

MS 5  
 25 November 2022  
 Schreck, Christopher J.

**DWIGHT, HENRY WILLIAMS**  
**1917-1961**  
**LINEAR FT.: 2**  
**APPROX. NO. PGS.: 4,000**

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Henry Williams Dwight (1896-1964) enlisted in the United States Naval Reserve Force in April 1917 and piloted his first airplane later that year. Dwight trained at the School of Military Aeronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Taliaferro Field in Fort Worth, Texas, before being commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Signal Officers Reserve Corps in March 1918. He spent three months at the Air Service Depot in New York with the 184th Aero Squadron, and in June 1918, he was sent to active duty in France, where he served in Issoudun, St. Jean de Monts, Tours, and Colombey-les-Belles. In October 1918, Dwight joined the 12th Aero Squadron and participated in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the last major offensive of the war. Several days later, while on a mission to photograph a railroad center behind enemy lines, Dwight's plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Having succeeded in his mission, Dwight returned to his home base with little damage to his plane. The 12th Aero Squadron moved to Trier, Germany, about a month after the war ended to serve in support of the Occupation of the Rhineland. Dwight was discharged in May 1919 and went on to become a prominent banker and businessman. He died in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1964 at the age of 68.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT**

This collection consists of five boxes of manuscript material and one box of souvenirs arranged in twelve series, outlined below. These materials relate primarily to Dwight's training and military career, most notably his combat missions in 1918 and his duties following the signing of the armistice, when he served in Germany with the Army of Occupation. The most notable of these items is a photo album depicting military air and ground units from German, French, British, and American forces, found in Series 5, Package 1.

**SERIES ONE: CORRESPONDENCE, 1917-1919**

Consists of seven folders of written material from the time Dwight enlisted, throughout his military training, on active duty in France, and as he served with the Occupation Army in Germany after the war. Most of the correspondence is to his relatives with a vivid description of his daily activities and his living conditions. It also includes an index listing of all letters or documents in Series One by date, author of letter, addressee, and subject.

**SERIES TWO: DIARIES/JOURNALS**

Consists of two diaries spanning from 30 June 1918 to 1 May 1919, while Dwight was stationed in Europe.

**SERIES THREE: PRINTED MATTER, 1917-1919**

Consists of an assortment of booklets and leaflets saved by Dwight, along with a copy of a biography titled *The Adventures of Henry W. Dwight*, written by his grandson George S. Balin.

**SERIES FOUR: OFFICIAL ORDERS AND LETTERS, 1917-1919**

Consists of military records that pertain to assignments, transfers, leaves, and health conditions. This series is indexed within the correspondence file in Series One.

**SERIES FIVE: PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS**

Consists of two booklets of photographs. The first includes aerial photos with images of German soldiers, airfields, churches, and ruins of the war. Most of the photographs are captioned. The second album depicts military bases, air and ground units, and people with whom Dwight was associated during his 15 months in the service. The pictures were taken both at bases in the United States and overseas in France, Germany, and Italy. An excellent accounting of the types of aircraft in use during World War I by French, British, German, and US pilots is contained within the album.

**SERIES SIX: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1918-1919**

Consists of photographs taken during a presentation of citations by General Mitchell in Germany, Dwight in uniform, Dwight's fellow aviators while in France and Germany, and other identified images.

**SERIES SEVEN: 12th AERO SQUADRON, PRINTED MATERIAL, 1919-1961**

Consists of a news clipping, a history of the 12th Aero Squadron, a copy of a circular letter containing information about other members of the 12th Aero Squadron, and a photograph of a 12th Aero Squadron reunion held in 1961.

**SERIES EIGHT: GROUND SCHOOL NOTEBOOK, 1917**

Consists of notes and a group photo taken during a ground school training class attended by Dwight.

**SERIES NINE: NEWS CLIPPINGS AND ASSOCIATED PHOTOGRAPHS, 1919-1930**

Consists of material that deals with Dwight and his military accomplishments, including a program indicating that he was awarded an Honorary Bachelor of Arts for war service from Williams College.

**SERIES TEN: MAPS, 1916**

Consists of an assortment of maps used by Dwight during his flight missions in France and Germany. Four maps include one of Germany and most of Europe and three of France: Buzancy Sector, Metz Sector, and the Chalons-Sur-Marne Sector.

**SERIES ELEVEN: PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION AND LOGBOOKS, 1917-1919**

Consists of Dwight's *Pilots Flying Book*, *Officers Record Book*, and two passports required for overseas duty.

**SERIES TWELVE: ARTIFACTS**

Consists of a collection of items saved by Dwight such as dog tags worn in World War I, insignia, wings, ribbons, and shrapnel that was lodged in Dwight's plane on one of his missions over the enemy lines. Additional items include pieces of Dwight's uniform.

**Names:** Dwight, Henry W.

**Keywords and terms:** World War I; World War, 1914-1918; European Theater; 12th Aero Squadron; Pilots; Zeppelins; Balloons; Diaries; Journals; Aircraft; Airplanes; Fighter Planes; Tanks; Guns; Bombed Buildings; Airplane Wreckage; German Aircraft; Trenches; Occupation of the Rhineland; Meuse-Argonne Offensive; Taliaferro Field; Fort Worth, Texas; United States; Issoudun, France; St. Jean de Monts, France; Tours, France; Colombey-les-Belles, France; Trier, Germany; 1910s

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: CORRESPONDENCE, 1917-1919****BOX 1**

Folder 1	13 April 1917-25 December 1917
Folder 2	25 December 1917-3 March 1918
Folder 3	5 March 1918-23 June 1918
Folder 4	24 June 1918-11 August 1918
Folder 5	14 August 1918-15 October 1918
Folder 6	18 October 1918-8 February 1919
Folder 7	11 March 1919-2 May 1919

**BOX 2**

Folder 1	Index to correspondence, 1917-1919
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**SERIES TWO: DIARIES/JOURNALS****BOX 3**

Folder 1	Diaries/Journals
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- Diary, 30 Jun 1918-15 Nov 1918
- Diary, 16 Nov 1918-1 May 1919

**SERIES THREE: PRINTED MATERIAL, 1917-1919**

**BOX 3**

Folder 2 Printed Matter

- Hymnal from Coblenz, Germany
- International Law Syllabus
- Lewis Machine Gun Notes
- Rules for Demobilization Center
- Officers' Qualification Cards
- Commission Letter from Assistant Secretary of War.
- Bain, George S. *"The Best Days We'll Ever See": The Adventures of Henry W. Dwight, Second Lieutenant, American Air Service, World War I and After, 1917-1919. His Story through his Letters and Diary.*

**SERIES FOUR: OFFICIAL ORDERS AND LETTERS, 1917-1919**

**BOX 4**

Folder 3 Official orders and letters, 10 Apr 1917-5 May 1919

**SERIES FIVE: PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS**

**BOX 4**

Folder 4 Photo Album: Germany, 1919. Images depict German towns, buildings, weapons, a church, a bridge, bombed buildings and towns, and troops

**PACKAGE 1**

Album 1 Includes photographs taken in England, France, Germany, and Italy. Images depict members of the 12th Aero Squadron, and include:

- Balloons
- American Soldiers
- Military Aircraft
- Fokker Aircraft
- German Military Aircraft
- Plane wreckage
- Zeppelin sheds
- Castles
- Casualties
- Bombed buildings
- Guns
- Zeppelins
- Tanks
- Trenches
- 12th Aero Squadron group photo

Individuals identified include:

- Wickersham, M.W.
- Thompson, E.C.
- Dickinson, C.E.
- Bedell, E.
- Cooper, R.
- Chapman, L.B.

- James, Elsie
- Wilson, Arthur
- Franzheim
- Watt, Bob
- Breeze
- Gregory
- Hyman
- Dunn, Micky
- Bereton
- Hawkes, Harry
- Holden, "Doc"
- McClurg, "Sandy"

**SERIES SIX: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1918-1919**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 1 Unmounted, unidentified photographs taken at airfields and ceremonies in France and Germany during World War I of Air Service-related missions
- Folder 2 Photographs of Dwight, 1919

**SERIES SEVEN: 12<sup>th</sup> AERO SQUADRON, PRINTED MATERIAL, 1919-1961**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 3 12th Aero Squadron, 1919-1961

**SERIES EIGHT: GROUND SCHOOL NOTEBOOK, 1917**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 4 Ground School notebook, 1917

**SERIES NINE: NEWS CLIPPINGS AND ASSOCIATED PHOTOGRAPHS, 1919-1930**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 5 News clippings and associated photographs, 1919, 1920, 1930

**SERIES TEN: MAPS, 1916**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 6 Four flight maps: one of Germany and three of France, 1916

**SERIES ELEVEN: PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION AND LOGBOOKS, 1917-1919**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 7 Personal identification and Logbooks, 1917-1919

**SERIES TWELVE: ARTIFACTS**

**BOX 4**

- Folder 8 Insignia, awards, and souvenirs, 1918-1919

**BOX 5**

- Artifacts Five uniform items including a mail pouch, item pouch, leather belt, woven belt, and a rope