



**Archives Center & Research Library
Finding Aid**

**John D. Moore World War I correspondence and clippings, 1917-circa 1945 (bulk 1918-1919)
Collection #2021-004**

ABSTRACT:

John Doughty Moore (1898-1981) was a member of the prominent and wealthy Moore family in Haddonfield. This collection contains primarily correspondence sent by John to family members in Haddonfield while he was serving with the American ambulance corps in France during World War I. His letters describe life as an ambulance driver, his experiences with the YMCA American Expeditionary Forces, and some of his travels in France. The collection also includes photographs of life on the front. John was eventually awarded the American Distinguished Service Cross for “extraordinary heroism in action near Somme-Py, France, October 2 – 9, 1918.”

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

Collection #: 2021-004

Collection title: John D. Moore World War I correspondence and clippings

Creators: John D. Moore

Type of collection: family

Date of materials - earliest: 1917

Date of materials - latest: circa 1945

Bulk dates: 1918-1919

Number of boxes: 1 archival box

Extent: 0.4 linear feet

Provenance: Gift of Martha Goettelmann, 2021.

Any restrictions on access? No restrictions

Language(s): English

Related collections:

- * Historical Society of Haddonfield, Moore, Tatem, Brigham scrapbooks, collection 1980-003
- * Historical Society of Haddonfield, Moore, Tatem, and Brigham families papers, collection #1985-002.

* Historical Society of Haddonfield, Additions to Moore, Tatem, Brigham families papers, collection 1994-011.

Other internal notes: All letters, envelopes, photographs and printed ephemera included in the correspondence have been scanned and are available as digital files. The folders of clippings have not been scanned. The digital scans include the first initial of the recipients and the envelope date in the file names. Some of the photographs in the collection should be put in protective sleeves.

Finding aid author: Dana Dorman

Date finding aid created: 05/03/2021

SUBJECTS / ACCESS POINTS:

Geographic names

Haddonfield (N.J.)

Source?

lcsb

Names

Fretz, Katharine Moore, 1903-1971

Moore, John D., 1898-1981

Moore, Emma McDevitt, 1873-1960

Moore, William Garrett, 1874-1944

Source?

local

local

local

local

Subjects

American Expeditionary Forces

U.S. Army Ambulance Corps

World War I

Young Men's Christian Association

Source?

local

lcsb

lcsb

local

BIOGRAPHICAL / HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

John Doughty Moore (1898-1981) was a member of the prominent and wealthy Moore family in Haddonfield.

John's grandfather Henry Dyer Moore (1842-1930) was once one of the wealthiest men in New Jersey. Henry was one of the founders of the American Tobacco Co.; invested heavily in land companies in Atlantic City, Wildwood, and Ocean City; served as president of the Montana Railroad; and was involved in various other business interests. A native of Maine, Henry settled in Hammonton, NJ, and later Haddonfield. He and his wife Mary Jones Smith Moore (1847-1934) had five children, including John's father, William Garrett Moore (1874-1944).

William married Martha (Martie) A. Doughty (1873-1898) in 1896, and they had two children: Helen Moore Ellis (1897-1989) and John. Sadly, Martie died just a week after John's birth. In 1901, William married Emma B. McDevitt (1873-1960) and they had two more children: Katharine (Kath) Moore Fretz (1903-1971) and Elizabeth (Betty) Moore Rusk (1905-2005).

John grew up in Haddonfield, and graduated from William Penn Charter School in 1915. He was apparently a college student when he volunteered for the American Expeditionary Service in 1917.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, John enlisted on May 17, 1917 and was discharged from the U.S. Army on June 11, 1919. Based on the correspondence in this collection, John served in the American ambulance corps primarily in support of the French Army.

He was awarded the American Distinguished Service Cross for “extraordinary heroism in action near Somme-Py, France, October 2 – 9, 1918.” His full citation is included below:

MOORE, JOHN D.

Private First Class, U.S. Army

Section No. 554, Ambulance Service, A.E.F.

Date of Action: October 2 - 9, 1918

Citation:

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to John D. Moore, Private First Class, U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in action near Somme-Py, France, October 2 - 9, 1918. During this period Private Moore evacuated the wounded in an advance post under shell and sniper fire. On the nights of October 6 and 7, he drove an ambulance to points beyond the advanced posts to carry in the wounded, under intense shell and machine-gun fire. He also assisted the litter bearers in exposed positions in carrying the wounded from the lines to the dressing station.

General Orders No. 37, W.D., 1919

Home Town: Haddonfield, NJ

When he returned to the U.S. after the war, he eventually worked as an investment counselor for several banking and investment institutions. He married Nancy Andrews Robb (1897-1966) on May 28, 1921 and they had one child (Joan) live to adulthood. He was a member of the New Jersey Racing Commission, the Haddonfield Mason Lodge, and American Legion Post 38 in Haddonfield. After his first wife's death, John married Viola M. Stickles (1903-1994) in 1969 and moved to Dalton, MA. He died in 1981 and is interred at Harleigh Cemetery in Camden, NJ.

Bibliography

Ancestry.com. U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

Home of Heroes: Medal of Honor & Military History, “Distinguished Service Cross World War I – Army M,” <https://homeofheroes.com/distinguished-service-cross/service-cross-world-war-i/world-war-i-distinguished-service-cross-recipients/distinguished-service-cross-wwi-army-m/> (accessed May 7, 2021).

“John D. Moore,” *The Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Massachusetts), March 31, 1981.

Rauschenberger, Douglas B. and Katherine Mansfield Tassini. *Lost Haddonfield*. Haddonfield, NJ: Historical Society of Haddonfield, 1989.

“Viola M. Moore, longtime nurse.” *The Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Massachusetts), March 26, 1994.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

This collection contains primarily correspondence sent by John D. Moore to family members in Haddonfield while he was serving with the American ambulance corps in France during World War I.

Two letters from “Adele” to John’s step-mother Emma Moore are apparently transcribed copies of letters he’d written to Adele. The folders are arranged alphabetically, with correspondence grouped by recipient.

The letters describe John’s experiences training as a member of the American ambulance corps with the American Expeditionary Forces, primarily in support of the French Army. His earliest letters detail his life in training in the U.S. before shipping out in approximately January 1918. His letters in early 1918 describe frustration at being selected as a driver for an officer, rather than driving an ambulance, and details a relatively laid-back experience in France. Later in 1918, his letters describe more hardships, such as an encounter with hospital staff who had run out of bandages and other supplies. His section was eventually awarded the American Distinguished Service Cross after they “came out of the Champagne [sic] fight.”

Among the notable letters to “Mother” (Emma Moore): John included a printed card in his July 9, 1918 letter (folder 36) that reviews war censorship in letter-writing. His letter to Mother dated Dec. 9, 1918 (folder 47) mentions the citation that he might receive, and his April 2, 1919 letter to Mother (folder 54) includes a YMCA-AEF newsletter for soldiers titled “Leaves of the Riviera Leave Area.” A few of his letters addressed to “Mother” include a second letter, such as the letter to Mother postmarked Dec. 13, 1917 (folder 17); his letter to “Father” enclosed in that same envelope mentions buying insurance to benefit Helen and “Miss Nellie.”

Among the notable letters to “Father” (William Garrett Moore): John describes his experiences with YMCA boosters at various locations in France in a letter dated May 8, 1918 (folder 3). His letter to Father dated June 15, 1918 (folder 4) includes a separate note from the censor himself, clarifying John’s complaints about censorship. His letter to Father dated September 4, 1918 (folder 8) mentions Adele, whose copied letters to Mrs. Moore are also available in the collection, and how John is glad he listened to parental advice about not rushing things.

The collection includes one letter from John to his sister “Kath” (Katharine Moore Fretz), dated December 11, [1918], where he mentions that he heard she had the Spanish flu.

In addition to the letters, there are photographs scattered throughout the correspondence, along with a single folder of loose photographs (folder 58). Some letters mention having photos enclosed, but no photos were found in the envelopes. It is unclear if the photos that do survive were originally sent one or two at a time across several letters, or if some of John’s photos were destroyed by censors, or if some photos were just removed/enjoyed by the family recipients and therefore not stored long-term with the letters.

Notable photographs include:

- an image of soldiers posing around a plane that was shot down on Palm Sunday near “Stroth” 1918 (folder 58);
- an image labeled “dinner at the front,” showing several men holding plates and cups (folder 4);
- a photo of John and pals in Alsace, May 1918 (folder 40);
- a photo of “where the cars were kept” and another image of soldiers boxing (folder 48); and

- a photo labeled “American negroes of the 370th Regiment passing in view before then French commanding colonel near Grandvillais May, 1918” (folder 48).

Finally, one folder (Folder 59) contains assorted newspaper clippings that had been stored with this correspondence. The paper is in very poor condition, and appears to date primarily to World War II.

CONTAINER LIST / INVENTORY:

Correspondence from Adele to Mrs. Moore, August 4, 1918 – August 5, 1918	Box 1	Folders 1, 2
Correspondence from John to Father, May 8, 1918 – March 7, 1919	Box 1	Folders 2 – 13
Correspondence from John to Kath, December 11, [1918]	Box 1	Folder 14
Correspondence from John to Mother, [postmarked August 29, 1917 – April 23, 1919]	Box 1	Folders 15 – 56
Correspondence from John to Mrs. John Doughty, [postmarked January 14, 1918]	Box 1	Folder 57
Loose photographs, [1918]	Box 1	Folder 58
Newspaper clippings, [circa 1937-1944]	Box 1	Folder 59

Correspondence in chronological order:

1917/08/29 postmark	Folder 15
1917/12/05 postmark	Folder 16
1917/12/13 postmark	Folder 17
1917/12/22	Folder 18
Circa 1918/01/01	Folder 19
1918/01/14	Folder 57
1918/01/16	Folder 20
1918/01/19	Folder 21
1918/01/22	Folder 22
1918/02/11	Folder 23
1918/02/24	Folder 24
1918/03/01	Folder 25
1918/03/17	Folder 26
1918/03/24	Folder 27
1918/04/08	Folder 28
1918/05/08	Folder 3
[1918/05/12]	Folder 29
1918/05/13 postmark	Folder 30
1918/05/14 postmark (envelope only)	Folder 31

1918/05/20	Folder 32
1918/05/30	Folder 33
1918/06/10	Folder 34
1918/06/15	Folder 4
1918/06/24 postmark	Folder 5
1918/07/04	Folder 35
1918/07/08	Folder 6
1918/07/09	Folder 36
1918/07/23	Folder 37
1918/07/27	Folder 38
1918/08/04	Folder 1
1918/08/05	Folder 2
1918/08/14	Folder 7
1918/08/23	Folder 39
1918/08/29	Folder 40
1918/09/04	Folder 8
1918/09/08	Folder 9
1918/09/09	Folder 41
1918/09/21	Folder 42
1918/09/25	Folder 10
1918/10/13	Folder 43
1918/10/22	Folder 44
1918/11/15	Folder 45
1918/12/01	Folder 46
1918/12/09	Folder 47
[1918]/12/11	Folder 14
1918/12/12 postmark	Folder 48
1918/12/13	Folder 11
1918/12/20	Folder 49
1919/01/01	Folder 50
1919/01/02	Folder 12
1919/02/07 postmark	Folder 51
1919/02/26	Folder 52
1919/02/27	Folder 53
1919/03/07	Folder 13
1919/04/02	Folder 54
1919/04/10	Folder 55
1919/04/23	Folder 56