

Collection #
M 0951,
BV 2688

**RICHARD LETSINGER
LETTERS, CLIPPINGS, AND MAPS 1942–1945**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 2 Boxes and one Bound Volume

COLLECTION
DATES: 1942-1945

PROVENANCE: Richard Letsinger, Singer Island Florida, August 1993, May

2006

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1993.0581, 2006.0271

NOTES: BV 2688, Letsinger's Memoirs and transcripts of his letters was added to this collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard Letsinger was born on 31 July 1921 in Bloomfield, IN. He was part of the ROTC Program at Indiana University. Shortly after completing his undergraduate work at Indiana University, he was called up by the Army in May of 1943 and sent overseas. His skills as a typist allowed him to serve as a clerk with the Supreme Headquarters for the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in the Map and Survey G-3 section with a Top Secret clearance. His first posting was to London and then later followed the Allied armies into France. When Germany surrendered, he was ordered there and transferred into G-5 Civil Affairs, where he served in Frankfurt and later Bamberg. While in Bamberg, he became a staff reporter for his regimental newspaper and wrote several articles. He ended his military career with a rank of T/5. After the war, he became a realtor and moved to Florida, though he still spent several months of the year in Indiana. Richard died on 1 August 2007.

Sources:

Letters included in the collection.

www.familysearch.org Family Search Genealogy website. Accessed 1 February 2008.

"Soldier's Tales: Richard P. Letsinger." Bloomington *Herald Times Online*.
<http://www.heraldtimesonline.com/soldiers/letsinger.php>. Accessed 6 February 2008.

Letsinger, Richard. *And How Was Your Trip Abroad?*. BV 2688.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Richard Letsinger Collection consists mainly of the letters written by Richard and to Richard during the period of

late 1942 through 1945. A few miscellaneous letters are from after this period. The letters cover his involvement in World War II, beginning with his training in 1943. He was assigned to the Supreme Headquarters for the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and served near London, Paris, and later in Bamberg, Germany after that country’s surrender.

The majority of the letters in this collection are the letters Richard wrote, but there are some letters written to him. Most of the letters are to/from his parents, his girlfriend Pat, his siblings and their spouses, and friends. The majority of the letters are hand-written or typed, but there are also many examples of the war-time V-mail letters used to save room on transports. Richard mainly describes his day to day activities, what he does on his furloughs and days off, the locations he’s at, and the weather. Since he is assigned to SHAEF, he is very security conscience and does not discuss the war in great detail. The celebration of the end of the war in Paris is the subject of several letters. He admits to being homesick, so he common questions he asks in his letters are about Bloomington and Bloomfield and how people back home are faring. He wrote many letters to Pat and professed his love for her and his wish that they get married. The letters are arranged chronologically, which coincides with his movements across Europe.

Also included are a few newspaper clippings and a photograph, both sent to Richard and sent from him home. During the war, he wrote a manuscript for a children’s story entitled “The Wall,” which is included along with an attached questionnaire and explanatory letter. Several souvenirs such as postcards, maps, and ads are also part of the collection. While in Germany, he wrote for a service magazine, so there are a few articles he wrote for the magazine. Finally, several Army documents such as rolls and invitations were included.

Added to the collection were his memoirs, *And How Was Your Trip Abroad?*, located at BV 2688. This volume includes a short biography of his time in the Army, transcripts of the letters he wrote, and a dictionary of military obscenities.

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0951).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.