



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
403 Seventh Avenue North  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0312

**BRINKLEY, ROBERT LEE**  
**(1887-1971)**  
**PAPERS**  
**1914-[1918-1919]-1940**

*Processed by:*

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## INTRODUCTION

This finding aid focuses on the papers of Robert Lee Brinkley, of Nashville, Tennessee. The collection, spanning the years 1914-1940, is concentrated during the years 1918-1919. The collection traces the military career of Second Lieutenant Robert Lee Brinkley during the First World War.

Robert Lee Brinkley was born June 13, 1887, in Gallatin, Tennessee, the son of Gustavus Henry Brinkley. He enlisted in the United States Army on July 1, 1918, and after some basic training near Knoxville, Tennessee, was transferred to Camp Gordon, Atlanta, Georgia, for further instruction. Constructed during the United States' rush to mobilize for World War I, Camp Gordon was one of 16 temporary training camps, and the largest in the South. Ready for occupancy in just five months, the camp's 2,400 acres included 1,635 buildings with barracks for 46,612 men and corral space for 7,688 horses and mules.

After a period in the Officer's Training School, Brinkley was promoted to Second Lieutenant. On November 7, 1918, Brinkley was transferred to Camp Greene, near Charlotte, North Carolina. He was discharged from the United States Army on December 18, 1918. He died in Nashville on January 22, 1971 and was interred at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

The collection was obtained through private purchase and measures .5 cubic feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished material in the Robert Lee Brinkley Collection may be made for individual or scholarly research.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Robert Lee Brinkley Collection containing approximately 150 items spanning the period 1914 through 1940, although the majority of the collection is concentrated between 1918-1919. The collection is composed of correspondence, military records, printed materials, programs and several miscellaneous items.

The bulk of this small collection is composed of the World War I correspondence between Brinkley and his girlfriend, Matie Cooper of Woodland Street, Nashville, Tennessee. Brinkley, a graduate of the University of Tennessee and a trained engineer, provided very detailed descriptions of life in a World War I army camp. Although he did not see action overseas, his letters are an important source for military and social historians researching domestic conditions during the First World War.

## CONTAINER LIST

### Box 1

1. Applications-- War Risk Insurance Application, Brinkley, Robert L., 1918
2. Cards, Announcements, miscellaneous
3. Correspondence-- Adjutant General of the Army, 1918
4. Correspondence-- Brinkley, Robert L. (from Matie Cooper), 1918
5. Correspondence-- Civil Service Commission, 1918
6. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (July 1-July 2, 1918)
7. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (July 4-July 6, 1918)
8. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (July 7-July 14, 1918)
9. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (July 16-July 21, 1918)
10. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (July 23-July 27, 1918)
11. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (August 4-August 17, 1918)
12. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (August 20-September 8, 1918)
13. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (September 15-October 7, 1918)
14. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (October 12-October 23, 1918)
15. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (October 24-November 10, 1918)
16. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (November 12-November 15, 1918)
17. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (November 16-November 22, 1918)
18. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (November 25-November 27, 1918)
19. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (November 30-December 5, 1918)
20. Correspondence-- Cooper, Matie (December 7-December 15, 1918)
21. Correspondence-- Cumberland Lodge No. 8, Free and Accepted Masons, 1919
22. Correspondence-- Donovan, Charles Paul, 1918
23. Correspondence-- Dorsey, V.D., 1918
24. Correspondence-- Downie, James G., 1918
25. Correspondence-- Gadsey, Clarence, 1918
26. Correspondence-- Grace? (Unnamed correspondent), 1918
27. Correspondence-- Hermier, Roger, 1919
28. Correspondence-- Hill, A.E., 1914
29. Correspondence-- Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 1918
30. Correspondence-- Sexton, G.C., 1919
31. Correspondence-- Sitzler, Homer O., 1919
32. Correspondence-- Vaughn Family, 1918
33. Correspondence-- Vaughn, Willard E., 1918-1919
34. Correspondence-- Warner, Claude A. (Headquarters Development Battalion), 1918
35. Military Records-- Military Supply Receipts, Brinkley, Robert L., 1918
36. Military Records-- Special Order No. 104, 1918
37. Military Records-- Special Order No. 109, 1918
38. Military Records-- Special Order No. 288, 1918

39. Military Records-- Special Order No. 319 (Transfer Records), 1918
40. Printed Materials-- "Keeping Fit to Fight," (Lecture by Lieut. Brinkley), n.d.
41. Printed Materials-- "Soldiers Welcome to Atlanta," 1918
42. Programs-- Baccalaureate Service, Central Officer's Training School, 1918
43. Programs-- Dedication Services, Woodland Street Christian Church, 1918
44. Programs-- "Tennessee State Teachers' Association," 1927
45. Receipts, Accounts, miscellaneous, 1918-1919
46. School Records-- Grade Report, Cooper, Matie, 1906-1907
47. Sketches-- "Road Sketch near Camp Gordon," 1918
48. Writings-- Poem, "The Second Lieut." n.d
49. Writings-- School notes, Cooper, Matie, n.d.