Finding aid of the Howard T. Douglas Records

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Finding aid of the Howard T. Douglas Records

Collection number: H1957.2

Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library
Libraries of The Claremont Colleges
Claremont, California

Processed by:
Michael P. Palmer

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Michael P. Palmer

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Howard T. Douglas records

Dates: 1917-1921

Collection number: H1957.2

Creator: Douglas, Howard T., circa 1887-1921

Collection Size: 1 archives half-carton + 1 oversize box(0.2 linear foot).

Repository: Claremont Colleges. Library. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library.
Claremont, CA 91711

Abstract: Diary, appointments and awards, letters of condolence, writings, and published and newspaper accounts, 1917-1921, relating to the life and career of Howard T. Douglas and to the Alaska Flying Expedition of 1920.

Physical location: Please consult repository.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access
Collection open for research.

Publication Rights
All requests for permission to publish must be submitted in writing to Special Collections.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Howard T. Douglas records. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

Acquisition Information
Gift to Honnold Library from Mrs. Gordon Douglas (sister-in-law), Covina, California, May 9, 1957.

Processing Information

Biography
Howard Thomas Douglas was born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, on 1 October 1887, the second son and youngest of the four children of Summerfield Douglas (1847-1927) and his wife, Rebecca Clark (1849-1913). The family immigrated to the United States in 1895, and appears in the 1900 census in Lincoln Township, Pembina County, North Dakota, where Summerfield is listed as a farmer. By the time of the 1910 census, the family had settled in Covina, California, where Summerfield worked as a salesman for the Covina Realty Company. Howard graduated from Covina Union High School and the University of California at Berkeley. He enlisted as a private in the United States Army in January 1917, joining a coast artillery unit in Covina. In May 1917, after the United States declaration of war, he was sent to the first officer's training school at the Presidio in San Francisco, where he received his commission as a first lieutenant of infantry, U.S.R., at the end of the month. In July 1917, he was called to active duty, and upon finishing training camp the following month proceeded via Camp Lewis, American Lake, Washington, to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he received his first instruction in aerial observation. In December 1917, he proceeded to France where he served as an aerial observation officer, where he served.
with distinction, being twice recommended for promotion to Major, and receiving the Distinguished Service Medal. Following the armistice he was placed in command of an aviation unit in Germany; he returned to the United States in the summer of 1919. He then entered the Regular Army with the rank of Captain, and was attached to General Mitchell, Chief of Air Service. He served as Mitchell's aid and flying companion, directing a cross-country flight and playing a vital role in the Alaska flying expedition of 1920. He helped write the War Department's first aviation manual. He was drowned in the Chesapeake Bay, off Tangier Island, on June 22, 1921, during a practice bombing raid on the hulk of the battleship San Marcos, after his plane collided with another flown by Lieutenant Marll J. Plumb. His body was not recovered until July 1, 1921. He was buried in Oakdale Cemetery, Covina, on 12 July 1921.

Sources:
1. Diary.
2. "Covina Aviator Killed in Chesapeake Bay Fall", Los Angeles Times, June 23, 1921, p. i (1).

Scope and Content of Collection

Diary, appointments and awards, letters of condolence, writings, and published and newspaper accounts, 1917-1921, relating to the life and career of Howard T. Douglas and to the Alaska Flying Expedition of 1920. The collection comprises a single series, arranged as follows: (1) Biographical Materials, (2) Writings, (3) Printed Materials, (4) Newspapers, and (5) Fragile Materials, removed from other folders.

The Biographical Materials include a recommendation for promotion (1918), papers appointing Douglas First Lieutenant and Captain (1919), and a letter (1920) from the Aero Club of America awarding Douglas the Aviation Medal of Merit (the medal itself is now in the Arthur L. Neuman '23 Collection of Aeronautical Medals [NC010], Numismatics Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library), as well as a carbon copy typescript report on Douglas' body; several letters of condolence, most from Douglas' military superiors, but including one signed by the explorer Roald Amundsen; and a photograph (1920) of Douglas in military uniform.

The Writings include Douglas' World War I diary ending on 12 June 1918; his travel orders for, and a 137-page carbon-copy typescript account of, the Alaska Flying Expedition of 1920; and carbon-copy typescripts of two articles he had prepared for publication at the time of his death.

The Printed Materials consist of a single item, a published history of the San Gabriel Valley towns of Azusa, Baldwin Park, Charter Oak, Covina, Glendora, and Puente, during World War I. The history includes accounts of the war service of both Howard T. Douglas and his brother, Gordon C. Douglas.

The Newspapers include clippings and pages, July-October 1920, from the Nome Nugget, New York Times, New York Tribune, and unidentified newspapers, relating to the Alaska Flying Expedition; clippings and pages, June-July 1921, from the Pasadena Evening Post, the Nome Nugget, the Covina Argus (2 copies of the complete issue for July 21, 1921), and unidentified newspapers, relating to the death and funeral of Douglas.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Aeronautics--1910-1920
Aeronautics--History
Alaska--History--1867-1959
Douglas, Howard T., circa 1887-1921

Separated Material

The Aero Club of America Aviation Medal of Merit awarded Douglas in 1920 (see letter of award in box 1, folder 1) is now in the Arthur L. Neuman '23 Collection of Aeronautical Medals (NC010), Numismatics Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 1-4</th>
<th>Biographical Materials</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 1</td>
<td>Appointments and Awards 1917-1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 2</td>
<td>Report on the Body of Capt. Douglas 1921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical Description: Typescript : 5 p. ; carbon copy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 3</th>
<th>Letters of Condolence June-August 1921</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photograph of Howard T. Douglas in military uniform, Nome, Alaska 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: 1 photograph : b&amp;w ; 10 x 7 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 4</td>
<td>Writings 1920-1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diary 1918 April 18 - June 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes information back to Douglas' entering first officer's training camp on 13 May 1917.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 5-7</td>
<td>Alaskan Flying Expedition 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HON SPCL MS</td>
<td>Request for travel orders May 13, 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D570.9 D6X</td>
<td>Physical Description: Typescript : 2 p. ; carbon copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 5</td>
<td>Account of the Alaskan Flying Expedition by Capt. Howard T. Douglas 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: Typescript : 137 p. ; carbon copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 6</td>
<td>Other Writings n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Bombs and bombing developed by aircraft armament division, circa 1921.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typescript : 9 p. ; carbon copy.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have been printed in the Army Ordnance Magazine, 1921.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The First infantry contact, circa 1921.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typescript : 7 p. ; carbon copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 7</td>
<td>Printed Materials: The Upper San Gabriel Valley in the War; Azusa, Baldwin Park, Charter Oak, Covina, Glendora, Puente circa 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covina, California: Covina Argus Publishing Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 8</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings 1920-1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fragile materials removed from folders 2 and 7 circa 1920-1921</td>
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