

**McLean County Museum of History**

**Robert Sterzbach WWII Collection**

Processed by  
Rochelle Gridley  
Spring 2015

**Collection Information**

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| VOLUME OF COLLECTION: | 1 Box   |
| COLLECTION DATES:     | 1944 - 1945.  |
| RESTRICTIONS:         | None  |
| REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:  | Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History |
| ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:  | None  |
| OTHER FINDING AIDS:   | None  |
| LOCATION:             | Archives  |
| NOTES:                | Donated by Alyne Tracy Sterzbach's nephew Walter Payne plus Doris Payne, Shirley Payne, and Roy and Linda Groves.                   |

## Brief History

Robert Sterzbach was an Army Corporal when his correspondence with Alyne Tracy began on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1944. He was stationed at Camp Ellis, Illinois, which was near Lewistown. Robert came from Mamaroneck, New York. Alice Alyne Tracy was a young Bloomington woman living at 208 E. Front Street and working as a bartender at the Wonder Grill on Front Street when she met Robert. She later worked at Stanley's Tavern (611 N. Main). She was born in Kentucky but moved to Illinois as a young girl. Robert was stationed in Bloomington (refrigeration school) for a short time when Robert and Alyne were seeing each other and was transferred back to Camp Ellis where he was a munitions instructor. Prior to the war Robert worked as a foreman in food production in New York state.

Alyne was one of eight children of William and Lucy Ann Tracy: Mary (born 1899) Harry (1902) married Gladys; Evans Ely (1904), married Orna; Lucille Nell (1907), married Leonard Mayo; Julia Dixine (1909) married Gordon Payne; William (1911), married Wynell Smith; Carter (1913), married Gerald Garfoot; and Alyne (1919). Their correspondence was passed on to Alyne Tracy's nephew, Walter Payne (sister Dixine's son).

Robert had one sister, Dorothy O'Connor. His parents were William and Ida Sterzbach. While Robert was stationed in England his mother died and his father had a serious stroke.

The correspondence here dates from January 13, 1944 to June 5, 1945. Robert and Alyne were married June 19, 1944 in Bloomington, Illinois. Robert was shipped out July 1944 and stationed at an Army Hospital near Swindon, England. Later in life Robert revealed that he was shipped to England on the Queen Mary. Robert enlisted in the army December 14, 1942, and was discharged December 15, 1945.

The residents of the Tracy apartment at different times were Alyne; her mother, Lucy Ann Tracy; Mary (Luallen) Ancona; Lorraine Tracy (niece, daughter of Mary Tracy); Virginia Bush; Jeanne (and her son "little Bill"?) and "Mary and Randall."

Robert returned to Bloomington after the war, and he and Alyne always made their home here. They never had any children, and these letters come to us through Alyne's nephew Walter Payne.

## Scope

This collection holds the correspondence between Robert Sterzbach and Alyne Tracy from January 1944 to June 1945.

## Box and Folder Inventory

### Folder 1: Correspondence: January to March 1944

- 1.1 13 January 1944, to Alyne (daughter) written from 1609 SUCTI, Platoon 14 B, Bloomington. Refers to Wonder Grill.
- 1.2 15 January 1944 (postmark), to Alyne. Love letter. Cartoon enclosed.
- 1.3 18 January 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 1.4 14 February 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 1.5 16 February 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 1.6 26 February 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 1.7 27 February 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 1.8 28 February 1944, to Alyne. Stationed at Camp Ellis. Robert mentions WACs were stationed at Camp Ellis.
- 1.9 29 February 1944, to Alyne. (Received letter from Alyne). Love letter
- 1.10 30 February 1944, to Alyne. Robert's work with ammunition. Prospects of work with refrigeration. Suggestion that Alyne see a doctor.
- 1.11 Undated: Thursday, to Alyne from SU CTI. Love letter.
- 1.12 Undated: to Alyne from SU CTI. Love letter.
- 1.13 March 31, 1944, to Alyne. Exposure to tear gas. Love letter.

### Folder 2: Correspondence: April 1944

- 2.1 3 April, 1944, to Alyne. Newspaper clippings of jokes and cartoon. Love letter.
- 2.2 5 April, to "Mrs. Robert Sterzbach." Description of firing range and "gas chamber."
- 2.3 6 April 1944, to Alyne. Working on final test for 291<sup>st</sup> Refrigeration Unit. Postscript in shorthand.
- 2.4 7 April 1944 (postmark) to Alyne. Mustard gas Fridays. Love letter. Postscript in shorthand.
- 2.5 10 April 1944, to Alyne. Love letter. Sent Alyne \$15.
- 2.6 14 April 1944, to Alyne. Saturday was the first anniversary of Camp Ellis.
- 2.7 17 April 1944, to Alyne. On Army Service Forces Unit Training Center, Camp Ellis letterhead. Love letter. Alyne has a new job and left Wonder Grill because of "Ben." Alyne has another sweetheart, "Bill."
- 2.8 18 April 1944, to Alyne. On QM Headquarters Co. Camp Ellis IU letterhead. Love letter. Robert's work with mustard gas and colored troops.
- 2.9 19 April 1944 (postmark), to Alyne. Love letter. Mentions Cliff and Irene.
- 2.10 20 April 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 2.11 21 April 1944, to Alyne. Injury to another man during a demonstration.
- 2.12 24 April 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 2.13 26 April 1944, to Alyne. On QM Headquarters Co. Camp Ellis IU letterhead. Love letter.
- 2.14 27 April 1944, to Alyne. Further gas demonstrations. Love letter.
- 2.15 27 April 1944, to Alyne. 2900 soldiers were on flood duty. Levee out at Beardstown and most bridges covered with water. Troop transfers to "casual companies" to be replaced by limited service men and wounded.

### **Folder 3: Correspondence: May 1944**

- 3.1 1 May 1944, to Alyne. Robert was promoted to line sergeant. The refrigeration company was moving to Camp Ellis.
- 3.2 2 May 1944, to Alyne. Processing troops with uniforms and clothing.
- 3.3 3 May 1944, to Alyne. Robert has dental problems.
- 3.4 4 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter. Mentions Hank and Jinny.
- 3.5 8 May 1944, to Alyne. Postcard from Robert's sister (Dorothy) from Jack Dempsey's Bar in New York.
- 3.6 9 May 1944, to Alyne. Mentions Alyne's other sweetheart Bill being overseas.
- 3.7 10 May 1944, to Alyne. Rumors of being shipped out before August.
- 3.8 11 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.9 15 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.10 16 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.11 17 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.12 18 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.13 19 May 1944, to Alyne. Robert has more dental problems.
- 3.14 22 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.15 23 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 3.16 30 May 1944, to Alyne. Love letter. Enclosed clipping of jokes.
- 3.17 31 May 1944, to Alyne. Robert was promoted to Senior Instructor of the Refrigeration Station. Enclosed newspaper clipping of two friends from Mamaroneck NY, George and Dennis O'Connor.
- 3.18 Undated letter. Love letter.

### **Folder 4: Correspondence: June and July 1944**

- 4.1 6 June 1944, to Alyne. Mentions "the invasion."
- 4.2 15 June 1944, to Alyne. Preparing to ship out.
- 4.3 3 July 1944, to Mrs. Robert Sterzbach. Robert's rank changed to technician sergeant. Enclosed in this letter was an announcement of their marriage. Earl Donohue was best man and Mrs. Leo (Mary) Ancona was matron of honor. He was still preparing to ship out.
- 4.4 3 July 1944, to Robert. Stopped at the Polar to meet Mary. Enclosed a letter from Earl Donohue. Mary, Alyne and Earl went swimming.
- 4.5 4 July 1944, to Alyne. Packing duffel bags, possibly shipping out the 5<sup>th</sup>.
- 4.6 8 July 1944, to Alyne. Mailed from "one of the eastern states." Love letter.
- 4.7 8 July 1944, to Robert. Written on airmail paper. Alyne was working 11 hours on a split shift, 8 until 3 and 6 until 10. Mentions Mary, Earl and Carter (sister).
- 4.8 9 July 1944, to Alyne. Robert is self-conscious of the censors. Love letter.
- 4.9 9 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Bonita, her work mate, and a raise they received.
- 4.10 10 July 1944, to Alyne. Received first letter since he shipped away. Having \$30 taken out of his pay to send to Alyne.
- 4.11 10 July 1944, to Robert. Alyne refers to their trip to New York. Mentions Ginny and Mary. Bonita's husband is shipping out.
- 4.12 12 July 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.

- 4.13 12 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Carter and her husband on furlough.
- 4.14 13 July 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 4.15 13 July 1944, to Robert. Went to the Green Mill with Mary and Earl. (Green Mill Café 212 W. Washington, John Krikos Prop.) Played pinball at work and won \$4.00.
- 4.16 14 July 1944, to Alyne. This date was 19 months from the date of Robert's enlistment.
- 4.17 15 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.18 15 July 1944, to Robert. Took in \$100 on a Thursday night at the bar. Visited the Colony Club with Vern Gaddy's wife, Ginny & Joe Milliser.
- 4.19 15 July 1944, to Alyne. Letter redacted. Love letter.
- 4.20 16 July 1944, to Alyne. Soldiers were ordered to destroy all their letters before they shipped out.
- 4.21 16 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Mary & Randall. Carter visiting.
- 4.22 17 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.23 18 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Earl Carter being at the bar. Says they call their house the "Stab Apt." for all their different last names: Sterzbach (Alyne), Tracy (Lucy), Ancona (Mary), and Bush (Virginia). Mentions a letter from Dottie O'Connor.
- 4.24 19 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Ben and Ann (Weatherford) at the Wonder Grill
- 4.25 20 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.26 21 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.27 22 July 1944, to Robert. Shows, Wonder Grill and Polar Grill.
- 4.28 23 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions feeding the "little president." Enclosed letter from Mother Tracy.
- 4.29 24 July 1944, to Robert. Alyne admits that she has not told Bill about her marriage, and he has been writing to her as always. His sister has snubbed Alyne.
- 4.30 25 July 1944, to Robert. Mentions Joe Million taking her and the waitress to lunch.
- 4.31 26 July 1944, to Robert. Visitors: Dixine (sister) and family, Mary and Randall.
- 4.32 27 July 1944, to Robert. Mary and Randall were planning to move into the Tracy household.
- 4.33 28 July 1944, to Robert. Alyne received letter from Bill Collins and Carter's husband. Bonita was possibly going to leave the Polar Grill because she did not belong to the union. Mildred said she needed to belong to the union.
- 4.34 28 July 1944, to Alyne. Letter redacted by censors. Sending \$85.00 per month to Alyne. Love letter.
- 4.35 29 July 1944, to Alyne. Reports instructions about interactions with the English. Soldiers were instructed to "accept" dating/marriage of blacks and whites while in England.
- 4.36 30 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.37 31 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 4.38 31 July 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 4.39 31 July 1944, to Robert. Love letter.

**Folder 5: Correspondence: August 1944**

- 5.1 1 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne counselling Ginny against new boyfriend and staying out all night.
- 5.2 1 August 1944, to Alyne. Love letter. Robert has a private room.

- 5.3 1 August 1944(postmark), to Alyne. Redacted by censors. Writing at sea. Written over a week and after disembarking. Marched through a town and saw bomb damage. Children are asking for candy, sugar and “goom” (gum). Eggs are sold for one dollar a piece. The cars and trains are small and seem like toys to Robert.
- 5.4 2 August 1944, to Robert. Had telegram of Robert’s safe arrival.
- 5.5 4 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne lets him know that she is not pregnant. Ginny is working at Stanley’s and at Lucca Grill.
- 5.6 5 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Mary and Randall moving out of the Tracy home.
- 5.7 7 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne attended a union meeting. After the meeting Alyne went to the K & P Club and the Sportsman Club with Bonita and Alberta.
- 5.8 8 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.9 9 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Mentions “Little Bill.”
- 5.10 9 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.11 10 August 1944, to Robert. Received roses from Robert for her birthday. Planning weekend trip to Chicago.
- 5.12 11 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne went to the show with mother, Mary and Earl and then to Wonder Grill, Polar Grill, Stanley’s and Colony Club. Dorothy O’Connor sent photos of Alyne and Robert.
- 5.13 12 August 1944, to Robert. Earl and Slim Carter are in the bar.
- 5.14 15 August 1944, to Robert. Home from Chicago.
- 5.15 16 August 1944, to Robert. Trocadero closed to put in a new bar (\$10,000).
- 5.16 17 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne reports that she saw the doctor – “I just haven’t any blood.”
- 5.17 19 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne seeing the doctor to have her blood built up.
- 5.18 20 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.19 21 August 1944, to Robert. Alyne taking medicine for nervousness and dizziness.
- 5.20 23 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.21 24 August 1944, to Robert. Night at Trocadero and Stanleys with friends.
- 5.22 25 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.23 26 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.24 28 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Traveled to Decatur to visit Carter.
- 5.25 29 August 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 5.26 29 August 1944, to Alyne. Discharge points discussed.
- 5.27 31 August 1944, to Robert. Enclosing letter from Mother Tracy.
- 5.28 31 August 1944, to Robert. Planning trip to Kentucky with mother, Carter and Dixine.
- 5.29 31 August 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.

**Folder 6: Correspondence: September 1944**

- 6.1 1 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.2 1 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert met a man who said he could get a ring made by a prisoner (of war?).
- 6.3 2 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.4 2 September 1944, to Alyne. Cancelled his trip to London. The rings made by the prisoners are made from shillings and half crowns.

- 6.5 3 September 1944, to Robert. Went to the Nite Hawk. Mentions the full moon.
- 6.6 3 September 1944, to Alyne. Mentions the full moon. Working on heating systems in the wards.
- 6.7 4 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.8 4 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.9 5 September 1944, to Robert. Refers to a letter scolding her for drinking with another man. Alyne plans that her mother will live with them when they move to New York.
- 6.10 5 September 1944, to Alyne. Working in the psych ward for one night watching over a violent case.
- 6.11 6 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne had a birthday present from Robert's mother. A gown.
- 6.12 6 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert is alarmed that they might make the men work in the wards as "bedpan commandos." Received a ring from Alyne. Enclosed a clipping of two soldiers from Mamaroneck, NY.
- 6.13 7 September 1944, to Robert. Sent Stanley Earl for a hamburger with everything. Bonita is thinking of going to California to see her husband off. Some of the men at the bar wrote him letters: Bunk, Stanley Earl (but he was too tight) and Doc Moore (but they couldn't read his handwriting.)
- 6.14 7 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert is sorry that Alyne did not have a good time on a visit to Streator. He does not like for her to go out with Wick and Willie. Enclosed part of a candy bar wrapper from a "Whiz" bar from Paul F. Beich Co.
- 6.15 8 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne's mother is ill and unable to cope with the house. She is considering quitting work once she has saved six or seven hundred dollars from the allotments.
- 6.16 8 September 1944, to Alyne. Blackouts will be lifted in nine days.
- 6.17 9 September 1944, to Robert. Joe Million brought a chicken dinner to Alyne at work. Carter was planning to visit and Alyne hoped she wouldn't "bring those goons." She reminded Robert that "goons" doesn't mean the same thing in Illinois as in New York.
- 6.18 9 September 1944, to Alyne. Built a beater bicycle from old GI bicycle parts.
- 6.19 10 September 1944, to Robert. Carter is visiting.
- 6.20 10 September 1944, to Alyne. Washing his clothes in a bucket on the fire.
- 6.21 11 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.22 11 September 1944, to Alyne. Went to the movies. During the movie an announcement was made about service of tea at four during the movie. Visited the pub but the pubs were sold out of beer.
- 6.23 12 September 1944 to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.24 12 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.25 13 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.26 13 September 1944, to Alyne. Visited London and all the tourist sites. Saw the bombed out buildings.
- 6.27 14 September 1944, to Robert. Bob Murray working at the Trocadero. Alyne is going to learn how to can vegetables from her mother. Alyne talks about little Bill's mother – Jeanne and Lorraine (Mary Tracy's teenage daughter).
- 6.28 14 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.29 15 September 1944, to Robert. Frieda, Cliff and Bunk (Tommy) came to the bar.
- 6.30 15 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.

- 6.31 16 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.32 17 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.33 18 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne went to Peoria with Bonita and "some guy." (Bonita's husband was home on furlough in August) Alyne considering quitting her job and will ask for a raise (\$50.00) from Mildred first.
- 6.34 18 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.35 19 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.36 19 September 1944 (Postmark) to Alyne. Robert went on bike ride with other men (40 miles) and ate in a tea room in the country.
- 6.37 19 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.38 20 September 1944, to Alyne. Describes heating water on the fire for his shower.
- 6.39 20 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.40 21 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne ill with pleurisy. Listening to the radio and writes the lyrics to Robert. "I'll Walk Alone."
- 6.41 21 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.42 21 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne is still confined to bed with pleurisy.
- 6.43 22 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert needed to fix a refrigerator but had no tools on the base. He went to the town and could not find tools there either.
- 6.44 23 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.45 23 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.46 24 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.47 24 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.48 25 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.49 25 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert's salvaged bicycle was stolen. Robert built it from salvaged parts. He was assigned work on a refrigerator but no tools were available.
- 6.50 26 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Stanley (Mildred's husband/boyfriend) on furlough soon.
- 6.51 26 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 6.52 27 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.53 27 September 1944, to Alyne. Listening to a radio in the barracks "borrowed" from the Red Cross.
- 6.54 28 September 1944, to Robert. Alyne complains of a drunk (Gaddy) in the bar.
- 6.55 28 September 1944, to Alyne. Love letter. Asks Alyne to send her photo to his mother.
- 6.56 29 September 1944, to Alyne. Mentions American Forces radio broadcast and the song "I'll walk alone."
- 6.57 29 September 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 6.58 30 September 1944, to Robert. She is having trouble getting film for a camera to send pictures to him of her new hairstyle.
- 6.59 30 September 1944, to Alyne. Robert was sent to get 5000 feet of lumber. Tells Alyne of the beautiful countryside and thatch roofed houses. Planning to go to London and buy Alyne a gift.
- 6.60 30 September 1944, to Alyne. Had a letter from Alyne with the lyrics to "I'll Walk Alone." Tells Alyne his birthday is Oct 29.



## Folder 7: Correspondence: October 1944

- 7.1 1 October 1944, to Robert. Mentions working with a man she had worked with eight years before at Larry's place and mentions Mary and her sisters, Pauline and Estella.
- 7.2 1 October 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 7.3 2 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.4 2 October 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 7.5 3 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.6 3 October 1944, to Alyne. Men are placing bets on the World Series.
- 7.7 4 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Enclosed letter from Doc Moore.
- 7.8 4 October 1944, to Alyne. No shortage of cigarettes for men in England. Alyne had told Robert that Mary was going to smoke a pipe.
- 7.9 5 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.10 5 October 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 7.11 6 October 1944, to Alyne. Went on pass to Winchester.
- 7.12 6 October 1944, to Robert. From Bonita McClellan (Mrs. Clyde McClellan, 805 N. Roosevelt.) Birthday card.
- 7.13 7 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.14 7 October 1944, to Alyne. Robert imagines an evening in Bloomington and visiting the Servrite for a steak.
- 7.15 8 October 1944, to Robert. Visited Mary and Randall in the country. Alyne has saved \$300 in the bank and says it is the first time she has had money in the bank.
- 7.16 8 October 1944, to Alyne. Trying to build a gasoline engine and air compressor.
- 7.17 9 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne and her mother are looking for a different apartment. They have to carry coal up to the third floor.
- 7.18 9 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne alludes to Mary getting an abortion in Peoria.
- 7.19 9 October 1944, to Alyne. Robert speaks of the relationship between Mary and Earl and the "soldier's viewpoint."
- 7.20 10 October 1944, to Alyne. Some men had received empty boxes in the mail – their presents were stolen.
- 7.21 11 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Mentions the Victrola at "the place" (the bar?) and ordering a recording of "I'll walk alone."
- 7.22 11 October 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 7.23 12 October 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 7.24 13 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.25 14 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.26 15 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.27 16 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Robert's sister is "Dot."
- 7.28 17 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.29 17 October 1944, (postmark), birthday card to Robert.
- 7.30 18 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.31 20 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne received the pin that Robert bought for her. Doc Moore wrote a note on Alyne's letter. Alyne going to the movies with Bunny Lynn, who is also the woman who fixes her hair. Alyne's mother will not let her wash her hair at home in the winter.

- 7.32 21 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne plans to get a permanent, 25 cents a curl. She is not satisfied with the snapshots that she and Bonita took (3 rolls of film).
- 7.33 22 October 1944, to Robert. Evening at the Colony Club and Green Mill.
- 7.34 23 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.35 24 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 7.36 25 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne is going to practice cooking when she quits the bar.
- 7.37 26 October 1944, to Robert. Mentions a letter from Bill Callans.
- 7.38 27 October 1944, to Robert. Alyne had to tell off Stanley Earl (a customer). Bill Callans asked for Robert's address.
- 7.39 28 October 1944, (Postmark), to Robert. On Stanley's Tavern letterhead. News of life at the bar.
- 7.40 30 October 1944, to Robert. Visited her brother, Harry, in Lexington with mother and Carter for a chicken dinner and then visited Dixine. Mother visited the bar to drink beer and whiskey.
- 7.41 31 October 1944, to Robert. Love letter.

**Folder 8: Correspondence: November 1944**

- 8.1 1 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.2 2 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.3 3 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.4 4 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.5 6 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.6 7 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.7 8 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.8 9 November 1944, to Robert. Jean and her mother went to Michigan, and Alyne, Mary and Lorraine are enjoying the quiet house.
- 8.9 10 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.10 11 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.11 12 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.12 13 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne had an angry letter dated 26 October from Robert regarding her night out with another woman and man. She apologized and assured him she did not do anything wrong.
- 8.13 14 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne bought a new suit for \$50.
- 8.14 15 November 1944, to Robert. Bonita went to Peoria with a girl who had gotten herself in trouble. Alyne reminded Robert of when they had been worried at one time. Mildred's husband is stationed in Arkansas.
- 8.15 16 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.16 17 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.17 18 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.18 20 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.19 21 November 1944, to Robert. Something happened to Robert's mother—"I didn't think Dad would do anything like that." Alyne offers to have her mother in law stay with her.
- 8.20 22 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.21 22 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne visited Eddie Burns Tavern.
- 8.22 23 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.

- 8.23 24 November 1944, to Robert. A bar customer brought Alyne a full turkey dinner for Thanksgiving at the grill. Alyne's niece came to visit from Lexington.
- 8.24 25 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne going to Decatur with Mary to visit Mary's sister Estella. Alyne threw a man out of the bar because he was playing the "barrel of fun" but didn't want to buy the tickets.
- 8.25 26 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.26 27 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.27 28 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne bought a war bond from Mary Tracy's daughter, Lorraine.
- 8.28 29 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 8.29 30 November 1944, to Robert. Alyne mentions Mary's husband/sweetheart Leo. The grill purchased a copy of Alyne and Robert's "song."
- 8.30 30 November 1944, to Robert. Love letter.

**Folder 9: Correspondence: December 1944**

- 9.1 2 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.2 4 December 1944, to Robert. Apologizes for going to Peoria with Bonita.
- 9.3 5 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.4 5 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.5 6 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.6 6 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert visited the English Non Com Club and found that they had an acceptable beer. Robert has the job of building a sound proof room at the Red Cross.
- 9.7 7 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.8 7 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert's mother is having eye trouble.
- 9.9 8 December 1944, to Robert. Alyne can only mail cigarettes to Robert if she has a request from him in writing.
- 9.10 8 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert mentions the robot and rocket bombs.
- 9.11 9 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.12 9 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.13 10 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert reports that they are expecting jet planes. The German's have planes that can go 500 mph, but not for extended periods.
- 9.14 10 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.15 11 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.16 11 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert attended a Catholic Mission five-day service. He said he felt less low after praying there.
- 9.17 12 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.18 12 December 1944, to Alyne. The hospital has increased in size from 1400 beds to 2000 beds. Passes have been discontinued since the "drive." Robert is still attending the Catholic services. The sermon was on remaining true to your wife.
- 9.19 13 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.20 13 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.21 14 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.22 15 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.

- 9.23 15 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert's company had to watch a VD movie. Their company had 6 cases, which was an extraordinary number according to Robert. The Army "allows" for 1 case per 1000 men per month.
- 9.24 16 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.25 16 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert refers to P-39 beer in Bloomington to P-238 beer in Britain (unfavorably).
- 9.26 17 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.27 17 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.28 18 December 1944, to Robert. Mentions Nellie and Eric moving to Arizona, but gives Robert an address in Kerrville TX to write to them. Sending Robert's parents \$20 for Christmas.
- 9.29 18 December 1944, to Alyne. Robert says that his mother wrote to him that his father "walked out on her." His father wrote that he moved to the city because he had work there. Robert had a nurse "censor" his envelope before he wrote the letter so he could write more pages and "tease" Alyne.
- 9.30 19 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.31 19 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.32 20 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.33 20 December 1944, to Alyne. Mentions a letter from Slattie O'Connor with "all the dirt."
- 9.34 21 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.35 22 December 1944, to Robert. Robert thinks that the war is being lengthened by the latest drive of the Germans. He compares this time to 1918. He mentions the terrible injuries of the soldiers in the hospital.
- 9.36 22 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.37 23 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.38 23 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.39 24 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.40 25 December 1944, to Robert. Alyne is working at the bar on Christmas day.
- 9.41 25 December 1944, to Alyne. Enclosing a holly leaf and the menu for Christmas dinner. Presents were provided by the Red Cross.
- 9.42 26 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.43 26 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.44 27 December 1944, to Robert. Harry Coit of the Wonder Grill fell and broke his leg. He was going to be replaced by John Kelly, but Alyne doubted that he could stay sober for the three months Coit would be off work. Stanley Earl had been hit by a car the previous week and his leg was badly injured.
- 9.45 27 December 1944, to Alyne. Soldiers from the front tell Robert that it will be very difficult to end the war because they need to cross the Rhine and the other side is "fortified like the Seigfried line." The hospital was having trouble with freezing pipes and Robert was in charge of the generators.
- 9.46 28 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter. Enclosed letter from Carter Garfoot, her sister.
- 9.47 28 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.48 28 December 1944, to Robert. Love letter.
- 9.49 29 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 9.50 29 December 1944, to Robert. Alyne writes the lyrics to "A Little on the Lonely Side."
- 9.51 30 December 1944, to Alyne. Enclosing letter from nephew Dick.

9.52 31 December 1944, to Alyne. Love letter.

**Folder 10: Correspondence: January 1945**

- 10.1 1 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.2 1 January 1945, to Alyne. Two men were in the hospital with acute alcoholism and another with an eight inch gash in his arm after celebrating the new year.
- 10.3 2 January 1945, to Robert. Mary is starting work at the Wonder Grill.
- 10.4 2 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.5 3 January 1945, to Alyne. Robert is worried about his sister who is thinking of remarrying.
- 10.6 4 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne was in Decatur because her sister Carter was having a surgery. Carter's husband was able to get leave for a few days to be with her. Carter's home did not have a kitchen.
- 10.7 4 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.8 5 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.9 5 January 1945, to Alyne. Robert was having a disagreement with his staff sergeant.
- 10.10 6 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.11 7 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne's brother Herry and his family came to visit and went to Mary and Randall's home.
- 10.12 7 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.13 8 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.14 9 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.15 9 January 1945, to Alyne. One hundred men have joined Robert's unit, and he heard a rumor that one hundred men would be sent for the infantry. Robert says that they are looking for men with combat training, and he had such training.
- 10.16 10 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne writes the lyrics to a song to Robert "I'm a Little on the Lonely Side."
- 10.17 10 January 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 10.18 11 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.19 11 January 1945, to Alyne. Robert met a man from Bloomington, Molloy.
- 10.20 12 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.21 12 January 1945, to Alyne. Men were asked to volunteer for the infantry. Five men volunteered.
- 10.22 15 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.23 15 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne's mother had a letter from her son, Bill. He was in Brazil. Bunny (Alyne's friend) is running away with a soldier. She has a husband in the army and two children. Alyne is taking Bunny's furniture to her house and considering buying it. The two front rooms in their apartment are empty, and Alyne is thinking of fixing them up.
- 10.24 17 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne has been working at Stanley's Tavern for nine months.
- 10.25 18 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne went out with Carter, Pauline, Mary and Estella and Estella's husband to the Nite Hawk. Robert's father wrote to ask Alyne to stay with them in New York.
- 10.26 18 January 1945, to Doc from Robert. Robert sends Doc a money order for five dollars and asks him to purchase yellow tea roses for Alyne on Valentine's Day.
- 10.27 19 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.

- 10.28 20 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.29 22 January 1945, to Robert. Alyne went bowling with Bonita and Mildred. Stanley Earl and "Gaddy" are barred from the tavern.
- 10.30 23 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter. Carter and Wick (husband) are still visiting.
- 10.31 24 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.32 25 January 1945, to Robert. Carter is returning home to be released to work.
- 10.33 26 January 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 10.34 27 January 1945, to Robert. Carter is scheduled for another surgery. She is going to see if she can get Gerry (Gerald Garfoot, her husband) home again. Alyne had a letter from Dorothy, who broke the news that Robert's mother had died. Alyne gave up any plan to go to New York. Alyne sent a photo of herself to Robert.
- 10.35 29 January 1945, to Robert. A photographer was supposed to come to the tavern to take their pictures. Doc Moore came in and played pinball with Alyne.
- 10.36 31 January 1945, to Robert. Stanley (tavern owner) has allowed Stanley Earl back in the tavern. He wanted Stanley to do some work. Alyne also notes that Stanley Earl's wife divorced him that day. Alyne mentions the tenant in the downstairs apartment but does not mention her name.

**Folder 11      Correspondence: February 1945**

- 11.1 1 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.2 2 February, 1945, to Robert. Businesses have been told to turn off unnecessary electric signs and lights to conserve electricity.
- 11.3 3 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.4 5 February, 1945, to Robert. Alyne missed her union meeting again but went out with Bonita to the Sportsmans Club, the Moose and the K of P Club.
- 11.5 6 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.6 7 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.7 8 February, 1945, to Robert. Alyne's mother had been receiving an "old age" pension but it was stopped due to the fact that Alyne was receiving money from Robert. Her brother Bill was trying to get an allotment sent to his mother from his pay.
- 11.8 9 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.9 11 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.10 14 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.11 14 February, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 11.12 14 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.13 16 February 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.14 17 February 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.15 19 February 1945, to Robert.
- 11.16 20 February 1945, to Robert. Bars and taverns are ordered to close at midnight instead of 1 am.
- 11.17 21 February 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.18 22 February 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.19 23 February, 1945, to Alyne. Robert is building an ice cream freezer for a colonel.
- 11.20 23 February, 1945, to Robert. Robert's father had a stroke, and his sister had lost her job. Robert's father asked for \$50 and Alyne told Robert she would send it.

- 11.21 26 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 11.22 27 February, 1945, to Robert. Robert has a motorcycle in England.
- 11.23 28 February, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.

## **Folder 12 Correspondence: March 1945**

- 12.1 1 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.2 2 March 1945, to Alyne. All the men in the camp had to be x-rayed for TB.
- 12.3 2 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.4 5 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne went to Chicago and bought a coat and dress. She also attended a union meeting and went to Kappa.
- 12.5 5 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.6 6 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.7 7 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.8 8 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.9 9 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.10 10 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne was finally able to find film for Robert. She had been looking for months.
- 12.11 12 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne went to Peoria with Bonita again. Her sister, Dixine had a baby boy.
- 12.12 13 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.13 14 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.14 16 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.15 17 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.16 19 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne went horseback riding with Bonita.
- 12.17 20 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne plans to attend a baby shower for her niece, Betty. Gossips about Bunny Lynn's husband coming on furlough to deal with her "elopement" with another soldier. Confides that Doc Moore has asked her out on a date.
- 12.18 21 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne congratulates Bob for finishing the ice cream freezer. Alyne had a letter from Bill (ex fiancé?) who is in the front lines in the Philippines.
- 12.19 23 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne is going horseback riding with Bonita again.
- 12.20 24 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne mentions that she went for a ride in a car (a novelty for her). She and Bonita are planning a farewell party for Bonita's cousin who is going to Washington D.C. and a birthday party for the woman who brings Alyne her food every day.
- 12.21 24 March 1945, to Alyne. Robert complains that Alyne says too often she does not have time to write him a letter on Sunday. He mentions that he always writes even after working a 18 or 19 hour shift.
- 12.22 25 March 1945, to Alyne. Robert is reading about a crack down on vice in Peoria. He says you can always hear stories about Peoria in England. He mentions the "work or fight" men at Camp Ellis. They were given one month's training and then told they could either fight or work. The men on the base are forming baseball teams. Robert complains about the powdered eggs.
- 12.23 26 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne went horseback riding again. She ordered new sunglasses for \$20.
- 12.24 26 March 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.

- 12.25 27 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.26 27 March 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 12.27 28 March 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 12.28 28 March 1945, to Alyne. Robert sent a photo of himself on the motorcycle, but he no longer had it because another man wrecked it when the gas jammed.
- 12.29 29 March 1945, to Alyne. The men are on edge because they expect the end of the war. Robert heard a new song: "I'm Gonna See My Baby."
- 12.30 30 March 1945, to Robert. Alyne went to Springfield with Bonita on the train to pick up a dress for Bonita.
- 12.31 30 March 1945, to Alyne. Love letter

**Folder 13: Correspondence: April 1945**

- 13.1 1 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert played craps and lost all his savings.
- 13.2 2 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.3 3 April, 1945, to Robert. On Hotel Lincoln, Joliet IL letter head. Alyne travelled to Chicago, Joliet and Springfield with Bonita.
- 13.4 3 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.5 4 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.6 5 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert talks about people's disregard for marriage. He talks about Mary and Bonita and others who have cheated on their husbands during the war.
- 13.7 6 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert has received orders to stop making improvements in the hospital. They expect to be home by June.
- 13.8 7 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.9 8 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.10 8 April, 1945, to Robert. Love letter.
- 13.11 9 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.12 11 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert has received a telegram that his father had a stroke and is dying. He has applied for a furlough home.
- 13.13 12 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.14 13 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.15 14 April, 1945, to Alyne. When Robert received the telegram about his father, he was in Southampton with Mills, getting ready to play a round of golf there. Mills' cousin there had connections that allowed them to borrow clubs from the mayor.
- 13.16 15 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert quotes Shakespeare to Alyne. "I cannot heave my heart into my mouth. I am sure my love is more ponderous than my tongue." Robert is waiting for an emergency furlough because of his father's ill health.
- 13.17 17 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert sent a photo of his room in the camp. A cat brought a litter of kittens into his room and abandoned them.
- 13.18 18 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter. Encloses a magazine article "Love Rides the Storm."
- 13.19 19 April, 1945, to Alyne. A letter from Robert's sister says that their father is paralysed on one side.
- 13.20 20 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert has been told that his furlough is held up because there is no transportation.



- 13.21 21 April, 1945, to Alyne. Some hospitals that came over at the same time as Robert's have returned to the U.S. He is hopeful that his will go back as well. They have very few patients.
- 13.22 22 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.23 23 April, 1945, to Alyne. The blackout has finally been lifted.
- 13.24 24 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.25 25 April, 1945, to Alyne. Robert congratulates Mildred on expecting a baby.
- 13.26 26 April, 1945, To Alyne. Love letter.
- 13.27 27 April, 1945, to Alyne. The hospital is now receiving prisoners that had been held by the Germans. Their condition shocked Robert.
- 13.28 28 April, 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.

**Folder 14: Correspondence: May 1945**

- 14.1 1 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.2 2 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.3 2 May 1945, to Alyne. Word of German surrender in Italy has come through. There are rumors of Hitler's death.
- 14.4 3 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.5 4 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.6 5 May 1945, to Alyne. Robert's furlough request was officially refused.
- 14.7 6 May 1945, to Alyne. War in Europe is over as far as Robert is concerned. Hospitals are being sent to the U.S. for furlough and then sent to the Pacific for duty there.
- 14.8 7 May 1945, to Alyne. The war is officially over in Europe.
- 14.9 8 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.10 9 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.11 11 May 1945, to Alyne. Robert gives the details of his journey to England now that censoring is over.
- 14.12 12 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.13 13 May 1945, to Alyne. The hospital has received Russian patients. One was uncontrollable. He sliced his chest with a razor and then jumped through a window.
- 14.14 14 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.15 15 May 1945, to Alyne. Roberts says that under the Army point system only 7 of the five hundred men in his unit will be discharged. Robert did not have the right points to be discharged (married men with children would have more points)
- 14.16 16 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.17 17 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.18 18 May 1945, to Alyne. A list of hospitals going to the Pacific has been released and Robert's is not on the list.
- 14.19 19 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.20 20 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.21 21 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.22 22 May 1945, to Alyne. Robert's hospital has been "put in class four," meaning they have been made surplus and will be shipped to the States. Robert related an incident of a man in his station receiving a letter from his wife telling him she was living with another man. He was hospitalized in the psychiatric ward.

- 14.23 23 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.24 24 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.25 25 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.26 26 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.27 27 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.28 28 May 1945, to Alyne. Bonuses are discussed. Robert anticipates receiving over three thousand dollars. (\$3 per stateside day served and \$4 per overseas day.)
- 14.29 29 May 1945, to Alyne. Robert finally heard from his sister regarding their father. Their father was still living but Robert's sister questioned his motivations in wanting to come home.
- 14.30 30 May 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 14.31 31 May 1945, to Alyne. The hospital has just four hundred patients.

**Folder 15: Correspondence: June 1945**

- 15.1 1 June 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.
- 15.2 2 June 1945, to Alyne. Two hundred patients were shipped out, leaving just 200 in the hospital. There is a war bond push, but Robert complains of the waste in throwing out expensive equipment (x-ray equipment, ordnance).
- 15.3 3 June 1945, to Alyne. Rations had been cut by 10% but after sending away so many patients, the soldiers were offered as much as they could eat. Robert's C.O. was drunk, he said he was celebrating going home, but Robert did not want to be hopeful.
- 15.4 4 June 1945, to Alyne. Robert learned from a lieutenant which ship they were leaving on and that they were returning to the States by July 1.
- 15.5 5 June 1945, to Alyne. Love letter.