Finding Aid for the William S. Harker Second World War correspondence collection. 2016.121.w.r

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Center for American War Letters Archives
06/22/2016
Leatherby Libraries
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URL: http://www1.chapman.edu/library/archives/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Center for American War Letters Archives
Title: William S. Harker Second World War correspondence
creator: Harker, William S.
creator: Harker, Lois
source: Cowell, Jean
Identifier/Call Number: 2016.121.w.r
Physical Description: .75 Linear feet(1.5 document boxes).
Date (inclusive): 1937 - 1948
Date (bulk): 1937 - 1948
Abstract: This collection contains correspondence and records relating to Sgt. William S. Harker. According to information provided by the donor, Harker was a medic in the Army Air Corps during World War II.
Leatherby Libraries.
Storage Unit: 1-2
Content Description
This collection contains letters and other correspondence written by Sergeant William S. Harker, his wife Lois, their parents, and Sgt. Harker's sister Elvina, with the bulk of correspondence between 1944 and 1945. The letters were written while Sgt. Harker was stationed at Randolph Field in Texas, at the Army Air Base in Blythe, California and at the Army Air Field in Walla Walla, WA. Documents indicate that Lois was also stationed at Blythe for a period. An item in Series 10 says that Lois Harker was secretary to the officer in charge of the Base Signal Office. One letter from 1945 is also written from Hofen, Germany, although it is unclear if it is from Sgt. Harker. According to information provided by the donor, Sgt. Harker was a medic in the Army Air Corps. The letters describe life on the bases, as well as life in Hawarden, Iowa, where William and Lois were born and raised. In her letters, Lois describes her work at the drug store in Hawarden. The letters also describe life on the homefront during World War II, particularly pertaining to rationed items. One letter that addresses rationing is in Series 2. It is from Sgt. Harker's sister Elvina and is postmarked April 9, 1943.
Arrangement
This collection is arranged by material type, author, and date. Series 1: Correspondence between Sgt. William Harker and Lois Harker -- Series 2: Correspondence between Sgt. William Harker and family members -- Series 3: Other correspondence with William Harker -- Series 4: Correspondence between Lois Harker and family members -- Series 5: Other correspondence with Lois Harker -- Series 6: Other correspondence -- Series 7: Personal records of Sgt. Harker -- Series 8: Photographs -- Series 9: Diary of William S. Harker -- Series 10: Ephemera -- Series 11: Clippings.
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 Jean Cowell. This is a legacy collection from Andrew Carroll.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
World War, 1939-1945
World War, 1939-1945 -- Homefront
World War, 1939-1945 -- Hospitals
World War, 1939-1945 -- Germany
Correspondence -- World War, 1939-1945
Harker, William S.
Harker, Lois
Cowell, Jean
Series 1. Correspondence between Sgt. William S. Harker and Lois Harker. 1942-10-1944-07

Physical Description: .16 Linear Feet(3 folders)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence between Sgt. William S. Harker and Lois Harker. Lois was Sgt. Harker's wife. He refers to her as "Loaf" in the letters. Sgt. Harker writes about life and entertainment on the Army Air Base in Blythe, CA. The letters also detail life on the homefront and in Hawarden, Iowa during World War II.

Series 2. Correspondence between William S. Harker and family members. 1943-1945

Physical Description: .16 Linear Feet(2 folders)

Scope and Contents
Correspondence between William S. Harker, his parents, his sister Elvina, and other family members. The letters detail family life and life on the military bases at which Sgt. Harker was stationed. The series also contains a letter written in 1945 from Hofer, Germany but it is unclear whether it is from William Harker. The letter is addressed to "Aunt Annie" and, according to the donor, Lois Harker's mother was named Annie. A letter from Harker's sister postmarked April 9, 1943 discusses rationing.

In one letter, dated October 8, 1943 and addressed to Nellie, Sgt. Harker writes about the crash of a B-24: "Everyone here calls them 'flying coffins'."

Series 3. Other Correspondence with William S. Harker 1944-07-1946-04

Physical Description: .05 Linear Feet(1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains cards, postcards, and other correspondence addressed to William S. Harker by various people, including Major K.B. Cassidy, Ismmert Ellison, John W. Graham, Sergeant Ray Nicholson, and Sergeant L.M. Shelton. Most of the correspondence relates to Sgt. Harker's effort to get a furlough.

Series 4. Correspondence between Lois Harker and family members. 1943-06-1945-08

Physical Description: .13 Linear Feet(2 folders)

Scope and Contents
This series contains correspondence between Lois Harker and family members, including her parents, her sister-in-law Elvina, her mother-in-law, and her niece, Mary. The letters mostly relate to family life and Sgt. Harker's work at the hospital. In one letter, dated February 14, 1945, Lois writes about Sgt. Harker joining a rescue squad to search for the crew of a missing bomber. There is also a clipping about the missing crewmen in an adjacent letter, dated February 24, 1945. In one letter dated November 21, 1945, Lois appears to write to her parents about the birth of a child.

Series 5. Other correspondence with Lois Harker 1937-02-1942-08

Physical Description: .03 Linear feet(One folder)

Scope and Contents
Letters from various people, possibly friends, to Lois Harker. The letters are signed by Florabella (no last name), Rita (no last name) and Russ (last name not clear).
Series 6. Other correspondence 1943-1945

Physical Description: .03 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

This series contains correspondence to and from people other than Lois and Bill Harker. The series also contains a picture of a group of unidentified women and a poem from an unidentified person. One letter, along with an accompanying military graduation announcement, is from Earl W. Hultgren to "Aunt Louise." A card identifies Earl W. Hultgren as a Lieutenant Air Corps in the United States Army. The card could refer to Sergeant William Harker's mother. Information provided by the donor identifies Sgt. Harker's mother as "Louise Catherine (Ericson) Harker." A second letter is addressed to "Ernest" from "Aunt Annie." The sender could be Lois Harker's mother, Annie (Tuynman) Benson. Her name was also provided by the donor.

Series 7. Personal Records 1942-1945

Physical Description: .03 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

This series contains the personal records of Sergeant William S. Harker. It includes an auto insurance card that expired in 1943, one War Ration Book One, and two booklets of War Ration Book Two. There is also an individual income tax return form from 1942 and a memo from headquarters at Walla Walla Air Field that mentions Sgt. Harker and appears to address discharges. In addition, the series also contains a note from the Army Finance Center to Sgt. Harker.

Series 8. Photographs

Physical Description: .01 Linear feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

Items in this series include two undated photographs. One is a picture of an unidentified woman at a desk. "Base Signal Office" is written on the back. The other is a picture of a structure. On the back, a stamp says "Official A.A.F. Photo. Base Photo Lab. A.A.B. Walla Walla, Wash."


Physical Description: .03 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

This series contains a diary that Sgt. William S. Harker kept in 1942. Harker's wife, Lois, also writes in the diary.

Series 10. Ephemera 1943-1944

Physical Description: .03 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

Items in this series include a wedding announcement, a graduation announcement, a US Savings Bond pamphlet, and a roster from a 1943 Halloween celebration at the Army Air Base Station Hospital in Blythe, California. Other items include: a pamphlet announcing the opening of an NCO Club in November of 1944 and a 1944 schedule of Mother's Day activities at the Army Base in Walla, Walla, WA. There is also a blurb, possibly from a newsletter, talking about William and Lois Harker.
Series 11. Newspaper Clippings 1943-06-1944-03

Physical Description: .02 Linear Feet (1 folder)

Scope and Contents

This series contains several newspaper clippings. Only two of the clippings have dates: one is a story in a Hawarden, Iowa newspaper from June 3, 1943. The other is dated March 4, 1944 and was in an unidentified newspaper. The other clippings include a short blurb about Joe Demler, who was held at the Limberg Nazi Prison Camp and a story about soldiers coming home from Guadalcanal for Christmas.