

University of Waterloo Library. Special Collections & Archives.

**Harry Byers fonds : 2018 accrual.  
(GA389)**

## Summary information

**Physical description:** 4 cm of textual records. - 16 coins. - 5 photographs. - 1 printing plate. - 1 metal axe ornament

**Immediate source of acquisition:** Donated in 2018 by Jean Grenier

## Scope and content

Materials relating to the personal and professional life of Harry J. Byers. Includes photographs, coins, artefacts, correspondence, ephemera and more. Most of the items relate to Byers' time working in Russia from 1930-1931.

## Collection holdings

### Series 1: Personal.

**Date:** 1924-1931 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** Materials relating to the personal life of Harry J. Byers. Includes correspondence, ephemera, clippings, etc.

#### File 1: Address book.

**Date:** [ca. 1903] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One address book kept by Harry J. Byers. Includes lists of names and addresses of friends in North America as well as those met overseas. Also includes financial notes, Russian language translation notes, menus, etc.

#### File 2: Clipping.

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One clipping from the Kitchener-Waterloo Record advertising a talk to be given by Harry J. Byers on his time in Russia.

#### File 3: Correspondence : Byers, Harry J. to Boyers, John

**Date:** October 29, 1929 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One item of correspondence from Harry J. Byers to John Boyers (his father in law) dated October 29, 1929. In the letter Harry mentions that he and Violet have recently married and their plans to head to Russia for work.

#### File 4: Cunard Line menu.

**Date:** November 28, 1929 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One menu from the Cunard Line for a dinner held November 18, 1929. In attendance were Harry and Violet Byers as well as Mr and Mrs E. Poulson, Mr R. Robertson, Mr D. Lister and Mr J.M. Carlyle.

**File 5: Diary.**

**Date:** 1930-1931 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** Diary maintained by Harry J. Byers during his time in Russia from 1930-1931. The diary is titled "Mile stones a five year diary", is ring-bound, and has ca. 202 one-sided leaves, with two days per leaf. The diary includes daily entries detailing general activities, conditions in Russia, places Harry and Violie Byers stayed, meals, sickness and health, agricultural details, how the Grain Trust Russian Five Year Plan was going, details of social activities and events, notes from friends, lists of books read while in Russia, and lists of names and addresses of acquaintances. Some entries are written by Harry's wife violet and a few include words in Russian.

**File 6: Hamburg-Amerika Linie farewell dinner programme.**

**Date:** October 15, 1931 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One programme for a farewell dinner aboard the S.S. New York of the Hamburg-Amerika Line held Thursday, October 15, 1931. The programme lists the menu and musical entertainment and has been signed by others on the ship.

**File 7: Passport.**

**Date:** November 12, 1929 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One United States passport for Harry J. Byers and his wife Violet Byers. In the passport Harry is described as being 6 feet tall, having light brown hair and blue eyes, and a tattoo on his right arm. The passport also includes a photograph of Harry and Violet and visa stamps from countries they visited including Russia, Poland, Germany and the United States.

**File 8: Postcard : cooperation holiday in the country.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard of a cooperation holiday in the country. Image shows a painting of coloured print of a celebration with people gathered outside with signs and what appears to be a picture of Lenin. Verso is blank.

**File 9: Postcard : danses oukrayennes.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard with the painting "evening party" by Ilya Repin. Verso is blank.

**File 10: Postcard : Harry Byers and John [Giger] with horse drawn cart.**

**Date:** [191-] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One photographic postcard of two men (Harry Byers and John [Giger]) with a horse drawn cart. The verso reads "Caroline. That is John [Giger] in Michigan. A good fat for me."

**File 11: Postcard : Les rivaies.**

**Date:** May 13, 1930 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard with the painting "rivals" by Nikolay Kasatkin. Verso reads "Dear Mother, May 13, this picture is so real I just had to send it. It looks just exactly like the village we lived in the far east & the women are just almost real. I'm feeling better mother, will be moving again in about

2 weeks. Violie will write in a few days. We send love. H &V" The letter is addressed to Mrs. Albert Scherbarth, West Monkton, Ontario, Canada.

**File 12: Postcard : Old Inn in Berlin.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard reading "Alte Schanke OLD INN Weinhandlung inh. Erich Haupt. Berlin W8. Unted den Linden 16. Telefon Zentrum 2736." Image shows the interior of a pub. Verso is blank

**File 13: Postcard : Potsdam Schloss Sanssouci.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard showing a photograph of the Sanssouci palace in Potsdam. Verso is blank.

**File 14: Postcard : Russian worker.**

**Date:** February 2, 1931 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One postcard with Cyrillic writing on the front and an image of a draftsman working at a desk. Verso reads "Hello Jack, well we have been home for the last 4 days and it is sure H-. Leaving today for Valavodstok [Vladivostok?]. Had one hell of a trip on the train also had a wreck but they did not shoot the engineer. Best Regards, Kelly.

**File 15: Printing plate.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One printing plate used in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record of St. Basil's Cathedral.

**File 16: State of Kansas, County of Leavenworth appointment as Justice of the Peace.**

**Date:** November 7, 1924 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One certificate from the State of Kansas, County of Leavenworth, appointing Harry Byers as a Justice of the Peace.

**File 17: Valentine card.**

**Date:** [193-?] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One die cut valentine card of a woman holding a suitcase reading "ay ban gude girrul wit lotsa it, yu betcha."

**Series 2: Photographs and realia.**

**Date:** 1767-[ca. 1986] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** Photographs and realia created and collected by Harry J. Byers. Includes coins and banknotes, photographs of Harry with family and friends and more. Most of the materials were created or collected during Harry's time in Russia.

**File 18: [Payarkous?], Helen : photograph.**

**Date:** December 25, 1930 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One snapshot of Helen [Payarkous]. Verso reads "Our maid, Helen [Payarkous]. Siberia xmas present 1930."

**File 19: Bank of China Kalgan Branch one dollar bank note.**

**Date:** June 1, 1912 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One one dollar bank note from the Bank of China Kalgan Branch, dated June 1, 1912.

**File 20: Bank of Manchuria 5 cent banknote.**

**Date:** April 1, 1923 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One 5 cent banknote from the Bank of Manchuria, dated April 1, 1923.

**File 21: British one penny bronze coin.**

**Date:** [ca. 1886] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One British one penny bronze coin.

**File 22: Byers, Harry J. and group : photograph.**

**Date:** December 25, 1930 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One snapshot of Harry J. Byers with a group of unidentified other men. Verso reads "Xmas Day [Verblude]. Harry Byers - instructor in Siberia."

**File 23: Byers, Harry J. and Violet : photograph.**

**Date:** 1930 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One snapshot of Harry J. Byers and Violet used for their passport. Verso reads "This is our pass port picture, I was sore at the bird who snapped this. Funny looking out fit. Vi looks funnier than me. Don't tell her I told you. PS Look at my chin. 1930"

**File 24: Byers, Harry J. and Violet : photograph.**

**Date:** November 19, 1930 (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One snapshot of Harry and Violet Byers. Violet is in bed while Harry leans over her. Verso reads "Nov. 19, 1930 Nikolsk, Far East. Harry and Vi Byers."

**File 25: Byers, Jim and Shirley : photograph.**

**Date:** [ca. 1946] (date of creation)

**Scope and content:** One snapshot of Jim and Shirley Byers, children of Harry and Violet Byers. Verso reads " Jim 4 yrs & Shirley 3 yrs. Jim Jan 20/1942 Shirley April 3/1943. Harry & Violet Byers (parents)."

**File 26: Canada one penny bronze coin.****Date:** 1917 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Canadian one penny bronze coin.**File 27: French 1 franc aluminum-bronze coin.****Date:** 1927 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One French 1 franc aluminum-bronze coin.**File 28: Fung-Tien Province 10 cash brass coin.****Date:** [ca. 1905] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Chinese 10 cash brass coin from Fengtien [Liaoning].**File 29: German 1 rentenpfenning bronze coin.****Date:** 1923 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One German 1 rentenpfenning bronze coin.**File 30: German 10 rentenpfenning aluminum-bronze coin.****Date:** 1934 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One German 10 rentenpfenning aluminum-bronze coin.**File 31: German 5 rentenpfenning aluminum-bronze coin.****Date:** 1924 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One German 5 rentenpfenning aluminum-bronze coin.**File 32: Japanese 1 sen copper coin.****Date:** [ca. 1890] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Japanese 1 sen copper coin from the Meiji Period.**File 33: Kuang Hsin Syndicate of Heilungkiang [Heilongjiang] 20 cent bank note.****Date:** 1929 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One 20 cent banknote from the Kuang Hsin Syndicate of Heilongjiang, dated 1929.**File 34: Latvian 2 santini bronze coin.****Date:** 1926 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Latvian 2 santini bronze coin.

**File 35: Metal axe ornament.****Date:** [ca. 1930] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One small metal axe ornament made by Harry J. Byers.**File 36: Polish 5 groszy brass coin.****Date:** 1923 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Polish 5 groszy brass coin.**File 37: Russian 2 kopek copper coin.****Date:** 1916 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Russian 2 Kopek copper coin.**File 38: Russian 5 kopek coin.****Date:** 1767 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Russian 5 Kopek coin.**File 39: Tai-Ching-Ti-Kuo 20 cash copper coin.****Date:** 1906 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Chinese 20 cash copper coin.**File 40: Tausend Mark Reichsbanknote.****Date:** September 15, 1922 (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Tausend Mark banknote from the Weimar Republic, dated September 15, 1922.**File 41: Thailand 1 baht copper-nickel coin.****Date:** [ca. 1986] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** Two Thai 1 baht copper-nickel coins.**File 42: The Japanese Government one peso.****Date:** [ca. 1943] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Japanese government issued Philippine fiat peso.**File 43: Tiffin half penny brass token.****Date:** [ca. 1832] (date of creation)**Scope and content:** One Canadian Tiffin imitation half penny token. Was produced by Montreal grocer Tiffin and was not legal tender.