

MSS. Collection #258

L. Vincent Wade Papers, 1916-1951 [bulk 1943-1946]. 2 boxes (54 folders), 298 items.

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

INTRODUCTION

This collection consists primarily of letters that Vincent Wade sent to his parents while stationed in Europe and North Africa during and after World War II. The letters detail his experiences as a B-17 pilot in the final months of the war, as well as his work as a courier and in aerial mapping afterwards. Also included are a few pilot logs, photographs, and foreign coins from his military training and service. The correspondence with his future wife, Rita Hunter, took place after he was discharged. Researchers interested in the training and service of B-17 pilots during World War II, the post-war work of military pilots, or life in the United States after the war may find this collection useful.

Arrangement: This collection is organized in two series and arranged within series by author or document type. The series are: **Correspondence**, 1943-1951; and **Miscellaneous**, 1916-1950, n.d.

Provenance: This collection was donated by Nancy Wade McConnell and Anne Berry Wade in April 2023, and it was assigned the accession number 2023.9.1.

Processing: This collection was organized and the finding aid was prepared by volunteer Leah Nykamp in July 2023.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Lyle Vincent Wade (1925-2022) was born to Blanche Mann and Lyle Berry Wade in Greensboro, where he attended Lindley Elementary, Lindley Junior High, and Greensboro Senior High School. In 1943, he was a student at North Carolina State College (later North Carolina State University) when he enlisted in the U.S. Army. After completing basic training at Keesler Field in Mississippi, he continued his training at Hendricks Field in Florida and multiple locations in Georgia and Alabama until he was sent overseas in March 1945. As a B-17 pilot in the 365th Bomb Squadron of the 305th Bomb Group, he flew ten bombing missions over Germany, obtaining the rank of first lieutenant. After the war ended, he continued flying as a courier pilot and doing aerial photomapping for Project Casey Jones, which mapped western Europe and the coast of Africa. He returned to the U.S. in the summer of 1946 and was subsequently discharged. Following his military service, he earned a bachelor's degree from N.C. State, and then worked as a chemical engineer in Virginia, Fayetteville, and Wilmington, before moving back to Greensboro in 1968.

Rita Hunter Wade was born in Gastonia, North Carolina. She attended the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (later UNCG) from 1944-1948, where she studied to become a teacher and then worked as a laboratory assistant from 1948-1949. In 1950, she married Vincent Wade, and the couple had two children, Nancy and Anne-Berry. The family were members of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Biographical Sources: The sources for this biographical note include information provided by the family; items in the collection, particularly the letters between Wade and Hunter; [Ancestry.com](#); Lyle Vincent Wade's obituary (*News & Record*, October 9, 2022); the [Rita Hunter Wade Papers](#) at UNCG; and the [American Air Museum in Britain](#).

SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

The types of materials in this collection include letters, photographs, foreign coins, and a few logs, primarily dating from the World War II era. The majority consists of correspondence from Vincent Wade to his parents about his life as a B-17 pilot in the last months of the war and then his work as a courier and in aerial mapping afterwards. Also included are photographs he took during his training and service, as well as numerous letters that he and his future wife, Rita Hunter, exchanged while in college after the war. Researchers interested in the training and experiences of B-17 pilots during World War II, the work of military pilots after the war, or post-war life in the United States may find this collection useful.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Correspondence. 48 folders (270 items). 1943-1951.

Most of the correspondence was sent by Vincent Wade to his parents and discusses his day-to-day life as a pilot during and after World War II (2:15-48). He describes his time as a trainee at Hendricks Field in Florida, as well as stationed overseas in places such as England, Belgium, Germany, and Libya. He tells his family about his flights, his experiences visiting foreign cities, and what it was like to live on a military base. He also expresses a fondness for photography and mentions multiple cameras that he bought in Europe, including the Zeiss Ikon Super Ikonta 531 purchased in Rome and donated with this collection. Letters between Wade and his future wife, Rita Hunter, were written while they were both in college (2:4, 2:11-14). After they became engaged, his mother wrote to welcome her to the family (2:10). Also included in the series are a couple letters from Wade's maternal uncle, who was the pastor at Crozet Methodist Church in Virginia (2:7-8), as well as a few letters written to members of the Wade family by other soldiers, demonstrating that the whole family had friends in the military (2:1, 2:5-6).

2. Miscellaneous. 6 folders (28 items). 1916-1950, n.d.

The majority of this series consists of photographs taken while Wade was in Europe and North Africa (2:3). He took a "selfie" in a mirror with a camera that he mentions in a couple letters (1:45, Mar. 15 and Mar. 30), explaining that he traded cigarette cartons for it in Rome

(1:46, Apr. 5). Also of note is his Pilot Rating Book, which was issued by the Civil Aeronautics Administration and contains evaluations of his flights as a trainee (2:4). Similarly, the navigation logs from his training (2:2) and his senior pilot log (2:5) contain records of places to which he flew. He apparently acquired the foreign coins in the countries in which he was stationed: Belgium, Egypt, England, France, and Italy (2:1).

FOLDER LISTING

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	1	Correspondence	-- Cove, Roscoe to Lyle Wade (1945, April)
	2	"	-- Curtis, Nancy to Vincent Wade (1943, September)
	3	"	-- Halladay, Bill to Rita Hunter (1950, September)
	4	"	-- Hunter, Rita to Vincent Wade (1949-1950)
	5	"	-- Jakab, W.D. to Wade family (1945, May)
	6	"	-- Logan, E.J. to Wade family (1944, December)
	7	"	-- Mann, Marvin to Rita Hunter (1950, November)
	8	"	-- Mann, Marvin and Lucile to Rita Hunter and Vincent Wade (1951, January)
	9	"	-- Marlowe, Faye to Rita Hunter (1945, October)
	10	"	-- Wade, Blanche Mann to Rita Hunter (1950, May)
	11	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Rita Hunter (1949, July-August)
	12	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Rita Hunter (1950, January-February)
	13	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Rita Hunter (1950, June-August)
	14	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Rita Hunter (1950, September-November)
	15	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1943, June-August)
	16	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1943, September)
	17	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1943, October)
	18	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1943, November)
	19	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1943, December)
	20	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, January)
	21	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, February)
	22	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, March)
	23	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, April)
	24	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, May)
	25	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, June)
	26	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, July)
	27	"	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, August)

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	28	Correspondence	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, September)
	29	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, October)
	30	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, November)
	31	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1944, December)
	32	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, January-February)
	33	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, March)
	34	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, April)
	35	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, May)
	36	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, June)
	37	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, July)
	38	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, August)
	39	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, September)
	40	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, October)
	41	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, November)
	42	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1945, December)
	43	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, January)
	44	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, February)
	45	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, March)
	46	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, April)
	47	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, May)
	48	“	-- Wade, Vincent to Blanche and Lyle Wade (1946, June)
2	1	Miscellaneous	-- Coins (1916-1945)
	2	“	-- Navigation Log Books (ca. 1943)
	3	“	-- Photographs (1942-1946, n.d.)
	4	“	-- “Pilot Rating Book” (1943)
	5	“	-- Senior Pilot Log (1944)
	6	“	-- Sketches (ca. 1950)