

Collection #  
M 0975

**EDWARD E. GRAY  
LETTERS, 1951–1954; 2011**

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Processed by

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 box; 1 folder photographs

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1951–1954; 2011

PROVENANCE: Ralph Gray, Bloomington, Indiana, September, 2008; May  
2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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FORMATS:

RELATED  
HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION  
NUMBER: 2008.0289

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Edward Earle Gray (1931–1973) was born in Otwell, Pike County, Indiana, the son of Lee M. and Voris R. Gray. He received his education at the public schools of Otwell, Seymour, Evansville and Petersburg, Indiana, graduating from Petersburg High School in 1949

In January 1951 Gray and three friends from Petersburg joined thousands of other young men who enlisted in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. Following basic training in Texas at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio and Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, he became an aircraft mechanic. His service included one year abroad in Pusan, Korea. He was also stationed in Great Falls, Montana, and again in Texas.

Upon completing his four year enlistment, Gray returned to Petersburg and entered the family business—Gray's Grocery. When the grocery closed in the latter 1960s, he became, like the grandfather for whom he was named, a rural route mail carrier (using his station wagon, not the horse and buggy like the other Ed Gray). A good sportsman, particularly a bowler, Gray suffered late in his life from phlebitis and died at the age of 41 in 1973. He was survived by his parents and three brothers, Ralph, Robert and Charles, two of whom, Ralph and Charles still (2009) survive.

Source:

Submitted by Ralph D. Gray, brother of Edward Gray, February, 2009.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection is primarily comprised of Edward Gray's letters to his parents and siblings, during his years in the United States Air Force during the Korean War, 1951–1954). The letters are written from his training bases at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio and Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas (January–September, 1951) and Great Falls, Montana (September, 1951–February 1952) and Camp Stoneman, California (March 1952). Letters from this period mainly focus on description of how Gray spent his leisure time with some mention of his training as a mechanic. Letters from April, 1952–January 1953 are from Pusan, Korea and focus on his duties as an assistant crew chief with 37<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron including descriptions of the weather and off duty activities. Letters from January, 1953–September 1954 were written after Gray returned to Sheppard Air Force Base, as an instructor and later a security guard. Much of the later letters pertain to Gray's financial situation.

Non letter related material include snapshot photographs, greeting cards from 1951, form material from his indoctrination at Sheppard and an article from *Life*, Magazine on 29 January 1951 regarding recruits at Lackland.

There is also a biography of Eddie Gray by his brother, Ralph, in 2011 entitled *A Hoosier Airman's Odyssey, 1951–1954: The Air Force Career of Eddie Gray of Petersburg, Indiana*.

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Greeting Cards, 1951

Printed Materials, Form Letter, ca. 1951

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*A Hoosier Airman's Odyssey, 1951–1954 The Air Force Career of Eddie Gray of Petersburg, Indiana* by Ralph Gray, 2011.

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## 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://opac.indianahistory.org/>
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 0975).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.