

A Glimpse at World War II

The Papers of MAJ Earl and Florence Hallgren

The papers of MAJ Earl and Florence Hallgren offer a look at how World War II affected two people from Omaha, Nebraska. The collection is small, but offers an unusual look at the war.

The material available on the web is divided into four parts:

- [Earl's journal](#) (kept from January - April 1941)
- [Some Documents](#) (not all documents were digitized)
- [Photographs](#)

About The Papers:

Earl Hallgren was an attorney practicing in Omaha, Nebraska. He was also a member of the Army Reserves. In 1935 he married Florence. In 1940, Earl was serving on active reserve duty as an Infantry First Lieutenant at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In January 1941, Earl received orders sending him to Fort McKinley in the Philippine Islands. At the time Earl left, it was anticipated that his wife Florence would join him, so he shipped their household items to the Philippines.

In February, Earl and Florence learned that wives and children could no longer accompany their spouses to the Philippines due to the rising military activity in the Pacific. Earl began training a unit of Philippine Regulars, the 91st Infantry in March and Florence began waiting.

When the war broke out in December 1941, Earl was listed as "missing in action". Florence spent the next three and half years attempting to find out her husband's fate. In late 1945, Florence learned that Earl had been killed in the initial Japanese invasion of the Philippines. Florence immediately began trying to locate people who had served with Earl to find out how he died. She also spent the next 10 years, trying to recover their household goods and money from Earl's Philippine bank account.

Florence did not remarry. She died in 1995 and as they had no children, her collection of materials relating to Earl went her niece, Rita Faulders, who donated the papers to the Combined Arms Research Library in 1996.

It is our hope that by making some of this material available, people can give a small picture of life before, during and after World War II.

Papers of MAJ Earl and Florence Hallgren

The papers of MAJ Earl and Florence Hallgren is an open, processed collection of a journal, official papers, letters, photos and medals saved by Mrs. Hallgren. The material is organized in one box in a loosely chronological order. The contents notes include only the general contents of the folders, not each individual document.

Rita Faulders, the niece of Mrs. Hallgren, donated the papers of MAJ Earl and Florence Hallgren in 1996.

Collection Description

The material in this collection all pertains to MAJ Earl O. Hallgren who served with the U.S. Army Reserves. In 1940, then 1st Lt. Hallgren was on active duty at Fort Leavenworth Kansas. In January 1941, he was reassigned to Fort McKinley in the Philippines. In anticipation of his wife joining him, he had their household goods shipped over and requested passage for Florence on a ship.

The journal details the first three months of MAJ Hallgren's service in the Philippines. The official papers and letters record what occurred to Florence Hallgren, Earl's wife, after the invasion of the Philippines by Japan in December 1941.

MAJ Hallgren was declared missing in early 1942. Letters and documents detail Mrs. Hallgren's attempts to find out the fate of her husband during the war. In later 1945, after hostilities had ended, Mrs. Hallgren was notified of her husband's death in December 1941. Other papers in the collection chronicle Mrs. Hallgren's attempts to find out the details of her husband's death from other servicemen who had served with Earl, and document her attempts to locate her household goods and money placed in a Philippine bank account by her husband.

Also included are some photos of Earl during his time in the service and of Florence many years later, as well as the medals Earl earned.

Box listing:

Letter from donor 1996

Prewar

- Assignment to the Philippines (1941)
- Authorization to ship household goods (1941)
- Earl's graduation from Creighton University in 1935
- Letter denying Mrs. Hallgren transportation to the Philippines (1941)
- Letter to Earl from Creighton University (1934)
- Promotion to Captain (1941)
- Transport of Mrs. Hallgren to the Philippines (1941)
- Wrapping from a package sent to Earl's mother that contained towels (1941)

During the war

- Letters from Masonic lodge (1942)
- Letter from nurse (1942)
- Negative replies to search letters (1943)
- Search letter to Captain Samuel Grashia and reply (1944)
- Status as "missing in action" (1942-1943)

Postwar

- Attempts to get details of Earl's death and official notice (1945)
- Attempts to locate household goods and claim (1945-1954)
- Attempts to locate service companions of Earl (1946)
- Letter to Florence from a High School teacher of Earl's (undated)
- Letter to and from COL Russell Barros concerning circumstances of Earl's death
- Letter to and from COL James D. Carter concerning circumstances of Earl's death
- Letter to and from CPT Norman Wides concerning circumstances of Earl's death
- Letter to and from LT. Bill Parks concerning circumstances of Earl's death
- Letter to and from LTC Arthur Murphy concerning circumstances of Earl's death
- Letter to COL Leslie Lathrop
- Memorial to Earl by Noon Day Club (1946)
- Notification of Earl's death (1945)
- Papers relating to estate
- Phillipine bank deposit search (1946-1956)
- Veteran's compensation claim (1941-1958)

Posthumous award of medals

Original Journal January-April 1941

Photocopy of Journal

Florence's transcript of journal

Copies of letters from Earl's fellow servicemen

Photographs

Shadow box containing medals