

Collection #
M 0768

CHARLES D. HUNT LETTERS, 1943–1946

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Paul Brockman

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box
COLLECTION DATES:	April 1943–January 1946
PROVENANCE:	Charles D. Hunt, 10686 Creeknoll Ct., Cincinnati, Ohio 45242,

14 September 1999, 29 October 1999, 17 December 1999, 12
January 2000

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Esther Hunt (SC 1236, OM 0379)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 1999.0635, 2000.0052, 2000.0200, 2000.0295

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Charles Douglas Hunt (b. 1924) was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and moved with his parents to Indianapolis in 1930. Hunt started attending Indiana University but joined the United States Army in the spring of 1943. After basic training, he spent three months as a cadet in the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) in Texas before returning to regular Army infantry duty with the 97th Division. Hunt served in Europe from March–May 1945 and was part of the occupation forces in Japan, September 1945–January 1946.

After his discharge Hunt returned to Indiana University and completed his degree. He became District Sales Manager for Universal Match and eventually settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1955 he married Mary Lou Cromer and they had three children.

Mr. Hunt, now retired, and his wife continue to live in Cincinnati, where he volunteers at the Natural History Museum.

Sources:

Information in collection

Telephone conversation with Mrs. Mary Lou Hunt (28 January 2002)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains letters written by Charles D. Hunt to his family while serving in the United States Army during World War II, April 1943–January 1946. Most of the letters are to Hunt's parents and grandmother, but there also are several letters to his sister, Sarah Jeanette (b.1919) as well as three letters sent by his mother while he was in Germany. The letters are grouped by Hunt's location during the war and most groups begin with his later reflections, written ca. 1999–2000, about the letters in the group. The letters trace Hunt's military service from basic training at Camp Wolters, Texas, to serving with the occupation army in Japan.

Charles Hunt's letters written while at basic training (April–June 1943) contain detailed information about the type of training plus a description of the camp and activities available while off duty. Letters from cadet ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program) training for basic engineering at Camp Moxey, Texas, and Tarleton Agriculture College (July–Oct. 1943) describe his struggles to understand the math and science and his difficulties with some of the

instructors. He also comments on family news from Indianapolis and relays that he is having financial problems and needs money.

Letters written by Hunt after his return to Camp Wolters and his subsequent reassignment to the 97th Division contain apologies and explanations why he was unable to succeed in the ASTP program and a description of his maneuvers with the division in Louisiana and relocation to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri (January-July 1944). He reassures his mother of his safety and the unlikelihood of his being sent to fight. He also talks of an attempt to be transferred to the M.P.'s to relieve his mother's worry of having her son in combat. Hunt's letters written while the 97th Division was preparing for amphibious training in California focus on the nice climate, social life in California cities, playing basketball for his unit's team, and meeting his mother who was on a buying trip for L. S. Ayres in Los Angeles. He also describes amphibious training on landing crafts and his battles with seasickness.

The collection also contains Hunt's letters to his family while serving as a combat soldier in Europe (March–May 1945). Letters were written from France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia and are generic in nature, for the most part relating non-military activities and requests for food and clothing from home. Hunt does comment on the jubilation of recently liberated French slave laborers (20 April 1945), the death of President Roosevelt, and moving from Czechoslovakia back to Bamberg, Germany, for political reasons in May 1945.

Hunt's letters following his return to the United States while at Camp Bragg, North Carolina, comment on the size and facilities of the camp and his dismay at the prospect of being sent to Japan as part of the occupation force. He expresses his disgust with the military and asks his parents to use every avenue possible to stop him from being sent overseas again (August 1945). In his letters from Iwahaua, Japan (September 1945–January 1946) he is still somewhat bitter but has accepted his assignment and describes his views of the Japanese people and country in comparison to his experiences in the European Theater. Everyday life as part of the occupation force he described as extremely boring with the exception of a devastating fire in his barracks in January 1946.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Letters, April–June 1943	Box 1, Folder 1
Comments on Letters from July–Oct. 1943	Box 1, Folder 2
Letters, July–Oct. 1943	Box 1, Folder 3
Comments on Letters from Oct. 1943–Jan. 1944	Box 1, Folder 4
Letters, Oct. 1943–Jan. 1944	Box 1, Folder 5
Comments on Letters from Jan.–July 1944	Box 1, Folder 6
Letters, Jan.–July 1944	Box 1, Folder 7
Comments on Letters from July 1944–Feb. 1945	Box 1, Folder 8
Letters, July–Dec. 1944	Box 1, Folder 9
Letters, Jan.–Feb. 1945	Box 1, Folder 10
Comments on Letters from March–May 1945	Box 1, Folder 11
Letters, March–April 1945	Box 1, Folder 12

Letters, May 1945	Box 1, Folder 13
Comments on Letters from Aug. 1945	Box 1, Folder 14
Letters, Aug. 1945	Box 1, Folder 15
Comments on Letters from Sept. 1945–Jan. 1946	Box 1, Folder 16
Letters, Sept.–Oct. 1945	Box 1, Folder 17
Letters, Nov. 1945–Jan. 1946	Box 1, Folder 18

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0768).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.