

Collection #  
SC 2989

**ERNIE PYLE EYE WITNESS DEATH ACCOUNT  
LETTER, JANUARY, 1999**

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 folder

COLLECTION  
DATES: January, 1999

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NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ernest (Ernie) Taylor Pyle was born to William C. and Maria Pyle in Dana, (Vermillion County) Indiana on August 3, 1900. He attended Indiana University in Bloomington and married Geraldine Siebolds. He was an American journalist who was known for his columns as a roving correspondent during World War II. He reported both from Europe and the Pacific, until his death in combat on a Pacific island. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1944 for his coverage of campaigns in Italy, France and North Africa. He also wrote for the Scripps Howard newspapers.

He wrote in a folksy style about the out-of-the-way places he visited and the people who lived there, often in and out of foxholes. He had a following in some 300 newspapers and was among the best-known American war correspondents in Europe. He died April 18, 1945 in Ie Shima Island, west of Okinawa by Japanese machine-gun fire.

Brigadier General William G. King Jr. was born in Topeka, Kansas, on 14 December 1918. He attended Kansas State University and received a commission from the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps and served as a second lieutenant. He entered active duty and served as an anti-aircraft artillery officer in the Pacific theater. He attended several universities receiving various degrees. He held several different positions in Wyoming, Florida, Grand Bahama Island, Ohio, New Mexico, Maine and Maryland. General King died in June 2009 at the age of 91. He was inducted as one of the first original ten Missile and Space Pioneers in 1989. There is currently a display case with his history at the Space and Missile Systems Center on the Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo.

E.M. (Mick) Nathanson was born in 1928 and was a reporter for several magazines and newspapers in New York, Washington and Los Angeles before writing his famous novel *The Dirty Dozen* in 1965.

Sources: Wikipedia; Hachette.com; afspc.af.mil; biography.com; People.famouswhy.com  
Accessed Sept. 18, 2013

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The letter is written by Brigadier General William G. King Jr., in reply to a request from E.M. Nathanson regarding his recollections regarding the death of Ernie Pyle on Ie Shima on 18 April 1945—King led the patrol on which Pyle was killed. King begins the letter with an account of his unit's anti-aircraft battalion landing and setting up on Ie Shima on 17 April. He then answers eighteen questions asked by Nathanson regarding the details of Pyle's death including the immediate action in which Pyle was shot.

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## CATALOGING INFORMATION

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1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
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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, SC 2989).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.