Clarence L. Alford Collection

Collection Summary
Title: Clarence L. Alford Collection
Summary: A collection of correspondence, military records, photographs, postcards, and travel guides and documents ranging from 1913 to 1951. Bulk dates: 1918-1919.
Physical Description: 5 full Hollinger boxes, 1 small box of post cards; 2.1 linear feet.
Language: English (bulk), French
Stack Location: Section 12, Shelf 13
Repository: Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219

Historical/Biographical Note:
Clarence L. Alford (1896-1975) was born in Nashville, Tennessee on 27 June, 1896. Alford graduated from Hume-Fogg High School in 1913. In 1914, Alford began working as a clerk for Abb Landis in the Independent Life Building. Alford enlisted with the National Guard of Tennessee on 24 November, 1917. He then attempted to join the United States Marines, but he was turned down due to his poor eye sight. As Alford was still eager to serve in some capacity, Abb Landis helped Alford secure a position in the military. After arriving in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia in June, 1918, Alford was assigned to Supply Company #323 in Camp Johnston. He and his Company embarked for France on 14 August, 1918.

Alford and Supply Company #323 arrived in Brest, France on 26 August, 1918. His company was then stationed in the town of Chateau du Loir where they erected a barracks and other facilities. In September, Alford was transferred to the Military Justice Hospital Group operating outside the town of Toul. There, Alford worked in a finance office as a payroll clerk. His job involved determining the pay for the doctors, nurses, and ever-rotating sick or injured servicemen in the hospital group. Alford celebrated the signing of the armistice in Toul, but he remained working in the finance office until April, 1919. Alford was then transferred to the town of Neufchateau where continued to work as a payroll clerk. Alford was relieved 6 June, 1919, and left France through Marseilles.

After the war, Alford returned to work for Abb Landis. Alford married Marie Hall on 25, December 1930. In 1964, he began work as an actuary in the Third National Band Building. Alford died in Nashville of a stroke on 1 January, 1975,
at the age of 78. He was survived by his wife, Marie Hall, and his sister, Helen Alford Estes.

Scope and Contents of the Collection:
The Clarence L. Alford Collection, added 1984, consists of correspondence, military records, photographs, post cards, and travel guides belonging to Nashville native and World War I veteran Clarence L. Alford, and ranges from 1913 to 1951. The bulk of this collection consists of correspondence spanning from 1918-1919: Alford’s years in the Army. Through his correspondence, Alford communicates a clear longing for home and communicates many of the logistical challenges that World War I servicemen faced. These challenges ranged from difficulties with infrequent and lost mail, transportation difficulties, and the frustration of not being able to secure a leave. Ominously, Alford also predicted that the uneasy peace negotiated after World War I would not last. He makes explicit his frustration with the League of Nations and his belief that the United States will have a war with Japan. Alford also collected many post cards dating from before and during World War I. Alford also collected a great deal of general correspondence sent to him before and during his time in the service. This includes dozens of letters from Ruth Lacy Nichols - a friend and romantic interest of Alford’s. The collection also includes several photographs of Alford’s family and friends.

Index Terms:

Subjects:
Cannes, France
Correspondence
Hostile attitudes towards Germans
Letters
Military logistics
Photographs
Post cards
Toul, France
World War I

Related Collections: N/A

Arrangement:
This collection is arranged alphabetically by series.

Contents Listing
Box 1: Correspondence
Folder 1: Collection and biographical information
Folder 2: Correspondence — Birthday cards received — 1918
Folder 3: Correspondence — Christmas cards received — 1915-1917
Folder 4: Correspondence — Christmas cards received — 1918
Folder 5: Correspondence — Christmas cards received — 1919
Folder 6: Correspondence — Davidson County Memorial Committee — 1919-1920
Folder 7: Correspondence — Family received — June-July 1918
Folder 8: Correspondence — Family received — May-July 1919

Box 2: Correspondence
Folder 1: Correspondence — Family sent — June-July 1918
Folder 2: Correspondence — Family sent — August-September 1918
Folder 3: Correspondence — Family sent — October-November 1918
Folder 4: Correspondence — Family sent — December 1918
Folder 5: Correspondence — Family sent — January-February 1919
Folder 6: Correspondence — Family sent — March-June 1919

Box 3: Correspondence
Folder 1: Correspondence — General received — 1916
Folder 2: Correspondence — General received — 1917
Folder 3: Correspondence — General received — January-May 1918
Folder 4: Correspondence — General received — June 1918
Folder 5: Correspondence — General received — July 1918
Folder 6: Correspondence — General received — August-December 1918
Folder 7: Correspondence — General received — January-August 1919
Folder 8: Correspondence — General received — September-December 1919
Folder 9: Correspondence — General received — 1920
Folder 10: Correspondence — Miscellaneous
Folder 11: Correspondence — Post cards received — 1915-1919
Folder 12: Correspondence — Post cards sent — 1915-1919

Box 4: Correspondence, Ephemera, Hume-Fogg High School, Military Records
Folder 1: Correspondence — Ruth Nichols Lacy received — 1916-1917
Folder 2: Correspondence — Ruth Nichols Lacy received — 1918
Folder 3: Correspondence — Ruth Nichols Lacy received — 1919
Folder 4: Ephemera
Folder 5: Hume-Fogg High School
Folder 6: Military records — Manual of Military Training — 1917
Folder 7: Military records — Miscellaneous
Folder 8: Military records — Notebooks

Box 5: Military Records, Newspaper Clippings, Photographs, Post Cards
Folder 1: Military records — Orders and Bulletins — 1917-1918
Folder 2: Military records — Pamphlets
Folder 3: Military records — Passes
Folder 4: Newspaper clippings
Folder 5: Photographs — Family
Folder 6: Photographs — Friends
Folder 7: Photographs — Military Justice Hospital Group
Folder 8: Photographs — Monte Carlo & Nice
Folder 9: Post cards — Cannes
Folder 10: Post cards — Florida
Folder 11: Post cards — Minnesota
Folder 12: Post cards — New York
Folder 13: Post cards — New Jersey
Folder 14: Post cards — Saint-Mihiel
Folder 15: Post cards — Strasbourg
Folder 16: Post cards — Tanger (Tangiers)
Folder 17: Post cards — Tennessee
Folder 18: Post cards — Toul
Folder 19: Post cards — Utah
Folder 20: Royal Tour of Quebec — 1951
Folder 21: Song Lyrics
Folder 22: Travel guides — France
Folder 23: Travel guides — New York

Box Six: Post card books
Antibes
Long Beach, California
Camp Gordon, Georgia
“Camp Life”
Canada Steamship Lines
Cannes
The Somme
Texas and Mexico
Turbie
Toul
Ventimiglia
Verdun

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Provenance: Originally donated to the Tennessee Historical Society in 1984 by Marie Hall.

Processing Information: Processed by Tyler Powell, July 2017

Accruals: No further accruals expected.