

McLean County Museum of History

Dorothy M. Washburn Collection

Inventoried by
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	One Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1920- 1947
PROVENANCE:	Material donated by Barbara Washburn, 2011.
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:	Rolled Documents in Annex: R-102 Certificate from Adjutant General's School at Ft Sam Houston; R-103 Panoramic photo of Adjutant General's School students.

Brief History

Born in 1904, Dorothy M. Washburn was a daughter of M/M George Washburn of Bloomington. George was a principal in the family's flower and seed business. Dorothy graduated Bloomington High School in 1921. She taught some nine years at a junior college in LaSalle, Illinois, before trying to enlist in the WWII efforts. After being rejected by both WAVES and Marines due to poor eyesight, Dorothy enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) in February 1943.

The WAAC had been established by Congress in May 1942 to perform non-combat work, freeing American males to serve in combat. Attracted by the success of the Corps, the Army requested that the WAAC be brought under the direct control of the Army. Congress obliged in July 1943, forming the Women's Army Corps (WAC). All WAACs were allowed the choice to join the Army as a WAC or return to civilian life.

Dorothy trained at Ft. Oglethorpe, GA, and then at Ft. Des Moines, IA. As an officer, her assignments took her from Des Moines to New York City (briefly) and then to New Orleans Air Force Base. Dorothy was ultimately promoted to first lieutenant and taught Army administration at New Orleans alongside various male teachers, mustering out in November 1945.

Family members report that Dorothy returned to teaching in Harvey, Illinois, until her retirement to Bloomington where she died in 1994.

Scope Note

This collection includes items copies of letters from Dorothy to her family during her military service, copies of a memory book related to her service, officer's commission, copies of her diary entries from 1920-24, etc.

Box 1 (4 Folders)

Folder 1: Military Service Memory Book

Copies of entries in "My Life in the Service" memory book including diary entries from February-March 1943, 13 pp.

Folder 2: Correspondence from Dorothy Washburn to family

Photocopies of over 30 letters, mostly handwritten, from Dorothy to her parents in Bloomington during Dorothy's service in the WAAC/WAC at Ft. Oglethorpe, Ft. Des Moines, New Orleans, etc., 1943-45.

Folder 3: Misc. related to Dorothy's Military Service

- 1.3.1 Photocopy of notice of arrival at Ft. Oglethorpe WAAC training center, 24 March 1943.
- 1.3.2 Newspaper article with photo on Dorothy's enlistment, *Pantagraph*, undated.
- 1.3.3 US War Department Adjutant General's Office identification card, 29 July 1944.
- 1.3.4 Letter from War Department confirming Washburn's commission, 19 July 1947, 2 pp. including the commission document.
- 1.3.5 State of Illinois Service Recognition Certificate for WWII service, 1947.
- 1.3.6 "A Camera Trip through Fort Sam Houston," a picture booklet of the post and its activities, 28 pp, undated (WWII vintage.)
- 1.3.7 Trading stamps from Eagle Dept. Store, undated. These may or may not be related to her war years.

Folder 4: Diary, 1920-24.

Photocopies of Dorothy Washburn's brief daily diary entries for 1920-24 while she was about 16-20 years old.