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**NORTHERN, JR., WILLIAM LEE
PAPERS
1923-1958**

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INTRODUCTION

William Lee Northern, Jr. was a U. S. Army fighter pilot from 1940 to 1941. This collection includes clippings, many photographs, printed material, and scrapbooks which are from this brief period. The donors are Ms. Jean Thomas and Ms. Emily Cox, Brentwood, Tennessee.

The materials in this collection number approximately 85 items. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the William Lee Northern, Jr. Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The William Lee Northern, Jr. Papers are composed primarily of photographs made during the period 1940 to 1941 when Northern was training to be a U. S. Army Air Corps pilot. These photographs show Northern and his classmates, the P-38 fighter plane and class 41-E, the class from which Northern was commissioned. The yearbook for class 41-E is a part of this collection.

Other items of interest are copies of the *Vanderbilt Hustler* from 1938 and 1939, and a copy of the *Northernaire*, the newspaper of Northern Army Air Field in Tullahoma, Tennessee.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Lee Northern, Jr. was born in Nashville, Tennessee on 25 January 1920. He attended public schools and was active in Boy Scouting, attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. In 1937, he was president of the graduating class at Central High School.

During the summers while he was attending high school, he was employed by the National Life and Accident Insurance Company. After graduating at Central, he worked for this company for a year before entering Vanderbilt University in the fall of 1938.

In addition to belonging to the Sigma Chi Fraternity at Vanderbilt, he was a member of the university's wrestling and track teams. He was an active member of the Waverly Place Methodist Church.

In September, 1940, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps and began training in November of that year after having received preliminary training at the Nashville Municipal Airport under the Civilian Pilots Training Program. He received his primary training at Hicks Field, Texas, basic flight training at Randolph Field, Texas, and was graduated from the advanced training school at Brooks Field, Texas, on 11 July 1941.

Lieutenant Northern was sent from Brooks Field to Selfridge Field, Michigan where he was assigned to flying the P-38 pursuit plane and where he participated in Army maneuvers.

On December 1941, he left with his air group for San Diego, California and, after being forced down en route because of bad weather, he reached that city on 7 December and was assigned to patrol duty in the San Diego – Los Angeles sector.

He was a member of the 94th Fighter Squadron, 1st Pursuit Group, the same squadron in which Eddie Rickenbacker and Irby Rice Currey served during the First World War.

Lieutenant Northern was killed on 21 December 1941 as the result of a mid-air collision between two Army planes which were on patrol duty off the California coast near Coronado. The bodies of Northern and the other pilot were never recovered. On 11 November 1942, Tullahoma Army Air Base was named Northern Field in his honor.

CONTAINER LIST

Folder # Contents

1. Clippings
2. Correspondence – Harton, Francis to Mrs. Northern, Sr., 6 December 1988.
3. History of the 94th Pursuit Squadron
4. Invitations, cards
5. Newsletter – Clemons Jr. High School, 1933
6. Newsletter – Sigma Chi Fraternity. 1938
7. Poem – Around the Corner

Photographs (3 ½ x 5)

1. (negative) Portrait in uniform
2. Portrait in uniform
3. Portrait in uniform
4. Portrait in uniform
5. In leather flying suit
6. In flying helmet
7. Relaxing
8. In flying helmet with goggles
9. With fellow pilots Buckman and Broome
10. With girlfriend
11. In training aircraft
12. C-40 transport plane
13. Portrait photo, Robert Macon
14. Portrait photo, unknown woman
15. Photo Christmas Card, no date, Albert, Mary Frances, and Leslye Ann

Photographs (5 x 7)

1. In flying helmet
2. With fellow pilots Hewitt, Tate, Larson, Burdick, and Ingalls. Hicks Field, Texas.
3. Portrait in uniform
4. Portrait in uniform
5. W. L. Northern, Sr., about 4 years of age

Photographs (8 x 10)

1. In Lieutenant's uniform
2. Training aircraft at night
3. Training aircraft and crew on field
4. Northern besides a P-38
5. Northern besides a P-38
6. In uniform

7. In uniform
8. Northern seated in a P-38, 1941
9. In front of a P-40, 1941
10. Seated in a P-38
11. P-38's of the 94th Pursuit Squadron
12. In leather flying suit
13. Standing before P-38
14. Banquet scene. Mr. and Mrs. Northern, Sr. (possibly at the dedication ceremony for Northern Field)

Photographs (oversize)

1. Class 41-E, Air Corps Training Detachment, Texas Aviation School, Hicks Field, Texas. 29 December 1940.
2. M-2 Flight, Class 41-E
3. Flying Cadets, Class 41-E, Brooks Field, Texas. June 1941 (located in map drawer for oversize manuscript materials on stack 8)

Printed Materials

1. Air Trails – December 1941
2. Vanderbilt Alumnus – November 1942
3. American Legion Magazine – January 1958
4. Lockheed P-38. illustrated analysis – Beck Engraving Co.
5. Lockheed P-38 Interceptor – Color.
6. Lockheed P-38 Interceptor – Color.
7. Lockheed P-38 Interceptor – Color.

Newspapers

1. Vanderbilt Hustler– 21 October 1938.
2. Vanderbilt Hustler – 27 January 1939.
3. Northernaire – 3 July 1943.

Scrapbooks

1. Photographs and mementos of flight training
2. Photographs and mementos of flight training

Yearbook

The Observer. Brooks Field, Class 41-E

Other Items

Two typewritten reports concerning troop trains, Southern Railroad, June 1942 – August 1945.