Information Sheet

R  Hall, Ralph Douglas, 1901-1976.
    One folder, photocopies.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are letters of a native of California, Moniteau County, Missouri, and member of Co. L, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, during World War I. The letters include brief comments on the war in France, 1917-1918, and service with the army of occupation in Germany, 1919. There is also a letter from Hall’s father with news from home.

Ralph Douglas Hall was the son of Douglas Edgar and Mollie Rohrbach Hall. He was born and grew up on the family farm a few miles north of California in Moniteau County, Missouri. Hall enlisted in the United States Army in 1917. He was assigned to Co. L of the 18th Infantry Regiment, which embarked for France in June 1917 as part of the 1st Division, American Expeditionary Force. Hall was wounded slightly in the left hand in January 1918 in a local action, probably in the Ansauville sector north of Seicheprey. He was attached to the 164th Infantry Regiment during his convalescence, but rejoined the 18th Regiment by the end of 1918. He served in the army of occupation in Germany in 1919 and was posted at Giershahn, Weidenhahn, and Moidt in the vicinity of Koblenz. Hall returned to the United States in August and was discharged in September 1919. He returned to California and took a position with the Missouri Utilities Company. In 1937 he moved to Versailles, Morgan County, Missouri, where in later years he operated the Versailles Appliance Company. He died in Versailles in 1976.

Hall’s World War I papers consist of nine letters to his father, and one letter from his father. There are five letters from unspecified locations in France, three letters from occupied Germany, and one letter from Camp Merritt, New Jersey. The letters from France were subject to censorship and contain very little war news. Generally they include inquiries concerning acquaintances, events at home, and matters on the farm. Hall mentioned his wounding briefly, but did not describe the engagement or its location. The letters from occupied Germany are only slightly more informative, but do reveal weariness of military life and a desire to return home. The last letter in the collection, from Camp Merritt, New Jersey, comments on a citation awarded to the 18th Infantry by the French and notes the novelty of once again hearing civilians “talking American.” The single item from Douglas E. Hall to his son concerns life on the farm and soldiers from Moniteau County who were serving in the armed forces.

16 October 1990  Morgan County Historical Society  Loaned for photocopying

Shelf List

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4 July [1917]  Ralph Hall, France, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.
16 September 1917  Ralph Hall, France, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.
30 September 1917  Ralph Hall, France, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.
11 February 1918  Ralph Hall, France, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.
30 May 1918 Ralph Hall, France, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.

1 September 1918 D. E. Hall, California, Mo., to Ralph D. Hall, France.

11 February 1919 Ralph Hall, Giershahn, Germany, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.

20 March 1919 Ralph Hall, Widenhahn, Germany, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.

22 June 1919 Ralph Hall, Moidt, Germany, to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.

5 September 1919 Ralph Hall, Camp Merritt, N.J., to D. E. Hall, California, Mo.

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