

SMS 520  
21 May 2024  
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**PHILLIPS, DONALD E.**  
**1943-1945**  
**LINEAR FT.: 0.2**  
**APPROX. NO. PGS.: 200**  
**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Donlad Emerson Phillips was a Second Lieutenant and Navigator on a B-17F for the 306th Bomb Group when his plane ran out of fuel just a few miles from the French coast on September 6th, 1943. He was captured and imprisoned in the Stalag Luft III prison camp in Sagan, Germany (now Zagan, Poland) for seventeen months. In January 1945 Phillips and his fellow prisoners were marched 60 miles in sub-zero temperatures to Spremberg, where they were loaded onto a boxcar and shipped to Stalag VII-A in Moosburg, Germany. The camp was liberated by the United States Army's 14th Armored Division on April 29, 1945

These materials were donated to the United States Air Force Academy by Theresa M. Ripley in 2005. Clark Special Collections maintains nearly 200 collections related to Stalag Luft III, and dozens of others pertaining to the World War II prisoner of war experience. See Clark Special Collections staff for additional resources.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of five folders pertaining to the military service and imprisonment of Donald E. Phillips. It includes letters written from his prison camps, service records, photographs, a type-written narrative, and a printed e-book written by Phillips titled *Don's Great Escape: Life in a German POW Camp*.

**Names:** Phillips, Donald E.

**Keywords and terms:** World War II; World War, 1939-1945; Stalag Luft III; Stalag VII-A; Prisoners of War (POWs); German prison camps; The March; Sagan Death March; Letters; Correspondence; Moosburg; Sagan; Germany; Zagan; Poland; 1940s

For information on how to cite the materials in this collection, see the Clark Special Collections Citation Guide at <https://usafa.libguides.com/spc>, or contact Clark Special Collections at (719) 333-4674.

## ARRANGEMENT AND DESCRIPTION

### **SERIES ONE: DONALD E. PHILLIPS**

#### **BOX 1**

- Folder 1 Prisoner of War Letters. A series of 49 letters written by Donald E. Phillips to his family while he was a prisoner of war in Stalag Luft III and Stalag VII-A. Letters are in chronological order, September 1943 to May 1945
- Folder 2 Service Records. Includes awards and certificates, personal identification cards, and a Caterpillar Club membership card
- Folder 3 Photographs. A collection of sixteen photographs from inside of what appears to be a Nazi concentration camp. Photos depict dozens of emaciated dead bodies. One photo is dated 1945
- Folder 4 Written Narrative. Narrative similar to an oral history provided by Phillips shortly after his return to the United States in June 1945, “while things were still fresh in my mind.” Provides a narrative of events pertaining to his imprisonment during World War II
- Folder 5 Phillips, Donald E. *Don’s Great Escape: Life in a German POW Camp*. Published, edited, and introduction by Dr. Theresa Ripley. E-book, published on Apple iBooks, 2012.