

C Ball, Hampton B., Papers, 1918-1919
3935 .1 linear foot

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Hampton B. Ball of Troy, Missouri, while in the United States Armed Forces in 1918-1919, consist of letters and a postcard addressed to family members and a brief history of his battalion during the Meuse-Argonne offensive.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Ball Papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Liz Barnes on 24 May 1993 (Accession No. 5306).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Hampton B. Ball served in the U.S. Armed Forces Infantry in World War I, seeing action in France in 1918-1919. He served in the 1st Battalion, 326th Infantry of the American Expeditionary Force. His battalion saw action in the Meuse-Argonne offensive from 25 September through 4 October 1918. He appears to have attended the University of Minnesota and may have been related to Hampton Ball of Montgomery County, Missouri, born 1830 in Virginia. A Hampton B. Ball died 1 October 1991; he may be the Hampton B. Ball under discussion here.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Ball Papers consist of thirty-two letters, arranged in chronological order. All but one of the letters is addressed to Mrs. J. R. Ball of Troy, Lincoln County, Missouri (the inside salutation is to "Home"). The information contained in the letters is relatively vague, given the fact that they had to pass the military censor.

The first seven letters are written from American training camps, the remaining from various locations in France. Ball appears to have been in England briefly before going to France. The letters describe his health, spirits, eagerness for news from home, the French countryside, and French people with whom he is friendly. One letter, dated 7 July 1918, describes his experiences in the trenches.

A history drawn up by members of the 1st Battalion, 326th Infantry of the American Expeditionary Force, describing the battalion's actions during the Meuse-Argonne offensive from 25 September through 4 October 1918, is also in the papers.

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