

26/20/239

Alumni Association

Alumni

Col. Russell A. Cone Papers, 1899-1992, 2002, 2014, 2016, 2020

Arranged into four series: Personal life and family, St. Albans High School, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Air Force Career. Series are arranged chronologically except Air Force Career for which service medals are arranged separately by order of precedence in Box 3. Oversized items are housed in Box 4 and are indicated elsewhere on the finding aid with parentheses.

These papers were donated by Russell A. Cone's youngest daughter, Claire Robertson whose extensive notes and annotations provide identifications, dates, and contextual information.

Box 1:

Personal Life and Family:

Family Photo Album, Charleston, Illinois, ca. 1899-1904

Photo Album: Russell Allan Cone, whole life, 1905-1992 (2 albums) (see oversized in Box 4)

Note: Contains photographs, clippings, cards, and other memorabilia from Cone's personal and professional life. The album was put together and is heavily annotated by his youngest daughter, Claire Robertson.

RAC-Family-Photos (see also separate CADETS Album from Wheatly side-Charleston, IL): Stinson Aircraft; Civilian Life, 1905, ca. 1915-16, 1920, 1930-40, 1944, 1948, 1950, 1959-60 (2 folders)

Note: Contains photographs and negatives of Russell Cone and family, photographs taken by Russell, a birthday card to Russell from his daughter Linda, photographs and negatives taken by Russell, business cards, and newspaper clippings.

Book of Verse by William S. Cone, 1925

Christmas Card and Club Membership Card, 1925

RAC and William Sefton Cone flight, c 1930-1941

Russell Cone Notes, 1933, ca. 1950-69

Note: Appears to be a list of people and a list of things to take.

Biographical Information and Provenance Notes 1943-44, 1951, 1957, 1963, 2020

Note: Contains select biographically relevant newspaper articles and forms copied from Cone's *Alumni News* Morgue File, a timeline of Cone's life, and notes written by Cone's daughter, Claire Robertson.

Russell Cone Photos, ca. 1950

Rotary International Outstanding Community Service Award, 1978

Leather handle, undated (see oversized in Box 4)

St. Albans High School:

St. Albans Athletic Letters, ca. 1919-1923

St. Albans School Diploma, 1923 (see oversized in Box 4)

RAC St. Albans Career, undated

Note: Contains a St. Albans necktie and a note about the necktie written by his daughter, Claire Robertson.

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign:

University of Illinois programs, dance cards, fraternity drink labels, and post cards, 1915, 1921, ca. 1924-27, 1937, 1946

University of Illinois Photos, 1920-29

ROTC training certificates, 1923-26

Delta Phi Induction Certificate, 1924 (see oversized in Box 4)

Fraternity Paddle with inscription, ca. 1924-1927 (see oversized in Box 4)

University of Illinois Clippings, 1925-28, 1944-46

The Illini Blather, December 17, 1926 (see oversized in Box 4)

Note: A single sided sheet that appears to be a spoof of the Daily Illini.

Daily Illini Magazine Sections, 1927-28 (see oversized in Box 4)

Note: Contains four sections for which Russell's first wife, Helen Bess Cone, was the short story editor. For two of the sections she also contributed a story.

Sigma Chi Memoir, undated

Air Force Career:

Hand labeled class photograph from flying school, ca. 1928 (see oversized in Box 4)

RAC: Photos-military; Flight training 1928; related Tulsa ROTC; Pilots Licenses, 1928-37, 1939-41, 1944-49 (2 folders)

Note: Contains photographs from throughout Cone's military career; newspaper clippings and programs relating to his time at Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field; newspaper clippings relating to his time in Alaska; and a pilots licence wallet containing his licences and certificates of registration to fly as well as a student ID card from UIUC and a voting registration card from Nankin, Michigan.

Box 2:

Military Commissions, Certificate of Appreciation, and Candidacy Correspondence, 1927, 1932, 1937, 1945

Sportsman Pilot magazine segment, 1933

Note: Features a photo of Cone.

Exchange between RAC and J. H. Finch at Rotary Talk Re War, ca. 1939

Note: Transcript handwritten by Russell's first wife, Helen Bess Cone.

WWII News clippings - compiled by Helen Bess Cone, 1939, 1942-44

Alaska WWII Correspondence with Family, 1941-42

Note: Primarily contains letters back and forth between Russell Cone and his mother, Ozeta Wheatley Cone. Also contains a letter from his father, William Sefton Cone.

Alaska World War II Correspondence and Military Documents, 1941-44

Note: Includes two letters from actress Joan Barton. One to Russell and one to Russell's first wife, Helen Bess Cone.

Alaska World War II Photographs 1941, 1944

Alaska World War II Clippings, 1942-43 (see oversized in Box 4)

Alaska-World War II Clippings, 1942-45

Note: Contains newspaper and magazine clippings about Cone's time in Alaska and Portugal. Written in English and Portuguese.

The Pacific Is My Beat, Keith Wheeler, 1943

Note: Book with dust jacket. Flyleaf contains glued-in newspaper article in which the book's author details a raid led by Cone.

Short Cut to Tokyo: The Battle for the Aleutians, Cory Ford, 1943

Note: Book with dust jacket. Contains note on half-title page from the author to Cone crediting him with getting the book started.

Portugal Correspondence, 1946

A Regiment in Action, Col. William J. Verbeck, 1946

Note: Short , soft-cover book chronicling the Twenty First Infantry Regiment especially in WWII. Also includes a holiday card Verbeck sent about the Association of Veterans of the 21st Infantry. On the back of the card is a handwritten note Verbeck wrote to Cone.

Air Force Letter of Appreciation, 1963

The Thousand-Mile War: World War II in Alaska and the Aleutians, Brian Garfield, 1975

Note: Soft-cover book annotated by Russell's first wife, Helen Bess Cone. Contains two notes on the inner cover giving information on the origins and importance of this copy.

Correspondence from Col. Robert I. Millberry about Russell Cone, 2002

Provenance Notes originally with "The Pacific Is My Beat" and "The Thousand-Mile War" written by Claire Robertson, ca. 2020

Small Microfilm box

- Gold dress uniform buttons, undated (4)
- Gold officer service cap device, undated
- Silver command pilot Air Force wings, undated
- Embroidered Air Force pilot wings, undated
- Silver Air Force colonel tie clasp, undated
- Misfired rifle bullet, undated
- Disassembled rifle bullet, undated
- Rotary Club pin, undated

Box 3:

Daddy's Medals, 1963, 2014, 2016

Note: Contains a certificate of death and documents relating to Cone's military medals.

Large brown medal box (7.1x4.5x1.25in)

Distinguished Flying Cross Medal in decorative dark blue box, 1942

Medium brown medal box (5.2x4.375x1.3125in) (2 boxes)

Air Medal in decorative dark blue box, created 1942

Air Force Commendation Medal in decorative dark blue box, 1963

Small envelope

Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon, created 1957

Small blue or purple medal boxes (4.375x2.25x.563in) (9 boxes)

American Defense Service Medal, created in 1941

American Campaign Medal, created 1942 as service ribbon only, full medal issued in 1947

Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, created 1942

European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, created 1942

World War II Victory Medal, created 1945

National Defense Service Medal, created 1953

Korean Service Medal, created 1950

Armed Forces Reserve Service Medal, created 1950

United Nations Service Medal, created 1950

Small microfilm box

Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, undated (4)

Bronze Service Stars, undated (3)

Box 4:

Oversized items:

Photo Album: Russell Allan Cone, whole life, 1905-1992 (2 albums)

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Hand labeled class photograph from flying school, ca. 1928

Leather handle, undated

Fraternity Paddle with inscription, ca. 1924-1927

Delta Phi Induction Certificate, 1924

St Albans School Diploma, 1923

Alaska World War II Clippings, 1942-43

The Illini Blather, 1926

Note: A single sided sheet that appears to be a spoof of the *Daily Illini*.

Daily Illini Magazine Sections, 1927-28

Note: Contains four sections for which Helen Bess Cone was the short story editor. For two of the sections she also contributed a story.

Timeline of Cone's Life:

Sept 13, 1905: Born in Charleston, Illinois.

1923: Graduated high school from the St. Albans Episcopal School in Washington D.C..

1923-1927: Attended the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and was in the infantry reserve as part of ROTC brigade.

1926-27: Served as student colonel in ROTC.

Jun 15, 1927: Commissioned as a second Lieutenant.

ca. 1928-ca. 1934: Had a tour of active duty and was associated with Consolidated Aircraft Corp., Curtiss-Wright Flying Service, and Stinson Aircraft Corp.

1928: Transferred to Air Force and attended flying schools at March A.F.B., California, and Kelly A.F.B., Texas. Remained as Air Force reservist.

February 22, 1930: Married Helen Bess Cone (formerly Finch).

1934-1940: Lived in Champaign and worked as a farm manager and rural appraiser.

Feb 1940: Called into active duty.

Aug 29, 1940: Tour started.

May 1, 1941-Mar 8, 1944: Served in Chanute, Alaska.

May 1, 1941: Assigned to Alaskan air command as first lieutenant after outbreak of war.

Aug 1941-Aug 1942: Commanded the 36th heavy bombardment squadron. Promoted to captain, major, and lieutenant colonel during this time.

Jun 18 or 19, 1942: Sank a Japanese transporter in Kiska harbor earning him the Distinguished Flying Cross medal.

Aug 1942-Mar 1944: Served as commanding officer of Kodiak A.F.B and as air liaison staff officer.

Mar 1944: Returned to US and attended an instructors course in Galveston, Texas. Stationed in Galveston, Texas and Miami, Florida.

Jul 1944: Assigned as military air attache at the American embassy in Lisbon, Portugal.

Jul 27, 1944: Third daughter, Claire Robertson, was born.

May 1946: Released from active duty and returned to Champaign.

1946-1951: Became secretary for the Trevett-Mattis Banking Co., Champaign, and served as secretary of the board of directors. Also active in Champaign-Urbana civic affairs:

Chairman of budget review committee for the Champaign County Community Chest.

On the Chest's board of directors for 3 years.

On McKinley YMCA board of directors for two years.

President of the Champaign Rotary Club.

President of Champaign County Country Club.

Apr 20, 1951: Returned to active duty (at his request) due to Korean conflict and served as commanding officer of the 8607th air base group, a corollary unit made up of Central Illinois reservists which was sent to Chanute Air Force Base, Illinois.

1951: Named second in Command at Chanute to Brig. Gen. Byron E. Gates. Served as training and wing operations officer. Briefly had to serve as executive officer for about two months until they assigned someone.

1952-1955: Left Chanute for Nagoya, Japan and served directly under the commander and vice commander in the Japan Air Defense Force which later became the Fifth Air Force.

1955: Returned to Champaign.

ca.1956-ca.1959: Taught for three years at the University of Tulsa as Professor of Air Science in the Air Force ROTC. Also headed a team that inspected ROTC units at ten colleges.

Jul 1959-Jul 1960: Stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, as President of the Physical Evaluation Board. Board was one of five in the US and answered directly to the Directorate of Military Personnel at Air Force Headquarters.

Jul 1960-1963: Moved to Washington D.C. and served as the Specialist for Reserve Forces within the Directorate of Civil Engineering.

1963: Retired with distinguished service and was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal.

ca. 1967: Divorced Helen Bess Cone.

1968: Married Faith Cone (formerly Bell).

Apr 24, 1992: Died.