do it and I presume that we are as well fitted for handling it as any station in the service. If, however, it is being satisfactorily taken care of we have no desire to take any work away from others now engaged in it.

H. B. HERSEY
Lieutenant Colonel, Signal Corps.

Above: Letter from Colonel Hersey in regard to the difficulties of an unmanned balloon. Record Group 18, Records of the War Department, Air Service, U.S. Army Balloon School, Fort Omaha, Nebraska, General Correspondence, 1918-1921, Folder 2061 -A Propaganda Balloons, National Archives at Kansas City. National Archives Identifier 617494.

We remained in the air for 6 hours and 15 minutes and found that during this entire time that the "Altitude Sand Box Control" worked well in every respect.

The only thing that might get out of order in a device of this kind is the magnet or batteries, but if those batteries were properly tested before sending the balloon away there is no reason why the outfit should not work.

The "Sand Box" is a little large for the purpose for which it is adapted and considerable weight could be saved by making this smaller and not carrying as much sand.

Captain Pierce is of the opinion that the balloon for carrying his combination of devices for sand and printing matter should be 6,000 ft. and this is what he had in mind at the time of laying out this first work.

It has already been decided that the proper size balloon is 20 ft. in diameter of about 4300 cu. ft. and on this account it would be an easy matter to utilize the same fixture but make the apparatus smaller. But as I had stated before this will depend upon the making up of this "Pierce Sand Box Control" and Distributor.

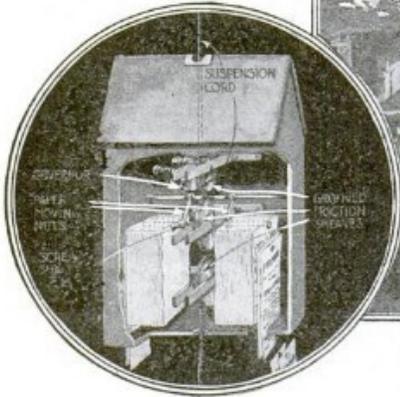
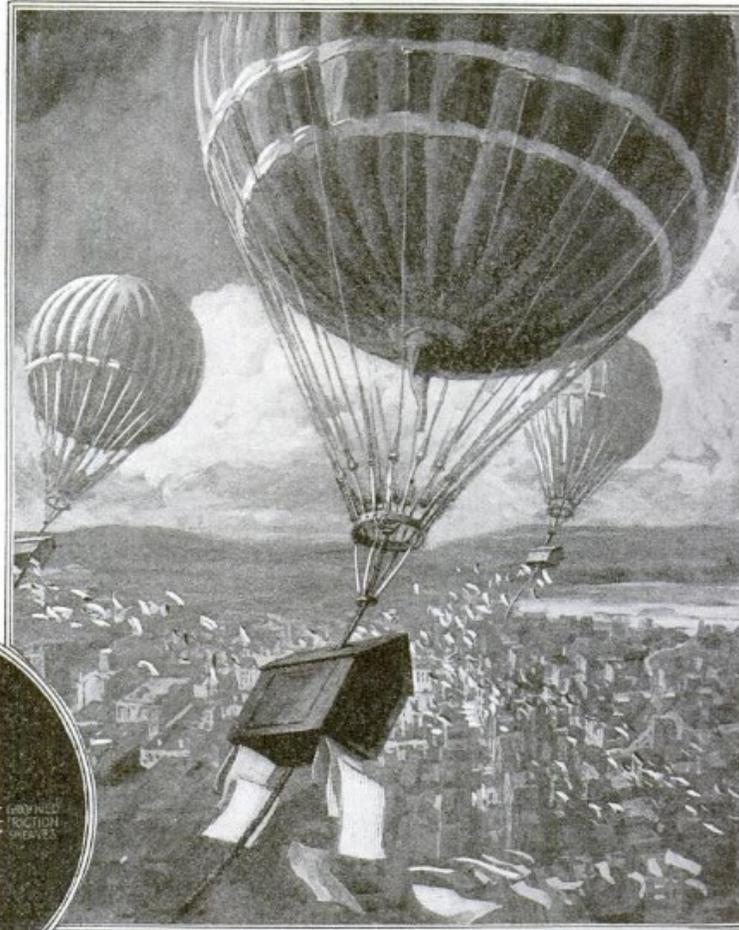
I have asked for quotations from local manufactures and will report upon receiving same.

Above: A second report from Pilot Stevens in regard to testing the Pierce Sand Box Altitude Control. Record Group 18, Records of the War Department, Air Service, U.S. Army Balloon School, Fort Omaha, Nebraska, General Correspondence, 1918-1921, Folder 2327-A Propaganda Paper Distributor and Sand Box Altitude Control, National Archives at Kansas City. National Archives Identifier 617494.

Automatic Pilot Controls Advertising Balloon

Small balloons, each equipped with a device for dropping sheets of paper over the countryside, and controlled by automatic pilots that throw out ballast in the form of printed matter whenever the balloons start to descend, may soon be used in political and advertising campaigns. The mechanism is the invention of R. C. Pierce, of New York City, a former captain in the United States Army Air Service.

The automatic piloting and distributing device is interfunctioning. The pilot consists of a tight case containing a small gas holder. An increase in atmospheric pressure as the balloon descends, forces down a ball in the gas holder, closing an electric circuit and throw-



As the distributing device travels down the suspension cord, revolving shafts feed sheets of advertising matter through slots in the bottom of the box. Meanwhile an automatic pilot checks the balloon's descent when necessary by throwing out paper ballast

ing in a clutch. This clutch causes a ballast shaft carrying printed matter to rotate one revolution, releasing sufficient ballast to check the descent. At the same time the electrical contact opens a magnetic valve and restores the pressure equilibrium within the automatic pilot.

Included in the box that contains the automatic pilot is the distributing mechanism loaded with 80 pounds of printed matter and attached to a 300-foot cord hanging from the balloon by friction rollers, which grip the cord. At the start, the box is within a few inches of the balloon. After release, it constantly travels down the rope by the influence of its own weight. The rate of descent along the cord is controlled by a small centrifugal governor connected with the rollers.

Turning with the rollers are shafts, threaded right and left, on which is hung the material to be distributed. Rotation of the shafts causes the paper to feed off the ends and down through slots in the bottom of the device at the rate of 20 a minute.

To distribute a full load of propaganda and bring the device to the end of the suspension cord, takes about eight hours. The distance covered depends on the wind.

Above: Image from an August 1922 issue of *Popular Science Monthly* magazine. The image above is similar to what the balloon device tested by the United States Army would have resembled. The magazine also mentions U.S. Army Captain R.C. Pierce as the inventor in the article. Image courtesy of Google Books.



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

KANSAS CITY

GENERAL INFORMATION: The National Archives is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed on weekends and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather. The National Archives is located at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108.

The National Archives at Kansas City is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/kansas-city. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity. Tweet us @KCArchives or #KCArchives.