Finding Aid for the Wiliam Fee Second World War Correspondence 2014.050.w.r

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: Center for American War Letters Archives

Title: William Fee Second World War Correspondence

source: Fee, George

Identifier/Call Number: 2014.050.w.r

Physical Description: 1.25 Linear Feet (3 document boxes)

Date (inclusive): 1943-1946

Physical Description: Letters are in good condition. Some have light pencil markings, written by the donor, during the postwar years.

Abstract: This collection contains correspondence by William "Bill" Fee PFC (private first class) and his parents, Dwight and Lucille Fee, during his service with the United States Army, 11th Armored Division, during World War II.

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Storage Unit: 1-2

Storage Unit: WWII 3

Preferred Citation

[Item title], William Fee World War Two correspondence (2014.050.w.r), Center for American War Letters, Chapman University, CA.

Conditions Governing Use

There are no restrictions on the use of this material except where previously copyrighted material is concerned. It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain all permissions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of the Fee family.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains 892 letters and correspondence from William "Bill" Fee and his parents, Dwight and Lucille Fee, during his service with the United States Army, 11th Armored Division, during World War II. Letters between William and his father make up the bulk of this collection, however this collection also includes letters from Dwight Fee, written to William's commanding officers and higher ranking military brass.

In William's letters, he writes about his daily experiences training for combat and his life in the Army. William also takes time to answer multiple questionnaires from his father, concerning many aspects of life in the service. Topics include weapons, tactics, supplies, uniforms and training routines.

William was wounded on March 6, 1945, when a nearby land mine exploded, while advancing his light machinegun up a hill, at night. He sustained a half-dozen slight wounds and one major wound in the groin, from shrapnel. He received treatment in England and at the Woodrow Wilson hospital, in Virginia. He was discharged from the hospital on September 20, 1945, but did not return to active duty.

Included in this collection is a transcription of a retrospective diary, written by William Fee, titled "With the Eleventh Armored Division in the Battle of the Bulge". In this diary, Fee gives a detailed account of his experience as a PFC (private first class), in the light machine gun squad of the 55th Armored Infantry Battalion, 11th Armored Division. This diary recounts the Ardennes campaign, December 1944 through January 1945. The diary focuses on the 11th Armored Divisions time in combat and provides some additional details of William's military deployment.

Arrangement

The William Fee World War Two correspondence collection is arranged by material type, author and recipient, in chronological order.

Series 1, Correspondence from William Fee (1943 - 1945)
Series 2, Correspondence to William Fee (1943 - 1945)
Series 3, Correspondence to Dwight Fee (1945)
Series 4, Miscellaneous papers and documents (1943 - 1946)

Subjects and Indexing Terms

World War, 1939-1945
World War II
Fee, Dwight -- Correspondence
Fee, George
Fee, William -- Correspondence
Fee, Lucille -- Correspondence

Series 1, Correspondence from William Fee. 1943-1945

Physical Description: 0.63 Linear Feet (8 folders)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence from William Fee. The bulk of the material is addressed to his father Dwight Fee and discusses William's daily routines in the Army. This series contains letters and casual notes, hand drawn diagrams and a few magazines clippings. Subjects of conversation include, training with an assortment of weapons, types of drills, various training exercises, deployment to France and recovery from being wounded.

Of interest are a series of hand-written notes by William Fee, comparing weapons specifications and training practices for different types of weapons. For example, Fee compares the older style Thompsons model 1921 A1 and M1 sub-machineguns to the newer style M3 Grease Gun. Topics such as weight, rate of fire, magazine capacity and overall layout are discussed. These can be found in folders 4 and 5 in box 1.

Also of interest are the letters from William concerning his recovery process while in the hospital after being wounded by a landmine.

Box 1:
Folder 1 July 1943 - Oct. 1943
Folder 2 Nov. 1943 - Dec. 1943
Folder 3 Jan. 1944 - Mar. 1944
Folder 4 April 1944 - July 1944 Folder 5 Aug. 1944 - Oct. 1944

Box 2:
Folder 1 Jan. 1945 - June. 1945
Folder 2 July 1945 - Sept. 1945
Folder 3 Nov. 1945 - Dec. 1945

Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945 -- Battlefields -- France
World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- France -- Normandy.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Equipment and supplies

Series 2, Correspondence to William Fee. 1945

Physical Description: 0.25 Linear Feet (5 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence to William Fee. The bulk of the material was written by his father Dwight Fee and concentrates on gathering information on William's daily routines and his life in the Army.

Being a former infantry soldier in the First World War, Dwight spends the bulk of these letters sending typed questionnaires and asking for information regarding his son's current training practices, weapons, gear and procedures. He makes numerous comparisons of his days as a foot soldier and the newer practices of the U.S. Army in the 1940s.

This series also contains letters from Dwight regarding Williams recovery after being wounded from an exploding landmine.


Box 3: Folder 1 July 1944 - Dec. 1944 Folder 2 Jan. 1945 - Sept. 1945
Series 2, Correspondence to William Fee. 1945

Finding Aid for the William Fee Second World War Correspondence 2014.050.w.r

Series 3, Correspondence to Dwight Fee. June 1945

Physical Description: 0.2 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence written to Dwight Fee from his wife Lucille Fee during their son William's hospital recovery, in June of 1945.
In these letters, Lucille keeps Dwight up-to-date on William's condition.
Of interest is one Father's Day card sent to Dwight Fee, in 1945.
Box 3: Folder 3 June 1945

Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945 -- Hospitals

Series 4, William Fee Retrospective Diary. 1944-1945

Physical Description: 0.2 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains a transcription of a retrospective diary, written by William Fee, titled "With the Eleventh Armored Division in the Battle of the Bulge". In this diary, Fee gives a detailed account of his experience as a PFC (private first class), in the light machine gun squad of the 55th Armored Infantry Battalion, 11th Armored Division. This diary recounts the Ardennes campaign, December 1944 through January 1945. The diary focuses on the 11th Armored Divisions time in combat and provides some additional details of William's military deployment.
Box 3:
Folder 4

Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945 -- Equipment and supplies
World War, 1939-1945 -- Battlefields -- France

Series 5, Correspondence and Documents - Miscellaneous

Physical Description: 0.2 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence and documents of the Fee family. The majority of these correspondence deal with William Fee's Army service and promotion as well as the wounds he sustained in March of 1945.
This series also includes letters from Dwight Fee, written to William Fee's commanding officers and higher ranking military brass associated with the army infantry.
Box 3:
Folder 5 Jan. 1943 - Mar. 1946

Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945 -- Public opinion
World War, 1939-1945 -- Homefront