

MS-674: Joseph Updyke Collection, World War II Correspondence

Collection Number: MS-674

Title: Joseph Updyke Collection, World War II Correspondence

Dates: 1942-1945, 1995 (bulk 1943-1944)

Creator: Updyke, Joseph Francis, 1922-1997

Summary/Abstract:

The collection consists primarily of correspondence written and received by Joseph F. “Bud” Updyke, a lifelong resident of Oakwood, during his World War II service in the U.S. Army at Fort Knox (Armored Force Replacement Training Center), England, and France. Subjects included military life and clerical work, interpersonal relationships, train travel, rationing and food shortages, base and barracks conditions, entertainment, weather, historic sites and scenery, holidays, and mail service. The collection also includes a few mementoes, such as newsletters and photographs.

Quantity/Physical Description: 0.84 linear foot (about 480 items)

Language(s): English

Repository:

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092, library-archives@wright.edu

Restrictions on Access:

There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

Restrictions on Use:

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Preferred Citation:

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-674, Joseph Updyke Collection, World War II Correspondence, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:

The collection was donated to Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University Libraries, by Deborah Janis, a former next-door neighbor and close friend of Joseph Updyke.

Accruals:

No additional materials anticipated.

Custodial History:

Joseph Updyke never married or had children, and all of his immediate family members predeceased him. His next-door neighbor and friend Deborah Janis cared for Mr. Updyke when he was elderly and sick. Ms. Janis came into possession of the correspondence after Mr. Updyke passed away.

Other Finding Aid:

The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collectionguides/files/ms674.pdf>. It is also available in the OhioLINK Finding Aid Repository at <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>.

Processing Information:

The envelopes for most correspondents have been retained, for the clues they can provide to researchers. The majority of the envelopes from letters written by Joseph have been discarded, with the exception of approximately 1 per month, to indicate return address, or if they included special notations.

Processed by:

Finding aid written according to DACS standards by Lisa Rickey, October 2020.

Arrangement:

The collection is arranged in two series:

Series I: Correspondence, 1942-1945, 1995

Series II: Mementoes, 1943-1944

Biographical/Historical Note:

Joseph Francis Updyke was a lifelong resident of Dayton and Oakwood. He was born September 22, 1922, the younger child of Earl E. Updyke and Hazel Francis (Chamberlin) Updyke. Joseph (also known as “Bud” to his family) had an older sister, Emma Kathryn (called “Kay” or “E.K.”), who was born in 1910. Joseph’s father Earl Updyke worked at National Cash Register for many years; his mother Hazel was a homemaker. At the time of Joseph’s birth, the Updyke family lived at 16 Lucerne Avenue, in Dayton’s Walnut Hills neighborhood. However, in the mid-1920s, they moved to a newly built home at 7 Ivanhoe Avenue in Oakwood, and the property remained in their family until Joseph’s death.

Joseph Updyke graduated from Oakwood High School in 1940. He attended the University of Dayton, where he studied business, until December 1942 when he was drafted into the U.S. Army for World War II service.

Mr. Updyke described his World War II service in a letter to a neighbor (Ann Scorgl) in 1995:

I was drafted in 1942...while a junior at UD. At UD I had two years of Army ROTC training. I went from Ft. Hayes to Ft. Benjamin Harrison to Ft. Knox, Ky.,

where I spent 1943 and 5 months of 1944. Much of my time there was in an office as a Personnel NCO, but armored training for combat was always ongoing at Ft. Knox. [Fort Knox was headquarters for the Armored Force Replacement Training Center, training soldiers in tank warfare.]

In June, 1944, I went overseas, briefly in England, and then to France, taking part in the liberation of France after D-Day. At that point I was considered an armored replacement under General Patton and General Eisenhower and others.

During this time I spent a lot of time at night in foxholes – usually dug by someone ahead of me. We kept moving behind the fighting areas (General Patton was well known for believing in constant pursuit of the enemy). During this time, I was assigned duties as needed – always on the move.

I was often scared, and always missed my family, friends and country. Near the end of the European fighting, I joined a new unit which operated a POW camp for German prisoners and resumed by personnel type of work.

In 1946 I came home, crossing the Atlantic on the aircraft carrier “Wasp” – so I especially appreciated the Navy at that time.

I was not actively involved in any other wars in my lifetime.

For his service in the European Theatre, Joseph was awarded three bronze battle stars: Normandy, Northern France, and Rhineland.

After returning home from World War II, Joseph Updyke returned to the University of Dayton, completing his degree with honors in 1947. He did his graduate studies at Miami University and U.D. He was a faculty member of the University of Dayton’s School of Business Administration, where he taught accounting for 27 years.

Joseph Updyke died on December 29, 1997, at the age of 75. He was buried with his parents and sister in Carlisle Cemetery (also known as New Jersey Presbyterian Cemetery) in Carlisle, Ohio, near the Montgomery and Warren County border.

Scope and Content Note:

Joseph Updyke’s World War II correspondence collection provides evidence of the wartime experiences of several Montgomery County residents, primarily those of Updyke himself, but also of his friends and family. The collection is divided into two series: correspondence and mementoes.

Series I, Correspondence, comprises the majority of the collection and includes letters dating from 1942 to 1945, as well as 1995. It includes mainly of letters that Joseph Updyke wrote to his parents between December 1942 and May 1945. During his time serving at Fort Knox,

Kentucky, from December 1942 to May 1944, Joseph wrote to his parents nearly every day, and most of the letters are typed on good quality stationery. He wrote about various aspects of his life, including his work in the personnel office of the Armored Force Replacement Training Center, interpersonal relationships, train travel between Dayton and Louisville, rationing and food shortages, base and barracks conditions at Fort Knox, prisoners (see Apr. 6, 1943), working with members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), and entertainment (especially military themed movies such as *Bataan* and *Behind the Rising Sun*). Of particular note are his descriptions of a visit by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to Fort Knox (Apr. 27-28, 1943) and of his sister's and other female friends' enthusiasm to become women pilots (see especially June 7, Oct. 20, and Oct. 29, 1943).

Joseph was sent overseas in June 1944, serving first in England (June-July) and then France (August and after). Letters that Joseph wrote during this time period are much fewer, usually handwritten, and on fragile, poor quality paper. He often commented on the weather, historic sites and scenery, holidays, accommodations, and mail service. He wrote less about his military work during this time period. One item of interest is a brief description of V-E Day celebrations in his last letter (May 11, 1945). He does not seem to have written about the Normandy invasion.

The collection also includes letters that Joseph received from family and friends. These date from as early as January 1942 to October 1943. While a few letters are from his immediate and extended family, most are from friends (usually schoolmates from Oakwood High School or University of Dayton). A few letters are addressed to Joseph's parents but mainly pertain to Joseph. Of particular note is an exchange of letters from March 1945 (the only file not from the mid-1940s) in which Joseph Updyke described his World War II service at the request of a young neighbor, Ann Scorgl.

The following briefly describes the major correspondents, their relationship to Joseph, situation during the war, and sometimes their post-war lives:

- Earl Updyke (1887-1948) and Hazel Updyke (1888-1977): Joseph's parents, residents at 7 Ivanhoe Avenue, in Oakwood. Joseph's father worked at National Cash Register and was a foreman during the WWII era.
- Emma Kathryn Updyke (1910-1987): Joseph's older sister, usually called Kay or E.K., a schoolteacher in the Oakwood schools. She also contributed to the war effort as a member of the Civil Air Patrol, flying airplanes to the east coast for transport to Europe. After World War II, Kay lived in Hawaii for several years, continuing to teach school and serve in the C.A.P. She never married.
- Donald C. Updyke (1923-1990): Joseph's cousin from Miamisburg; served in the Army Air Forces at Miami Beach, Florida, during WWII.
- Edna, Orpha, and Laura: Joseph's aunts, who all lived in the Carlisle/Franklin area.
- Betty Jean Holm (1924-1993): Joseph's long-distance girlfriend in Kenosha, Wisconsin. She and Joseph never married, but Betty later married twice (Dugan and Meade).
- Roy P. Caponi (1922-2020): a U.D. schoolmate from Chicago; also served in the Army during WWII.
- Harriet A. James (1922-1981): former next-door neighbor, who had lived at 5 Ivanhoe with Mrs. Ackerman, but in 1943 lived at 221 Oak Street with Mrs. Ada Brice. Harriet

worked with Joseph's father at NCR as a stenographer or file clerk. She later married Thomas N. Bridges.

- Mary Ann Ledger (1924-2001): a schoolmate from Oakwood High School and U.D. She later married a man named Simmons.
- Peter F. Legler (1924-2006): an Oakwood High School schoolmate who attended Denison University and served in the Army at Camp Wolters, Texas, during WWII. He was later a sales representative for Doubleday Publishing Company.
- Firmin A. Paulus (1922-2014): a U.D. schoolmate from Russia, Ohio, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during WWII, including the Battle of Okinawa. He later worked for Dow Chemical in Midland, Michigan.
- Arthur E. Cooper (1923-2006): an Oakwood High School schoolmate who also worked at NCR during WWII.

Series II, Mementoes, consists of a variety of items dating from 1943 to 1944, including a few photographs (a nice head shot of Joseph Updyke, as well as a few outdoor scenes that likely depict Fort Knox); newsletters, including the Fort Knox *Extract* (scattered issues 1943-1944), *Fort Knox News* (May 15, 1943), and *Entertainment News for the Men in the Armed Forces of the Louisville Area* (Apr. 17, 1943); and humor (“Application for a Date with a Soldier” completed by Betty Holm and “Last Will of Adolf Hitler”).

Subject Terms

Persons/Families

Updyke, Joseph Francis, 1922-1997
Updyke, Earl Edwin, 1887-1948
Updyke, Emma Kathryn, 1910-1987
Updyke, Hazel Francis (Chamberlin), 1888-1977
Updyke, Donald Charles, 1923-1990
Caponi, Roy Peter, 1922-2020
Holm, Betty Jean, 1924-1993
James, Harriet Adel, 1922-1981
Ledger, Mary Ann, 1924-2001
Legler, Peter Ferguson, 1924-2006
Paulus, Firmin Alphonse, 1922-2014

Organizations/Corporate Names

Armored Force Replacement Training Center (Fort Knox, Ky.)
Armored Replacement Training Center (Fort Knox, Ky.)
U.S. Army Training Center, Armor (Fort Knox, Ky.)

Places

Dayton (Ohio) -- History
Fort Knox (Ky.) -- History
Oakwood (Ohio) -- History

Subjects (General)

Soldiers -- Training of -- Kentucky -- Fort Knox
 World War, 1939-1945 -- England
 World War, 1939-1945 -- France
 World War, 1939-1945 -- United States
 World War, 1939-1945 -- Veterans

Material Types

Correspondence

Collection Inventory

Box	File	Description	Date
		Series I: Correspondence	1942-1945, 1995
1	1	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1942 Dec 29-30
1	2	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Jan 2-15
1	3	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Jan 16-28
1	4	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Feb 1-14
1	5	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Feb 15-28
1	6	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Mar 1-15
1	7	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Mar 16-31
1	8	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Apr 1-15
1	9	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Apr 16-30
1	10	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 May 1-15
1	11	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 May 16-31
1	12	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 June 1-15
1	13	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 June 16-30
1	14	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 July 1-15
1	15	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 July 16-31
1	16	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Aug 1-15
1	17	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Aug 16-31
1	18	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Sept 1-15
1	19	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Sept 17-30
1	20	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Oct 1-15
1	21	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Oct 16-31
1	22	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Nov 1-15
1	23	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Nov 17-30
1	24	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Dec 1-14
1	25	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1943 Dec 16-31
2	1	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 Jan 1-13, 28-31

Box	File	Description	Date
2	2	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 Feb 1-14
2	3	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 Feb 15-28
2	4	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 Mar 6-31
2	5	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 Apr 1-27
2	6	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents	1944 May 1-31
2	7	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from England	1944 June 14, 23, and 1944 July 7
2	8	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France	1944 Aug 3, 5, 11, and 1944 Sept 13
2	9	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France	1944 Oct 3, 19- 31
2	10	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France (fragile)	1944 Nov 17, 24-26
2	11	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France (fragile)	1944 Dec 3-31
2	12	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France (fragile)	1945 Jan 3-29
2	13	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France	1945 Feb 3 - 1945 Mar 12
2	14	Letters from Joseph Updyke to his parents from France	1945 May 2, 11
2	15	Letters to Joseph from his parents Earl and Hazel Updyke	1943 Feb 12-15
2	16	Letters to Joseph from his sister Emma K. Updyke	1943 Mar. 24
2	17	Letters to Joseph from his cousin Donald Updyke	1943 Mar. 14, 1943 Sept. 1
2	18	Letters to Joseph from his Aunt Edna	1942 Jan-June, 1943 May 22
2	19	Letters to Joseph from Ray Caponi	1943 Jan 24, 1943 Mar 21
2	20	Letters to Joseph from Harriet A. James	1943 Feb-Apr
2	21	Letters to Joseph from Mary Ann Ledger	1943 Jan-Mar
2	22	Letters to Joseph from Peter F. Legler	1943 Jan-Sept
2	23	Letters to Joseph from Firmin Paulus	1943 Feb 14, 1943 Mar 14
2	24	Letters to Joseph from Others	1943 Jan-Oct
2	25	Letters to Joseph about Christian Science/ Church of Christ, Scientist	1943 Jan-Feb

Box	File	Description	Date
2	26	Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Earl Updyke from Betty Holm	1943 May 22, 1943 Aug 3
2	27	Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Earl Updyke from Others	1943 Feb, 1943 May
2	28	Letters between Joseph Updyke and Ann Scorgl re: World War II	1995 Mar 7-18
		Series II: Mementoes	1943-1944
2	29	Photographs: Joseph Updyke and Fort Knox, Kentucky	1943 Mar
2	30	Fort Knox <i>Extract</i> Newsletters (scattered issues)	1943-1944
2	31	Fort Knox <i>News</i> Newsletter	1943 May 15
2	32	<i>Entertainment News for the Men in the Armed Forces of the Louisville Area</i>	1943 Apr 17
2	33	Application for a Date with a Soldier (humor/satire) completed by Betty Holm (Kenosha, Wisc.)	[1943 Mar.?)
2	34	Last Will of Adolf Hitler (humor/satire)	[1943 May?]