

**Guide to the
Letters from Chan Coulter to his wife and child,
World War II**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Jaclyn Campbell
August 2001**

MS-031: Letters from Chan Coulter to his wife and child, World War II

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Provenance:

Donated by Chan L. Coulter (1928-1999), retired professor of Gettysburg College 1998

Biography:

Chan Frank Coulter was born in Johnson County, Iowa, to Elmer and Ida Hunter Coulter on September 24, 1901. Ida Coulter died about eleven years later and her sister, Etta Hunter, helped to raise Coulter. The family moved to Iowa City when Coulter and his younger brother entered high school.

Coulter went on to the State University of Iowa, where he majored in physical education and received a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) Commission. Upon graduation, he acquired a job selling life insurance in Pittsburgh.

He married Mae C. Becker in 1926 and had a son, Chan Lowell Coulter, in 1928. The Coulters lived in Pittsburgh for one year before they moved to Lakewood, Ohio, where Chan Lowell was born.

While in Lakewood, Coulter sold life insurance, coached track at Western Reserve University, taught physical education, and served in the Ohio National Guard under the 37th Division. His division was called to active duty in 1940 by President Franklin Roosevelt. Coulter was commander of the division's Headquarters Company at the time.

After being called to active duty, he spent a year and a half at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, training, until he was sent to the South Pacific in 1942. During this time, his family moved to Mississippi to be closer to him. Once sent overseas, though, they moved to Iowa City. During the training at Camp Shelby, Coulter served as Aide-de-Camp to General Bietler and commanded the M.P. company.

After he was discharged in 1945 for health reasons, he returned to his family in Iowa City and continued to sell life insurance and participate in the military by serving in the Army Reserves as Commanding Officer of the 410th Infantry Regiment. He retired as a full Colonel in 1965. Coulter purchased a farm and worked on it during the 1950s and 60s.

Coulter worked closely with the Iowa City Chapter of Phi Gamma Delta and received the Coulter Cup, named for him, for his exceptional service to the chapter. He was very active in his community after the war, serving as the mayor of University Heights, working for the Republican Party, volunteering at the Johnson County Historical Society, serving on the local school board, volunteering at the First Methodist Church, and volunteering at the Veterans Hospital in Iowa City.

Coulter died in August of 1991.

Scope and Content Notes:

This collection consists primarily of correspondence from Coulter to his family and is broken up into four series: I. Correspondence by regular mail, II. Correspondence by V-Mail, III. 1985 Reunion of the 37th Division, and IV. Collection Information.

Series I consists of a series of letters, written by Coulter, to his wife, Mae, and son, Chan Lowell, during his overseas service in the South Pacific from 1942 until his discharge in 1945. The correspondence includes fatherly advice to his son and talk of normal family business matters to his wife, as well as day-to-day happenings of military life during war. Some letters have been censored and cut in places.

Series II consists of a series of V-Mails, written by Coulter, to his wife and son during his overseas service from 1942 until 1945. The content of this correspondence is very similar to the correspondence of Series I.

Series III consists of papers acquired by Coulter regarding the 40th Anniversary of the 37th Division's Liberation of Manila. This series includes news clippings, itineraries, and programs of the 37th Division and its 40th reunion in 1985.

Series IV consists of collection information regarding the gift of Chan Lowell Coulter of the series of letters from his father. Also included is a photograph, most likely of Coulter during World War II.

For additional information on Coulter and his family, see Chan L. Coulter's Oral History, located in the Reading Room of Special Collections and in the Birkner/Hedrick Oral History Collection located in the Archives.

Series I – Correspondence by Regular Mail

31-1.1 Regular Mail – From San Francisco, Dated:

May 10, 1942

May 11, 1942

Political Cartoon

May 13, 1942

May 13, 1942 (includes two postcards)

May 14, 1942

May 15, 1942

May 17, 1942

May 19, 1942

May 20, 1942

May 20, 1942 (includes two cancelled checks and a notice of promotion as captain)

May 22, 1942

May 23, 1942

May 23, 1942

American President Lines News Flashes June 1942

31-1.2 Regular Mail – From South Pacific and En Route, Dated:

June 5, 1942 (includes list of charges before mock court)

June 1942

June 16, 1942

June 1942
June 22, 1942
June 24, 1942
June 29, 1942
July 1, 1942
July 12, 1942
July 19, 1942
July 27, 1942
July 28, 1942

31-1.3 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

August 4, 1942
August 5, 1942 (includes newspaper clipping concerning General Connelly)
August 13, 1942
August 19, 1942
Dinner Menu 1942
August 25, 1942
August 25, 1942
August 27, 1942
August 31, 1942

31-1.4 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

September 1, 1942
September 2, 1942
September 5, 1942
September 7, 1942
September 9, 1942
September 9, 1942
September 11, 1942
September 12, 1942
September 13, 1942
September 15, 1942
September 19, 1942
September 20, 1942
September 25, 1942
September 26, 1942
September 27, 1942
September 28, 1942
September 29, 1942
September 30, 1942

31-1.5 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

News Digest distributed to units of 148th Infantry Regiment Oct. 10, 1942
October 1, 1942
October 5, 1942
October 6, 1942
October 8, 1942
October 10, 1942

Sunday Evening (not dated)

October 11, 1942

October 18, 1942

October 19, 1942

October 23, 1942

October 24, 1942

October 25, 1942

October 25, 1942

October 28, 1942

31-1.6 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

November 1, 1942

November 4, 1942

November 6, 1942

November 8, 1942

November 15, 1942

November 15, 1942

November 18, 1942

November 18, 1942

November 19, 1942 (includes typed letter from Mariett Hunter)

November 23, 1942

November 25, 1942

November 27, 1942

November 27, 1942

November 30, 1942

31-1.7 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

December 1, 1942

December 5, 1942

December 6, 1942

December 8, 1942

December 10, 1942

Card from Curtis Flower Shop and Greenhouse, Iowa City, Iowa

December 11, 1942 (includes sports news clipping)

December 14, 1942

December 17, 1942

December 19, 1942

December 21, 1942

31-1.8 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

December 22, 1942

December 22, 1942

December 23, 1942

December 23, 1942

December 24, 1942

December 25, 1942

December 26, 1942

Menu from 37th Division Christmas Dinner

December 27, 1942

December 28, 1942
Not Dated

31-2.1 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

January 1, 1943
January 2, 1943 (misdated 1942)
January 3, 1943 (misdated 1942)
January 5, 1943
January 16, 1943
January 19, 1943 (misdated 1942)
Two news clippings concerning World War II
January 21, 1943 (misdated 1942)
Thursday morning (not dated)
News Clipping picture with written message by Coulter
January 22, 1943
January 24, 1943
January 25, 1943
January 26, 1943

31-2.2 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

February 1, 1943
February 2, 1943
February 4, 1943 (includes news clipping regarding taxes)
February 4, 1943

31-2.3 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

February 6, 1943
February 9, 1943
February 11, 1943
February 13, 1943
February 16, 1943
February 16, 1943
February 16, 1943
February 17, 1943
February 18, 1943
February 21, 1943
February 23, 1943
February 28, 1943

31-2.4 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

March 12, 1943
March 17, 1943
March 18, 1943
March 19, 1943
March 21, 1943
March 22, 1943
March 23, 1943
March 24, 1943
March 29, 1943

31-2.5 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

April 4, 1943
April 6, 1943
April 10, 1943
April 12, 1943
April 14, 1943
April 15, 1943
April 16, 1943
April 17, 1943
April 19, 1943
April 23, 1943
Easter Sunday (not dated)
April 27, 1943
April 29, 1943

31-2.6 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

May 1, 1943
May 2, 1943
May 7, 1943
May 10, 1943

31-2.7 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

May 12, 1943
May 12, 1943
May 13, 1943
May 13, 1943
May 14, 1943
May 16, 1943
May 16, 1943
May 19, 1943
May 21, 1943
May 23, 1943
May 27, 1943
May 27, 1943
May 28, 1943
May 29, 1943

31-2.8 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

June 3, 1943
June 4, 1943
June 6, 1943
June 10, 1943
June 11, 1943
June 12, 1943
June 13, 1943
June 14, 1943
June 17, 1943

31-2.9 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

June 18, 1943

June 19, 1943
June 25, 1943
June 27, 1943
June 28, 1943
July 4, 1943
July 7, 1943
July 9, 1943
July 10, 1943
Sunday afternoon (not dated)
July 12, 1943
July 16, 1943
July 17, 1943
July 25, 1943
July 25, 1943
July 30, 1943

31-2.10 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

August 3, 1943
August 8, 1943
August 17, 1943
August 22, 1943
August 29, 1943
September 3, 1943
September 4, 1943
September 6, 1943

31-2.11 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

September 11, 1943
September 17, 1943
September 18, 1943
September 20, 1943
September 21, 1943
September 24, 1943
September 26, 1943
October 2, 1943
October 5, 1943
October 6, 1943

31-2.12 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

October 12, 1943
October 12, 1943
October 17, 1943
October 20, 1943
October 22, 1943
October 23, 1943
November 7, 1943
Two news clippings regarding World War II
December 5, 1943
December 5, 1943

December 6, 1943
December 10, 1943
December 11, 1943 (misdated 1942)
December 14, 1943
December 18, 1943
December 22, 1943
December 24, 1943
December 25, 1943
December 25, 1943
December 29, 1943

31-2.13 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

January 1, 1944
January 3, 1944
January 6, 1944
January 8, 1944
January 10, 1944
January 12, 1944
January 13, 1944
January 16, 1944
January 26, 1944
February 2, 1944
February 3, 1944
February 6, 1944
February 8, 1944 (includes *Trees, Vines, and Shrubs*)
February 11, 1944
February 13, 1944
February 15, 1944
February 21, 1944
February 24, 1944
February 29, 1944
March 2, 1944
March 4, 1944
March 7, 1944
March 19, 1944
March 30, 1944
March 31, 1944

31-2.14 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

April 3, 1944
April 5, 1944
April 8, 1944
Original memorandum from Robert S. Beightler April 12, 1944
April 9, 1944
April 12, 1944
April 14, 1944
April 17, 1944
April 19, 1944

April 21, 1944 (includes copy of Beightler memo)
April 21, 1944
April 26, 1944
April 30, 1944
May 3, 1944
May 5, 1944
May 6, 1944
May 7, 1944
May 14, 1944
May 14, 1944
May 15, 1944
May 19, 1944
May 20, 1944
May 21, 1944
May 22, 1944
May 24, 1944
May 29, 1944

31-3.1 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

June 1, 1944
June 1, 1944
June 5, 1944
June 7, 1944
June 7, 1944
June 11, 1944
June 12, 1944
June 15, 1944
June 17, 1944
June 18, 1944
June 19, 1944
June 21, 1944
June 21, 1944
June 23, 1944
June 25, 1944
July 2, 1944
July 2, 1944
July 3, 1944
July 3, 1944
July 8, 1944
July 11, 1944
July 11, 1944
July 13, 1944
July 17, 1944
July 20, 1944
July 31, 1944

31-3.2 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

August 6, 1944
August 8, 1944
Telegram August 22, 1944
October 16, 1944
October 16, 1944
October 20, 1944
October 22, 1944
October 22, 1944
October 23, 1944
October 24, 1944
October 26, 1944
October 27, 1944
October 29, 1944
October 30, 1944
October 31, 1944
November 1, 1944
November 6, 1944
November 9, 1944
November 11, 1944
Monday (not dated)
November 15, 1944
November 16, 1944
November 17, 1944
November 17, 1944
Not Dated
November 20, 1944
November 21, 1944
Not Dated
Map of Oahu
November 25, 1944
November 26, 1944
November 27, 1944
November 28, 1944
November 28, 1944
November 30, 1944

31-3.3 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

December 1, 1944
December 3, 1944
December 4, 1944
December 5, 1944
December 7, 1944
December 7, 1944
December 9, 1944
December 10, 1944
Not Dated
December 11, 1944

December 15, 1944
December 16, 1944
December 18, 1944
December 23, 1944
Christmas Day Dinner Menu 1944
December 24, 1944
December 25, 1944
December 29, 1944
December 31, 1944
January 1, 1945
January 5, 1945
Not Dated
January 1945 (misdated 1944)
January 11, 1945
January 16, 1945

31-3.4 Regular Mail – From South Pacific, Dated:

February 15, 1945
February 19, 1945
February 20, 1945
February 23, 1945
February 24, 1945
February 26, 1945
February 26, 1945
February 27, 1945
February 28, 1945
March 1, 1945
March 2, 1945
March 2, 1945
March 5, 1945
March 7, 1945
March 8, 1945
March 10, 1945
March 11, 1945
March 13, 1945
March 17, 1945
March 19, 1945
March 20, 1945
March 23, 1945
March 25, 1945
March 28, 1945
March 30, 1945
March 31, 1945
April 1, 1945
April 2, 1945
April 5, 1945
April 8, 1945

April 9, 1945
April 15, 1945
April 16, 1945
April 19, 1945
April 23, 1945
April 28, 1945
May 1, 1945
May 1, 1945
May 3, 1945
May 8, 1945
May 9, 1945
May 11, 1945
May 14, 1945
May 16, 1945
May 17, 1945
May 19, 1945
May 20, 1945
May 22, 1945
May 24, 1945
May 25, 1945
May 28, 1945
May 30, 1945
June 1, 1945
June 3, 1945
June 4, 1945
June 10, 1945
June 11, 1945
June 13, 1945
June 14, 1945
June 16, 1945
June 17, 1945
June 19, 1945
June 20, 1945
June 22, 1945
June 24, 1945
June 24, 1945
June 25, 1945
June 30, 1945

Series II – V-Mail Correspondence

31-3.5 V-Mail – From the South Pacific, Dated:

November 9, 1942
November 9, 1942
November 15, 1942
November 16, 1942

November 30, 1942
November 18, 1942
November 18, 1942
November 28, 1942
December 3, 1942
December 5, 1942
December 11, 1942
December 12, 1942
December 21, 1942
December 23, 1942
December 26, 1942
December 28, 1942
January 28, 1943
February 3, 1943
February 4, 1943
February 4, 1943
Not Dated
February 9, 1943
February 11, 1943
February 18, 1943
February 24, 1943
February 27, 1943
March 3, 1943
March 6, 1943
March 9, 1943
March 11, 1943
March 15, 1943
March 15, 1943
March 24, 1943
March 28, 1943
April 1, 1943
April 5, 1943
April 21, 1943
Pineapple Tidbits and Juice labels
Not Dated
July 23, 1943
Not Dated
August 10, 1943
August 11, 1943
August 12, 1943
August 17, 1943
August 22, 1943
August 30, 1943
August 31, 1943
September 1, 1943
September 2, 1943

September 12, 1943
September 25, 1943
September 27, 1943
October 8, 1943
October 25, 1943
October 30, 1943
November 2, 1943
November 9, 1943
November 9, 1943
November 20, 1943
November 23, 1943
November 29, 1943
November 30, 1943
December 3, 1943
December 4, 1943
December 6, 1943
December 8, 1943
December 9, 1943
December 10, 1943
December 11, 1943
December 12, 1943
December 13, 1943
December 14, 1943
December 17, 1943
December 20, 1943
December 29, 1943
December 1943
January 6, 1944
Not Dated
January 25, 1944
January 19, 1944
January 28, 1944
January 28, 1944
February 4, 1944
February 13, 1944
February 18, 1944
February 25, 1944
February 29, 1944
March 14, 1944
March 19, 1944
March 21, 1944
March 22, 1944
March 22, 1944
March 27, 1944
March 28, 1944
March 29, 1944

April 4, 1944
April 5, 1944
June 2, 1944
June 3, 1944
June 3, 1944
June 6, 1944
June 6, 1944
June 6, 1944
June 9, 1944
June 10, 1944
June 12, 1944
June 13, 1944
June 15, 1944
June 16, 1944
June 20, 1944
July 24, 1944
July 25, 1944
July 31, 1944
August 16, 1944
October 17, 1944
October 17, 1944
October 26, 1944
October 28, 1944
Not Dated
November 19, 1944
November 23, 1944
November 24, 1944
November 30, 1944
December 16, 1944 (letter to Chan from Major W. A. Boice)
January 1945
Not Dated
Not Dated
January 1945
January 1945
January 14, 1945
January 19, 1945
January 23, 1945
January 29, 1945
February 3, 1945
February 4, 1945
February 4, 1945
February 5, 1945
February 7, 1945
February 7, 1945
February 23, 1945
March 27, 1945

April 13, 1945

Series III – 1985 Reunion

31-3.6 Reunion – Folder consisting of news clippings of 37th Division, Orders for Philippine Liberation Medal to be given to Chan F. Coulter, list of members and addresses, *40th Anniversary Liberation of Manila*, Itineraries and Accommodation Information for reunion, newsletters of 37th Division, postcard of Cagayan, business cards, travel receipts, and *A Brief History of Cagayan*

Series IV – Collection Information

31-3.7 Collection – Picture of soldier (probably Chan F. Coulter), Correspondence from Mike Birkner to Chan L. Coulter, Accession List