

Collection #
M 0765

HENRY FLECK LETTERS, 1941–1945

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Processed by

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7 March 2002

Revised 1 July 2003

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 3 manuscript boxes

COLLECTION
DATES: 1941–45

PROVENANCE: Mrs. Henry Fleck, 905 W. Jeffras Avenue, Marion, IN 46952, 16
May 2001

RESTRICTIONS:

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Indiana Jewish Historical Society Records, 1845-1998 (M 0743,
OMB 0082, BV 3326-3376, F 1309-1349, CT 0902-0931)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2000.0692

NOTES: Donation made in conjunction with the Indiana Jewish Historical
Society Records.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Henry Fleck (1915-81) was a native of Marion (Grant County), Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University in 1938 (with honors), obtaining an LLB degree. After graduation, he worked in Washington, D.C., for the Federal Housing Administration, then returned to Marion, where he opened a legal practice.

Early in 1942 he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. His efforts to attend Officer Candidate School were thwarted by his poor eyesight. Fleck served in Europe as a radio operator and was in charge of a cryptographic section for the 8th TAC Air Command Squadron, attaining the rank of sergeant. In February 1945 he was transferred to Command Judge Advocate Office of HQ Squadron IX TAC, where he remained until returning to the United States in October 1945. After the war Fleck returned to Marion, and became a partner in a ladies' clothing store owned by his parents, Samuel and Lillie Hutner Fleck, and founded by his grandparents, called "The Paris."

In 1948, he married Betty Holland, and the couple had two children: Deborah Milkey (living in Carmel, Indiana, in 2002) and Alan Fleck (living in Jerusalem, Israel, in 2002). Henry Fleck died in Houston, Texas, of liver cancer in 1981.

Sources:

Information in collection and accession file; letter from Betty H. Fleck, 5 March 2002.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of approximately 485 letters primarily written by Henry Fleck to his parents in Marion, Indiana, while serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. The letters begin during Tech School Squadron training at Jefferson Barracks Missouri, (March-May 1942), and continuing at Richmond, Virginia (June-December 1942). The letters are of a general nature focusing on off-duty activities, including those pertaining to his Jewish faith.

Fleck also wrote from England where he served as a radio operator for the 8th Air Support Squadron (later changed to 8th TAC Air Command Squadron), January 1943-June 1944. In these letters he discussed the boredom of military life,

books he read, plays he attended, and pubs visited with friends. He also reported on his efforts to attend Officer Candidate School.

In late June 1944 Fleck and his unit moved to France and later Brussels. In these letters he talked about entering Paris and the celebrations. He discussed the French people's gratitude to their liberators and the conditions they suffered under German occupation. He also relayed information regarding the death of a hometown friend, Bob Simons, and his efforts to locate his grave. In February 1945 Fleck was transferred to the Command Judge Advocates Office of HQ Squadron IX TAC, where he served as a law clerk. This unit was stationed in Germany and in these letters home he complained about the military's non-fraternization policy with Germans. In his letters of 23 April and 28 May 1945 he mentioned visiting the Nazi Extermination Camp at Buchenwald with its horrors and stench. Most of Fleck's after armistice letters return to the theme of boredom and the anticipation of returning home.

Other letters in the collection include those to his relatives, first cousin Capt. H. A. ("Bud") Glanzberg, also with the U.S. Army in Europe, and uncle Sidney Hutner with the Army in Virginia, Illinois, and Kansas. In addition to relaying of family information, these contain more in-depth discussions of military duties and life in their units. There also are letters from Glanzberg and Hutner to Fleck's parents as well as two letters from rabbis serving with the Army relaying their impressions of Henry Fleck and his devotion to his faith.

The majority of the letters in this collection are in the photostat "V-Mail" format.

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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://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 call number, using the letter or letters designation and four digits (in this case, M 0765).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.