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Wilson, Aaron

**O’KANE, ROBERT W.**  
**1943-1977**  
**LINEAR FT.: 2.3**  
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**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Robert W. O’Kane (1925-2016) enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943. O’Kane received a slot in bombardier school in November 1943. Upon completion of bombardier school in August 1944, O’Kane received his Military Occupation Diploma and a commission as a Second Lieutenant. After commissioning, the Army Air Corps assigned O’Kane to the 379th Bombardment Group of the 8th Air Force. During World War II, O’Kane served as a bombardier, completing 35 missions over Germany and France from 28 December 1944 through 17 April 1945. The success of these missions earned O’Kane six Air Medals (Air Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters). During his time in World War II, O’Kane trained and received his Navigator’s certification in April 1945. He remained on active duty until reassignment to the Air Reserves in May 1947.

After the outbreak of the Korean War, O’Kane volunteered for active duty and received his orders on 2 August 1950. Upon return to active duty, O’Kane signed an Indefinite Volunteer Statement on 21 February 1951 and earned his Aircraft Observer Diploma on 30 June 1951. O’Kane deployed to Japan on 3 August 1951 to commence final preparations for his missions in Korea. During the Korean War, policy mandated that flight crews had to complete 55 missions before being eligible for return to the United States. O’Kane received certification of his 55 complete missions on 8 December 1951. For his service in Korea, the Air Force awarded O’Kane two Air Medals and the Distinguished Flying Cross. O’Kane returned to the United States in February 1952.

After the Korean War, O’Kane continued his career in the Air Force, taking assignments in Germany, Norway, and at numerous locations across the United States. Throughout his career, O’Kane earned the respect and admiration of his superiors. O’Kane’s due diligence and work ethic earned him special assignments, including being appointed as a member of the 1968 USS *Pueblo* incident investigation team. After a long and successful career, O’Kane retired at the rank of Colonel in December 1976.

Barbara O’Kane Worster, Robert O’Kane’s daughter, donated these materials to Clark Special Collections via the Friends of the Air Force Academy Library in 2018.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection relates to Robert O’Kane’s military career from 1943 until 1976. The collection heavily focuses on O’Kane’s experience as a bombardier and navigator in the European theater of World War II and during the Korean War. This collection consists of four boxes and an oversized folder divided into seven series, outlined in Arrangement and Description section below.

### **SERIES ONE: LETTERS**

Consists of letters written by Robert O’Kane to his family about his involvement in the Korean War from January 1951 to December 1952.

### **SERIES TWO: PHOTOS**

Consists primarily of photos taken by Robert O’Kane in Japan and Korea in 1951. Three photos from a 1962 U.S. Air Force crash in Fornebu, Norway, are included.

### **SERIES THREE: PERSONAL MILITARY RECORDS**

Consists of Robert O’Kane’s military records from his enlistment in 1943 until his retirement in 1976, including: promotion orders, award citations, training certifications, etcetera.

### **SERIES FOUR: MISSION RECORDS**

Consists of 35 bombardment reports from 28 December 1944 – 17 April 1945 conducted in Germany and France. Each report provides a crew roster, mission brief, and post-mission analysis.

### **SERIES FIVE: INDIVIDUAL FLIGHT RECORDS**

Consists of Robert O’Kane’s monthly and annual flight records from January 1945 – April 1977. Records present monthly and cumulative hours spent in the air along with monthly and total missions completed.

### **SERIES SIX: PRINTED MATTER**

Consists of World War II and Korean War era military manuals for navigation and Air to Air combat.

### **SERIES SEVEN: ARTIFACTS**

Consists of a framed topographic map of Korea used by Robert O’Kane in 1951.

**Keywords and terms:** Korean War; *Stars and Stripes*; Flight Logs; World War II; World War, 1939-1945; 379th Bombardment Group; Bombardment Reports; Mission Reports; Flight Logs; Navigator Manual; Air to Air Combat Manual; Air Medal; 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Group

**Names:** O’Kane, Robert W.; Mignery, Charles T.; Mignery, Charles E.

**Places:** Tokyo, Japan; South Korea; Sacramento, California, United States; France; Sumter, South Carolina, United States; Fornebu, Norway; Germany

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: LETTERS**

#### **BOX 1**

- Folder 1      Letters from Robert O’Kane to Mom and Family, 1951  
Letters to family, January 1951 – December 1951  
Foreign currency and newspaper clippings, attached to 1 October 1951 letter  
*Stars and Stripes* article, “Two Man Airforce ‘Prop Men’ Fight Lonely War,” attached to 2 October 1951 letter  
Newsletter, *The 3rd Bombardment Wing The Invader*, Vol 1, No. 14, 3 November 1951. Attached to 5 November 1951 letter  
Drugstore envelope with three photos, newspaper clippings, and a Japanese rain ticket
- Folder 2      Letters from Robert O’Kane to Mom and Family, 1952  
Letters to family, January 1952 – December 1952  
Western Union telegram to family, 12 June 1952
- Folder 3      Letter of appreciation to U.S. Korean War veterans from South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, 25 June 2000

### **SERIES TWO: PHOTOS**

#### **BOX 1**

- Folder 4      Photos from Korea and Japan, 1951, with writing. Including: Tokyo, Japan; Palaces; Kyoto, Japan; Temples; Officer Clubs; Barracks; Frank Lemac; Andy Andersen; Bill Mullis
- Folder 5      Photos from Korea and Japan, 1951, without writing.
- Folder 6      Photos and Newspaper from Fornebu, Norway, 15 January 1962  
Three photos of Air Force plane crash at Fornebu, Norway, 15 January 1962  
Norwegian newspaper, *Aftenposten*, 15 January 1962

**SERIES THREE: PERSONAL MILITARY RECORDS**

**BOX 1**

- Folder 7      Military Records, February 1943 – December 1949
- Enlistment identification card, 17 February 1943
- Bombardier selection letter, 18 November 1943
- Bombardier school diploma, qualification scores, and graduate list, 12 August 1944
- 379th Bomb Group combat missions with flight crew printouts, 28 December 1944 – 17 April 1945
- 8th Air Force Navigator Certificate, 10 April 1945
- Promotion Orders from Second Lieutenant to First Lieutenant, 25 April 1945
- Army Air Force Officers' Qualification Record, 21 May 1945
- Movement Orders from various dates
- Honorable Discharge from Active-Duty, 29 August 1946
- Assignment to Air Reserve, 6 May 1947
- Air Reserve Orders, 10 August – 10 September 1949
- Folder 8      Military Records, January 1950 – December 1954
- Active-Duty Orders, 2 August 1950
- Special Orders, 7 August 1950
- Individual recall of Air Force Reserve members, 16 September 1950
- Reserve: Retention, Promotion, and Retirement Points worksheet
- Special Orders, 16, 20, 23 September, and 21 October 1950
- Clearance investigation memorandum, 10 December 1950
- Indefinite Volunteer Statement, 21 February 1951
- Aircraft observer diploma, qualification scores, class roster, and Special Orders, 6 – 30 June 1951

Special Orders to Japan, 3 Aug 1951

Certification of 55 complete missions in the Korean Theater, 8 December 1951

Promotion Orders, 19 December 1951

Special Orders, 24, 31 January 1952

Travel Orders, Leave Orders, Assignment Orders, 1 – 29 February 1952

Special Orders 28 March, 9 May 1952

Officer classification data, 7 June 1952

Special Orders, 19 June 1952

Officer's qualification record, 29 October 1952

Temporary Duty Orders for Fort Riley aerial photo mission, 2 July and 4 August 1953

Promotion paperwork, 9 September and 14 October 1953

Aeronautical Orders, 14 December 1953

Ejection seat training certificate, 19 March 1954

Special Orders, 25 October 1954

Folder 9 Military Records, January 1955 – December 1969

Special Orders, 6 September, 28 September, and 3 October 1955

Veterans Affairs home loan packet, 7 March 1956

Permanent Promotion Orders, 13 September 1956

Aeronautical Orders, 7 May 1957

Squadron Officer School diploma, 9 August 1957

Special Orders granting rating of Senior Navigator, 31 October 1957

Special Orders, change of duty station, 20 August 1958

Temporary Promotion Orders, 1 April 1959

Memorandum, "Joint Composite Strike Force," 20 April 1959

Security clearance status roster, 1 April 1961

Special Orders, change of duty station, 2 June 1961

Special Orders, duty assignment, 6 July 1961

Special Orders, 31 May, 3 July, and 10 July 1962

Command and Staff College completion certificate, 29 April 1963

Request to Extend Overseas Tour, 21 May 1963

Certificate of French language fluency, 19 June 1963

Commendation letter from Col Gail L Stubbs, 8 May 1964

Statement of service, 3 August 1964

Special Orders, 24 September 1964

Aeronautical Orders granting rating of master navigator, 1 October 1964

Change of Duty Orders, 26 February, 9 March, 26 April, and 17 September 1965

Change of Station Orders, 9 June 1966

Officer Military Record, August 1966

Special Orders, temporary promotion, 21 November 1966

Letters of appreciation from Col Gordon F. Bradburn, 1 August 1967, Col Gail L Stubbs, 27 July 1967, and Maj Gen L. D. Clay, 25 July 1967

Ultra-Sensitive position certificate, 19 February 1968

Certificates of aircrew qualification, 15 March 1968, 8 April 1969

Letters of appreciation from Col Joseph J O'Conner, 18 March 1968, Col Gail L. Stubbs, 20 February 1968, and Maj Gen R. H. Ellis, 20 February 1968

Change of Station Orders, 23 and 28 October 1969

Folder 10 Military Records, January 1970 – December 1976

Military Personnel Record, 6 April 1970

Temporary Promotion Orders, 29 September 1970

Officer Career Objective Statement. 10 December 1970

Promotion Orders, 1 January 1971

Special Orders, 25 February and 19 March 1971

Special Orders, 1 September 1971

Military Personnel Record, 30 October 1971

Assignment and travel restriction, 5 September 1972

Change of Duty Title, 28 March 1973

Change of Duty Air Force Form 2095, 2 April 1973

Officer Military Record, 23 April 1973

Permanent Promotion Orders, 1 October 1973

DD Form 398 for Special Security Clearance, 13 November 1973

Certificate for Security Clearance, 28 January 1974

Change of Duty Station Request, 9 July 1975

Report on individual personnel, 25 September 1975

Defense Language Proficiency test results, 8 March 1976

Officer career brief, 11 November 1976

Retirement Order, 21 December 1976

Folder 11 Awards and decorations, January 1945 – February 1977

Air Medal citation, 11 January 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 10 February 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 26 February 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 10 April 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 19 April 1945

Certificate for World War II Medal Campaign Battle Stars, 4 July 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 19 April 1945

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 1951

Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster citation, 1951

Recommendation Letter for Distinguished Flying Cross, 8 December 1951

Distinguished Flying Cross citation, 23 December 1951

Request for Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, 30 March 1964

Air Force Commendation Medal certificate and citation, 17 December 1964

Letter of Appreciation from Col Gordon F. Bradburn, 1 August 1967

Meritorious Service Medal letter, citation, and certificate, 12 March 1970



The Legion of Merit Medal letter, citation, and certificate, 31 July 1975

The Legion of Merit Medal Oak Leaf Cluster letter, citation, and certificate  
3 March 1977

**SERIES FOUR: MISSION RECORDS**

**BOX 2**

Binder World War II Bombardment Mission Reports, 28 December 1944 – 17 April 1945

Brühl, Germany, 28 December 1944

Wittlich, Germany, 29 December 1944

Neuss, Germany, 31 December 1944

Daun, Germany, 2 January 1945

Cologne, Germany, 6 January 1945

Bonn Hangelar, Germany, 10 January 1945

Ingolstadt, Germany, 15 January 1945

Paderborn, Germany, 17 January 1945

Stuttgart, Germany, 20 January 1945

Berlin, Germany, 3 February 1945

Gotha and Arnstadt, Germany, 6 February 1945

Arnsberg, Germany, 9 February 1945

Langendreer, Germany, 16 February 1945

Munster, Germany, 19 February 1945

Nurnberg, Germany, 20 February 1945

Luneberg, Germany, 22 February 1945

Crailsheim, Germany, 23 February 1945

Hamburg, Germany, 24 February 1945

Leipzig, Germany, 27 February 1945

Misburg and Hanover, Germany, 3 March 1945

Kassel, Germany, 9 March 1945

Bremen, Germany, 11 March 1945

Minden, Germany, 14 March 1945

Zossen, Germany, 15 March 1945

Böhlen, Germany, 17 March 1945

Plauen, Germany, 19 March 1945

Hopsten, Germany, 21 March 1945

Gladbeck, Germany, 23 March 1945

Fassberg, Germany, 4 April 1945

Leipzig, Germany, 6 April 1945

Schafstadt, Germany, 8 April 1945

Royan, France, 14 April 1945

Royan, France, 15 April 1945

Regensburg, Germany, 16 April 1945

Dresden, Germany, 17 April 1945

**SERIES FIVE: INDIVIDUAL FLIGHT RECORDS**

**BOX 3**

Folder 1 Individual flight records, January 1945 – April 1977

**SERIES SIX: PRINTED MATTER**

**BOX 3**

Binder 1 Unpublished Memoir, *For God and Country: A Memoir*, by Robert O’Kane

Binder 2 Unpublished Biography, *Charles E. Mignery: Interview & History of his Military Service during World War II*, by Charles T. Mignery, 2008-2009

**BOX 4**

Folder 1 Air to Air Combat pocket manual, *Get That Fighter*, 1943

Folder 2 Newcomers Guidebook *Air Force Bombardment School* [No Date]

Folder 3 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Group, Shaw Field, South Carolina, 1952  
Yearbook

Folder 4 *Pacific Division: Navigator’s Manual*, 1954

**SERIES SEVEN: ARTIFACTS**

**OS Folder 1** Framed Topographic Map of Korea used by O’Kane during his 1951 missions

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: PUBLISHED MATERIALS**

Published materials have been catalogued according to Library of Congress classification and are shelved in Clark Special Collections’ stacks.

Banks II, Herbert C., ed. *379th Bombardment Group (H) Anthology November 1942 – July 1945 Volume One*. Paducah, Kentucky: Turner Publishing Company, 2000.

Banks II, Herbert C., ed. *379th Bombardment Group (H) Anthology November 1942 – July 1945 Volume Two*. Paducah, Kentucky: Turner Publishing Company, 2000.

Scutts, Jerry. *Aces and Pilots of the US 8th/9th Air Forces*. Hersham, United Kingdom: Ian Allen Publishing, 2001.