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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives
Special Collections Library
Department of Library Special Collections
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Descriptive Inventory

MSS 27 STRAHM, Victor Herbert, 1897-1957

1½ boxes. 14 folders. 251 items. 1909-1945. Originals, photocopies, photographs.

1944.10.1

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Victor Herbert Strahm, 1897-1957, was born in Nashville, Tennessee, the son of Franz Joseph and Alice (Jones) Strahm. In 1910, the family moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky, when his father joined the music faculty of Western Kentucky State Normal School. Victor received his teacher's life certificate in 1915 from Western; continued his education at the University of Kentucky, majoring in engineering; and enlisted in the army with the rank of private in May 1917. He began his army career at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana; entered aviation training at Ohio State University; learned to fly at Dayton, Ohio, received his commission as first lieutenant on October 31, 1917; and was sent to France immediately. After additional training in France, he was attached to the 91st Aero Squadron, U.S. Air Service; promoted to the rank of captain; and awarded military medals. Strahm's duties included mainly surveillance and spotting, but he also was credited with downing five German planes.

Following his return to the United States in 1920, Strahm was discharged from the army. Planning to obtain his engineering degree, he entered the University of Wisconsin, but soon rejoined the army with his previous rank of first lieutenant. Strahm was stationed at various posts in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. Sometime in the 1920s he married, and his wife's first name was Ruth. They had no children, and her death occurred between 1939 and 1942. In 1942 Strahm went to India and Egypt to assist in organizing the 9th Air Force. He was commissioned a brigadier general and received decorations from Britain and Poland. After World War II, Strahm commanded several air bases before retiring in 1953. He died in San Antonio, Texas, and his survivors included his widow, stepson, mother (d. 1963), and sister, Louise (Mrs. Carl Barber).

Bibliographical Notes

The Collection.

Kentucky Library, Vertical Files

Warren County Biography File

COLLECTION NOTE

The collection consists chiefly of Strahm's letters written to his parents during his overseas duty. More than one hundred letters dating from 1917 to 1919 were written while Strahm was in France, where he trained and flew missions even into the postwar period of 1919. Two dozen letters written during 1942 and 1943 cover his service as brigadier general in India and Egypt. There also are several newspaper clippings concerning Strahm's career from World War I to 1943. The forty photographs of Strahm, his associates (including a 1919 photo of Strahm, U.S. General William "Billy" Mitchell, and Edward, Duke of Windsor), and of airplanes, document his service. Other materials include a few printed items, a four-page summary of "American Airmen in the World War," a book of paintings of the 9th Air Force and copies of *Aerial Age* and *Army and Navy Journal* for January 1919. There is nothing in the collection dating after his mother's move from Bowling Green in 1944.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	Correspondence	1917-1944	162 items
Folder 1a	Descriptive Inventory		6 items
Folder 1	Note by Mrs. Strahm about Victor's enlistment and early service; correspondence of Strahm to parents	1917	20 items
Folder 2	Correspondence – Strahm to parents	Jan.-Apr. 1918	24 items
Folder 3	Correspondence – Strahm to parents (including one marked "Mother's Mail")	May-Aug. 1918	35 items
Folder 4	Correspondence – Strahm to parents	Sept.-Dec. 1918	33 items
Folder 5	Correspondence – Strahm to parents	1919, 1928, 1939	17 items
Folder 6	Correspondence – Strahm to mother	1942-1944	27 items
BOX 2	Clippings, photos, miscellaneous	1909-1945	89 items
Folder 1	Newspaper clippings and General Orders pamphlet – Strahm	1917-1919	11 items
Folder 2	Newspaper clippings – Strahm	1920-1929	7 items
Folder 3	Newspaper clippings – Strahm	1930-1938	7 items
Folder 4	Newspaper clippings – Strahm	1940-1943	23 items
Folder 5	Photographs – Strahm (includes	1919, n.d.	12 items

Edward, Duke of Windsor, Billy Mitchell, and Strahm) and *Aerial Age*, Jan. 27, 1919

Folder 6	Photographs – Strahm, fellow officers, and planes	1920-1933	24 items
Folder 7	Miscellaneous items	1919, 1945	5 items
	1. Collection of cigar bands	1909-1910	
	2. <i>Army and Navy Journal</i> (C1-D1,F33)	January 4, 1919	
	3. Invoice – Return of coat, 1919		
	4. <i>Ninth Air Force USAAF</i> (includes picture of Strahm as brigadier general, 1945)		
	5. “American Airmen in the World War”, 4p., n.d.		
	6. 91st Aero Squadron history, 4p., n.d.		
BOX 3	Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame	2019	2 items
	Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame items	2019	2 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS STRAHM, Victor Herbert, 1909-1945
27 1897-1957

Correspondence, clippings and photographs covering Bowling Green, Kentucky native Strahm’s U. S. Air Force career. More than 100 letters written to his parents in Bowling Green describe his World War I activities, and 27 letters to his mother detail his participation in the early days of World War II. 1½ boxes. 14 folders. 251 items. Originals, photocopies, photographs.
1944.10.1

SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Aviation, Military
Mitchell, William, 1879-1936 – Photo B2,F5
Mitchell, William, 1879-1936 – Relating to, 1919 B2,F5
Strahm, Alice (Jones) 1874-1963 – Letters to B1,F3-7
Strahm, Franz Joseph, 1867-1941 – Letters to B1,F3-6
United States – Army Air Force

Warren County – World War I, 1914-1918 – Soldiers from
Windsor, Edward, Duke of, 1894-1972 – Photo B2,F5
Windsor, Edward, Duke of, 1894-1972 – Relating to, 1919 B2,F5
World War I, 1914-1918 – Aerial Operations, American
World War I, 1914-1918 – France
World War I, 1914-1918 – Photographs B2,F5-6
World War I, 1914-1918 – Pilots and pilotage
World War II, 1939-1945 – Aerial Operations, American
World War II, 1939-1945 – Egypt, 1942-1943
World War II, 1939-1945 – India, 1942-1943
World War II, 1939-1945 – Pilots and pilotage

Jeffrey 11/09/2011