

UA1980.38

Dorr E. Felt Collection

“Our Country First” Conference

Dates: 1919-1924, Undated (Bulk 1919)

Creator: Felt, Dorr E. (1862-1930)

Extent: 0.25 linear feet

Level of description: Folder

Processor & date: Brooke Sutter, September 2016

Administration Information

Restrictions: No restrictions.

Copyright: Consult Archivist for information.

Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Archives and Special Collections. *Dorr E. Felt Clipping Collection: Our Country First Conference, September 8, 1919*. Box #, Folder.

Provenance: Records transferred to Loyola University Archives in November 1955 by Raymond Koch, son-in-law of Dorr Felt and then president of Felt and Tarrant Mfg. Co.

Separations: No separations.

See Also: Dorr E. Felt Collection – United States Employers’ Commission to Europe, 1918-1920; Dorr E. Felt Collection – World War I, 1909-1930; Dorr E. Felt Collection – International Trade and Labor Conferences, 1919-1921; Dorr E. Felt Collection – Felt and Tarrant Manufacturing Records, 1916-1926; Dorr Felt Collection – Bolshevism, 1918-1931

Biographical Sketch

Dorr Eugene Felt was born in Rock County, Wisconsin on March 18, 1862. At fourteen he began working in a machine shop in Beloit, Wisconsin. He moved to Chicago in 1882 and obtained work as a mechanic. A perceptive and skilled worker with an entrepreneurial spirit, in his free time Felt devised and constructed a computation device out of such crude materials as a macaroni box, rubber bands, and metal skewers. Felt called the machine a Comptometer. A mechanical calculator, the Comptometer was the first mechanical calculator to greatly improve upon the first mechanical computing device created, the arithmometer, which was first commercially distributed in 1851. Felt opened Felt and Tarrant Manufacturing Company with Chicago businessman Robert Tarrant in 1889; a large manufacturing facility in Chicago, out of which he built and sold Comptometers. The Comptometer computing device became a great commercial success and was sold and used world-wide. Felt went on to invent more devices and acquired 46 domestic patents and 25 foreign patents.

As a result of Felt’s experience as president of a large industrial company, he was asked by the U.S. Department of Labor to participate in a study of labor relations in Europe. Joining a team of other individuals from the United States, Felt toured England and France in order to examine manufacturing facilities and to speak with owners, managers, and laborers about the successes and frustrations of labor conditions in the two countries. The results of the commission’s inquiries were reported and published, but more importantly this trip marked the beginning of Felt’s close involvement with national

and international trade and labor interests. Felt attended and spoke at labor conferences and wrote about labor conditions, unions, communism, Bolshevism, and other labor-related subjects.

In addition to writing and speaking on broad topics, Felt held posts as president and director of the Illinois Manufacturers Association, president of the Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution, and director of the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1920. Felt was a regional advisor on the War Industries Board in 1918, a board member of the Chicago Association of Commerce, and a member of Chicago's Union League Club.

Scope and Content

The "Our Country First" Conference section of the Dorr E. Felt Collection consists of 0.25 linear feet and spans the years 1919 to 1924. The records consist of correspondence, notes, conference materials, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and publications. Subjects covered include agriculture, commerce, industry, government, and the creation of a cohesive, anti-communist political stance among businessmen, manufacturers, and laborers. Arrangement is chronological.

Series

Series 1: Correspondence, August-October 1919. Box 1

This series consists of letters and telegrams both to and from Felt. Additionally, the series contains a single business card and newspaper article, the latter of which is addressed in at least one of the letters. Subject matter mainly pertains to the "Our Country First" conference and topics addressed by the conference.

Series 2: Notes, undated. Box 1

This series consists of handwritten notes taken by Felt on matters relating to topics discussed at the "Our Country First" conference. Topics include finance, labor, and government.

Series 3: Conference Materials, August-October 1919. Box 1

This series consists of invitations to, programs from, and drafts of Felt's speech given at the "Our Country First" conference. Also included are copies of the declaration of the conference's purpose/goals, as well as Felt's attendee badge. Finally, the series contains a scrapbook of articles that address the conference.

Series 4: Pamphlets, August 1919. Box 1

This series contains pamphlets concerning topics such as labor, commerce, and government.

Series 5: Newspaper Clippings, September 1919-January 1924. Box 1

This series contains newspaper articles with anti-communist sentiments. Many of the article discuss the "Our Country First" conference, or mention Felt's role in the conference. Others simply address subjects—like politics, trade, and labor—that align with focuses of the conference.

Series 6: Publications, September-October 1919

This series consists of journals primarily concerned with agriculture and manufacturing. Included are several copies of the *Manufacturers' News* issue that focuses greatly on the "Our Country First" conference.

Subjects:

Agriculture

Anti-communism

Felt, Dorr E.

Labor

Illinois Manufacturers' Association

Industry

Manufacturing

"Our Country First" Conference

Politics/legislation on matters of trade and industry

Accession No.: UA1980.38

Creator: Felt, Dorr E. (1862-1930)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
		<u>Series 1: Correspondence, Aug.-Oct. 1919</u>	
1	1	Correspondence	Aug.-Oct. 1919
		<u>Series 2: Notes, no date</u>	
1	2	Notes	Undated
		<u>Series 3: Conference Materials, Aug.-Oct. 1919</u>	
1	3	Conference Materials	Aug.-Oct. 1919
		<u>Series 4: Pamphlets, Aug. 1919</u>	
1	4	Pamphlets	Aug. 1919
		<u>Series 5: Newspaper Clippings, Sept. 1919-Jan. 1924</u>	
1	5	Newspaper clippings	Sept. 1919-Jan. 1924
		<u>Series 6: Publications, Sept.-Oct. 1919</u>	
1	6	1 st National Bank of Boston: New England Letter	1919
1	7	<u>Manufacturer's News</u>	1919
1	8	<u>American Cooperative Journal</u>	1919