Vaughan, Conan W., Jr., Papers

Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., Papers

1923-1992

Title Statement

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Revision Description

2020-09-15	Finding aid notes updated to new department standards. juliags
2024-08-30	Ella Winterling added classification, updated date formatting, added Students and alumni as subject, and corrected typos. LM Rozema made minor edits, added acquisition and processing notes, added sponsor note, updated FA author, and added George Washington Carver, World War II, and U.S. Army as subjects..

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1991.050

Unit Date

1923-1992

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

The papers document the life of Virginia Tech alum Conan W. Vaughan, Jr. (1906-1990) and consist of photographs, correspondence, awards and certificates, newspaper clippings, files, and other literature almost exclusively from Vaughan's tour of duty (1941-1944) in Iceland and Europe during World War II, and his involvement in the U.S. Army Reserve in the late 1940s and 1950s. Of special interest are copies of correspondence between Vaughan and George Washington Carver, which run from 1928 to 1942.

Creator

Vaughan, Conan W., Jr., 1906-1990

Extent

1 Cubic Feet 2 boxes

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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Source of Acquisition

The Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., Papers were donated in March, April, and June 1992 by Edwin W. Vaughan, Conan Vaughan's brother, of Greensboro, North Carolina. Copies of the Carver/Vaughan correspondence were obtained from the Tuskegee Institute Archives.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., Papers was completed in 1992. The online finding aid was created in 2002.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., Papers, 1923-1992, Ms1991-050, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Conan Wallace Vaughan, Jr., was born on April 23, 1906, in Norfolk, Virginia. After graduating in 1923 from Maury High School in Norfolk he attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute, earning his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering degree in 1927, and a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1928. As a member of the local YMCA advisory council during the 1927-28 school year Vaughan was instrumental in inviting George Washington Carver (1861-1943), agricultural chemist and educator of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, to speak at Virginia Tech in April 1928. The two men corresponded often following Carver's visit, and Vaughan visited Carver at Tuskegee that summer.

Vaughan left Virginia Tech in 1928 to work as District Traffic Manager for the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company in Richmond and Roanoke until 1941. He later worked for the company in Norfolk and Richmond from 1946 until his retirement in 1971. He married Elizabeth Leary Tyler in 1935; they had no children.

Beginning in September 1941 Vaughan served as Unit Commander of the 1128th Engineer Combat Battalion in the European theatre, mostly in Iceland, during World War II. By the end of the war he rose from the rank of Captain to that of Colonel. He received the Bronze Star for meritorious service when his unit was instrumental in the Battle of the Bulge and during the Rhineland invasion preceding V.E. Day.

After the war Vaughan was active in the U.S. Army Reserve and from 1951 to 1959 he served as assistant Commandant and then Commandant of the 2086th Army Reserve Service Unit (Norfolk, Virginia, USAR School). Vaughan received the Army Commendation Medal in 1959. He also served as President of the South Hampton Roads chapter of the Association of the U. S. Army.

Elizabeth Vaughan died in 1988, and Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., died on January 24, 1990. The Vaughans left $2.6 million of their estate to the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, which is the largest endowment gift in the college's history and one of the largest ever received by Virginia Tech.

Scope and Content

The Conan W. Vaughan, Jr., Papers consist of photographs, correspondence, awards and certificates, newspaper clippings, files, and other literature almost exclusively from Vaughan's tour of duty (1941-1944) in Iceland and Europe during World War II, and his involvement in the U.S. Army Reserve in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Of special interest are copies of correspondence between Vaughan and George Washington Carver, which run from 1928 to 1942. Carver's letters are affectionate and thank Vaughan for his friendship. He often refers to Tuskegee as "God's Little Work Shop."

Keywords

Students and alumni
University History
World War, 1939-1945
Carver, George Washington, 1864?-1943
Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute (1896-1944)

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged according to date.

Description of Subordinate Components

Maury High School (Norfolk, Virginia) yearbook (separated pages) and class night program
Unit Date 1923
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 1 (folder)

Military appointments
Unit Date 1926-1953
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 2 (folder)

Certificates and diplomas
Unit Date 1926-1977
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 3 (folder)

Letters and awards from Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Unit Date 1927-1932
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 4 (folder)

Awards
Unit Date 1927-1987
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 5 (folder)

Letters from Vaughan to George Washington Carver at Tuskegee Institute (copies)
Unit Date 1928
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 6 (folder)

Letters from George Washington Carver to Vaughan (copies)
Unit Date 1928-1942
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

Articles about the work of George Washington Carver
Unit Date 1928-1992
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 8 (folder)

Vaughan's personnel file from the U.S. Army
Unit Date 1930-1950
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 9 (folder)

Daily Post, -- "Japan and U.S.A. at War"
Unit Date 1941-12-08
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 10 (folder)

"The American Forces in Iceland," and "Armed Guardians: One Year in Iceland," booklets
Unit Date 1941-1942
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 11 (folder)

Memoranda, notes, etc., from Iceland tour of duty
Unit Date 1941-1944
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 12 (folder)

Humorous and leisure-related literature from Iceland tour of duty
Unit Date 1941-1944
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 13 (folder)

Photographs of sites in Europe
Unit Date 1941-1945
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 14 (folder)

Photographs from Iceland tour of duty
Unit Date 1941-1945
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 15 (folder)

Pieces of a JU-88 German plane shot down in Iceland
Unit Date 1942
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 16 (folder)

Organization Day programs
Unit Date 1942-1943
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 17 (folder)

Letters to Vaughan
Unit Date 1942-1943
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 18 (folder)

Undated letters to Vaughan
Unit Date 1942-1945
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 19 (folder)

Foreign currency (Taiwanese and French bills)
Unit Date undated
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 20 (folder)

Maps of Iceland, Belgium, France, England, and Holland
Unit Date 1943, undated
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 1 (folder)

Photographs of U.S. engineering operations in World War II (confidential photographs stamped "passed for publication by field press censor")
Unit Date 1944
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 2 (folder)

Roster of 1128 Engineers group
Unit Date ca. 1944
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 3 (folder)

Newspaper clippings and newspapers
Unit Date 1944-1945
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 4 (folder)

Letters to Vaughan
Unit Date 1944-1945
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 5 (folder)

Newspaper clippings about U.S. forces in Iceland during World War II
Unit Date 1944-1946
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 6 (folder)

"Instrument of Surrender" (copy)
Unit Date 1945
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

Vaughan's Separation Qualification Record from the U.S. Army
Unit Date 1946
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 8 (folder)

Newspaper clippings
Unit Date 1946-1958
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 9 (folder)

Newspaper clippings about Malmedy massacre of U.S. soldiers in 1944 (trial in 1949)
Unit Date 1949
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 10 (folder)

Reinstatement of active military duty
Unit Date 1949
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 11 (folder)

Letters to Vaughan
Unit Date 1949-1960
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 12 (folder)

Miscellaneous photographs
Unit Date ca. 1950-1960
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 13 (folder)

Army reserve school
Unit Date 1951-1959
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 14 (folder)

Army Commendation Medal presentation

Unit Date 1959

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 15 (folder)

Application for retired pay benefits

Unit Date ca. 1960

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Pencil tray made from Miles Stadium seats

Unit Date 1964

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 17 (folder)

Award of Appreciation to Vaughan from the Virginia Tech Alumni Association with Century Member bars

Unit Date 1978-1983

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

Letters from and to Vaughan about his donating letters by George Washington Carver to Tuskegee Institute

Unit Date 1981

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

Letters to Vaughan

Unit Date 1983-1989

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 20 (folder)

"The Biography of Conan Wallace Vaughan, Jr." by Edwin W. Vaughan

Unit Date 1990

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 21 (folder)

"Conan and Elizabeth Vaughan: A Tribute," produced by the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine

Unit Date 1992

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 22 (folder)