Finding Aid for the Robert Benjamin Fugate World War Two Correspondence 2014.149.wc.r

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Center for American War Letters Archives
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**Language of Material:** English
**Contributing Institution:** Center for American War Letters Archives
**Title:** Robert Benjamin Fugate Second World War Correspondence
**source:** Lantz, Matthew
**creator:** Fugate, Robert Benjamin
**Identifier/Call Number:** 2014.149.wc.r
**Physical Description:** 0.05 Linear Feet (1 folder)
**Date (inclusive):** 1941-1946

**Abstract:** This collection contains a bound booklet of 33 photocopied letters between Lt. Robert Fugate and his parents. Fugate served in the Philippines, surviving Bataan and a P.O.W. camp before being killed in a Manila Bay bombing.

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**Storage Unit:** Copies 1

**Biographical / Historical**
Information on Robert Benjamin Fugate, written by the donor: "My great uncle, Robert Fugate, participated in World War II. We have his letters and I would like to donate copies to your project (I can’t seem to find the originals). Robert was from Brazil, Indiana (20 miles west of Terre Haute) and was the first person in my family to graduate from college (Purdue class of 1940). The letters are to my great grandparents and begin in June 1941 from Ohio, where he is a second lieutenant in the US Marine Corp (4th Marine Regiment, D Company 1st Battalion). The letters follow him across country to San Francisco (one is on beautiful Sir Francis Drake Hotel letterhead) to Hawaii to the Philippines where he is stationed starting in the summer of 1941. They describe life in the Philippines on a US Marine base. The last letter is dated a week before December 7, 1941 (this got through). "The letters then transition to my great grandmother writing him in the Philippines first expressing concern about him and the attack and then just general concern. All of these letters are returned undeliverable. "The final two documents are a letter to my great grandfather at the end of the war from a friend saying although the world is rejoicing, I know you are not, and a letter from American Express settling an insurance claim with Robert’s death. "Robert was taken prisoner by the Japanese. He survived the Bataan Death March and was held prisoner for four years by the Japanese at Davao Penal Colony (POW Barracks) - PMPC #2 on Mindinao. He was killed after he was put on a Japan ship in the Philippines to move him to Japan to be force labor and the US bombed the ship in Manila Harbor. They did not know US POWs were on the ship. Hampton Sides writes about this incident in Ghost Soldiers. We know this because a fellow POW visited my great grandparents and grandmother on his way back to Brooklyn to explain what happened. He apparently died in transport after the bombing."

**Scope and Contents**
Bound booklet contains:
1 program, 1940 Purdue University Commencement Ceremony 23 letters, Robert B. Fugate to Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fugate 9 letters, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fugate to Robert B. Fugate 1 letter, Rinn Kidd to Ben Fugate 1 funeral script, Brazil Methodist Parish 1 letter, American Express to the Brazil Trust Company re: Robert B. Fugate

Early camp letters before deployment to the Phillipines are cheerful and informative, with Fugate seemingly excited about his service. He is happy with his service in Manila, giving lighthearted details about sights and weather, even telling his parents he is "having a wonderful time." Of particular note is a letter to Fugate's father from a friend, expressing his condolences for the death of Fugate in 1945.

**Arrangement**
The entire collection is bound in a booklet. Letters within are arranged first by author, then chronologically.

**Conditions Governing Access**
This collection is open for research.

**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 Matthew and Ben Lantz.

**Preferred Citation**
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945
Lantz, Matthew
Fugate, Robert Benjamin