

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION RECORD

RG2353.AM: Overholser Family

Papers: 1919-1944

Lincoln, Lancaster County, Neb.: War Veteran

Size: 0.5 cu.ft.; 1 box

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Forrest E. Overholser was born at Springfield, Ohio, May 16, 1876. The family moved to Iowa and Forrest attended Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts at Ames receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in June of 1903. On May 16, 1906, he married Winifred (Winnie) Thompson at Cambridge, Story County, Iowa. She had been born at Iowa Center, Iowa, August 4, 1883.

Forrest joined the 51st Iowa Volunteer Infantry, U.S. Army. He served as a 2nd Lt. in the Spanish-American War and had duty in the Philippines and in Cuba. For this service he received the Spanish Campaign Medal, the Philippine Congressional Medal, the Cuban Pacification Medal, and the Mexican Service Medal. After the war, Major Forrest was stationed in Hawaii and then transferred to Camp Lewis, Washington. On July 26, 1924 Major Overholser was transferred to the Discharge and Replacement Depot at Fort McDowell, California. His father died in December of 1925. In June of 1928, he was ordered to duty with the Organized Reserves of the 7th Corps Area, 355th Infantry, Lincoln, Nebraska. In November of that year a daughter, Alice Louise, age 7, died in Lincoln and was buried at Maxwell, Iowa. Forrest Overholser resigned as a Colonel in 1935 after 30 years of service. He reenlisted and served in World War I for which he received a Victory Medal with Clasp.

Forrest was a member of the Lincoln Kiwanis Club, Scottish Rite-Lincoln, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World War. He was also a member of the Spanish American War Veterans and served as Camp Commander of William Lewis Camp #2 in Lincoln, 1941. He died in Lincoln, August 8, 1943, and was buried in Wyuka Cemetery. Mrs. Winifred Overholser died in Lincoln, February 4, 1960.

After her father's death a daughter, Frances, joined the WACS at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, and began service in the 4th Battalion, 3rd Regiment, Co. 24, 1st Women's' Army stationed at the auxiliary training center in Minnesota in August of 1943. She was transferred to Camp White, Oregon (Portland) with the 9th Service Command Unit 1913 and to Camp Abbott, Oregon, in April of 1944 serving as a telegraph operator. In August of that year she was sent overseas.

Another daughter, Mildred Ida Malcolm, resided in Lincoln for a time. She later moved to Seattle, Washington. She had two children at the time of Forrest's death, Forrest Bruce and Thomas W. Malcolm.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers of the Overholser Family consist of one manuscript box of material arranged in four series: 1) Correspondence, 1919-1944; 2) General Orders to Major Overholser, 1924-1932; 3) Manuscripts regarding 92nd Infantry Division, 1918 and n.d.; and 4) Memorials to Col. Overholser, 1943.

Correspondence concerns the Overholser Family. Included are miscellaneous family letters, one from Forrest to Winnie was written from Antwerp during World War I. Also included is a letter written by Mildred (Thompson) Nielson of Maxwell, Iowa, the sister of Winnie Overholser. Of particular interest and forming the bulk of the collection are the letters from Frances Overholser to her mother during her training period in the WACS from August 1943 until August 1944 when she departed the states for overseas duty.

Series 2 consists of one folder of general and special orders issued to Forrest Overholser, 1924-1932. The Manuscripts in Series 3 concern the 92nd Infantry Division. The final item is a testimonial from the Kiwanis Club of Lincoln on the death of Col. Overholser.

Note: See the photo component [RG2353.PH] for related images. Researchers may also wish to see RG044, [United Spanish War Veterans](#), for further information on Col. Forrest E. Overholser.

DESCRIPTION

Series 1 - Correspondence, 1919-1944

Box 1

Folder

1. Forrest to Winnie, May 18, 1919, Antwerp
Mildred, Maxwell, Iowa to Dorothy, June 11th
Carol Ruth Lasher (age 9 weeks) by her mother to Alice Louise, June 20, 1921
Erma W. Wells, the Church of the Truth, Spokane, Washington, January 17, 1930, to Mrs. Overholser – letter of support at Forrest's illness
2. Frances Overholser, Ft. Des Moines, Iowa, to her mother, 1943, Aug. 8-Sept. 21
Frances from Minnesota, September 25, 1943
Frances from Portland, Oregon, September 27, 1943
Frances from Camp White, Oregon, September 23-December 20, 1943
3. Frances to her mother, Camp White, Oregon, January 1 thru April 18, 1944
Frances to her mother, Camp Abbott, Oregon, April 23 thru August 15, 1944
Frances to her mother, in route overseas, n.d.

Series 2 - General and Special Orders, 1924-1932

4. Orders, 1924-1932

Series 3 - Manuscripts, 1918 & undated

5. Three Tactical Errors committed in October 1918, C.C. Ballou, concerning the 92nd Infantry Division
Critique of performance of the 92nd Infantry Division and negro troops in general (1st and last pages are missing), author unknown, n.d.

Series 4 - Memorials to Col. Overholser, 1943

6. Testimonial from Kiwanis Club of Lincoln, Nebraska, on the death of Col. Forrest E. Overholser, 1943

Subject headings:

Overholser, Forrest E., 1876-1943
Overholser, Frances, 1907-1993
Overholser, Winifred (Thompson), 1883-1960
United Spanish War Veterans
United States -- Army -- Infantry -- 92nd Division
United States -- Army -- Women's Army Corps
Veterans -- Nebraska
Women's Auxiliary Army Corps
World War, 1914-1918 -- African American troops
World War, 1914-1918 -- Personal narratives
World War, 1939-1945 -- Women

HEK/jc 02-04-1966
PMC 05-08-1989