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McComas Family Letters, 1906 – 1930s

ACC 2020/12.0865



Special Collections Department
James E. Morrow Library
Marshall University
Huntington, West Virginia
2020

McComas Family Letters, 1906 – 1930s

Summary:

Title: McComas Family Letters, 1906 – 1930s

Span Dates: 1906 – 1930s

Creator: Various

Repository: Marshall University Special Collections, Morrow Library (Huntington, WV)

Processed by: Seth Nichols, 2021

Accession Number: ACC 2020/12.0865

Date Completed: April, 2021

Access to Collection: Open

Extent: 0.5 foot

Donor: Gift

Language: English

Search terms:

Mail Correspondence

Barboursville, West Virginia

Battle Creek, Michigan

France

Germany

Huntington, West Virginia

Roanoke, Virginia

Greenwood, Virginia

The First World War

World War 1 (World War One)

American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.)

3rd (Third) Army, 2nd (Second) Division

4th (Fourth) Machine Gun Battalion

Red Cross

Virginia College (now Roanoke College)

Lt. (Lieutenant) Alex L. Garred

Lt. (Lieutenant) B. C. "Curtis" McComas

Charles W. Purcell

George J. McComas

Cpl. (Corporal) H.H. Helm

Margaret McComas

Cpt. (Captain) Thos. "Tom" Suiter

Biographical Notes:

Individuals relevant to this collection include:

Margaret McComas, (Ms. Charles W. Purcell), - the primary recipient of most of the letters in the collection. According to the letters she attended Virginia College in Roanoke, Virginia, at least during the period of 1906-1907. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George J. McComas and the sister of B.C. "Curtis" McComas. She is also the mother of Betty "Betsy" Purcell. She has a cousin, Henry, who writes to her from his tour of duty during the First World War. She eventually marries Charles W. Purcell sometime before 1919 and lives in Huntington, WV during the time period the letters were sent.

Lt. B.C. "Curtis" McComas – writes several letters to his parents and sister while on tour in France and Germany during the First World War. Part of the Third Army, Third Corps, Second Division, 4th Machine Gun Battalion between Jan. 1918 – July 1919. Most of the collection are letters from him to the members of the McComas family.

George J. McComas – a farmer and lawyer in Huntington, West Virginia, and father to Margaret and Curtis McComas. Appears to have spent some time near or inside the Battle Creek Sanitorium, in Battle Creek Michigan. [See: letterhead on some letters]

Bessie McComas nee Curtis "Babba" – wife of George J. McComas and mother to Margaret and Curtis. Grandmother to Betty and Bill who both refer to her as "Babba."

Scope and Content:

The collection consists of eight folders of correspondence between various family members of the McComas family between 1906 – 1930s. The McComas family consists of Mr. and Mrs. George J. McComas, and their son, B.C. "Curtis" McComas, and daughter, Margaret McComas. The majority of the folders contain correspondence from Curtis McComas detailing his experiences in France and Germany during the First World War. Other soldiers, including Curtis and Margaret's cousin, Henry, also sent letters to Margaret detailing their experiences or thanks for gifts provided to the war front. The rest of the collection include letters received during Margaret's stay in Virginia College in Roanoke, VA., letters from a trip to Greenwood, VA. from Betty Purcell to Margaret, and letters in French from a Mademoiselle Panchuse [?] possibly involving discussion of events during the First World War. Date ranges have been estimated or noted by mail stamps where possible.

Processing Notes:

The collection was received by deed of gift from David Woodward who received them from an estate sale in Barboursville, WV. The collection was received with minimal organization and items have been grouped together in absence of any intended original order. Many items display signs of extreme wear and tear and should be

handled with care.

Preferred Citation:

McComas Family Letters, 1906 – 1930s, Accession No. 2020/12.0865, Special Collections Department, Marshall University, Huntington, WV.

Access and Use:

For more information or to use any collection, contact:

Special Collections, Morrow Library

Marshall University

One John Marshall Drive

Huntington, WV 25755

(304) 696-2343

speccoll@marshall.edu

Container	Contents
Box 1	
Folder 1	Correspondence from George J. McComas to Margaret McComas, 1906 – 1916.
Folder 2	Correspondence from Liet. B.C. “Curtis” McComas to Mrs. George J. McComas, 1918.
Folder 3	Correspondence from Liet. B.C. “Curtis” McComas to Mrs. George J. McComas, 1919.
Folder 4	Correspondence from Liet. B.C. “Curtis” McComas to George J. McComas, 1918 – 1919.
Folder 5	Correspondence from Liet. B.C. “Curtis” McComas to Margaret McComas, 1917 – 1919.
Folder 6	Correspondence to Margaret McComas, “Mrs. Charles W. Purcell,” from Various Senders, 1918 – 1930s.
Folder 7	Correspondence to Mr. and Mrs. George J. McComas, 1914 – 1934.

Folder 8

Postcards, [n.d.].