

**Roscoe Robinson Jr. Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2023**

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Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2003  
Revised 2023 December

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Roscoe Robinson Jr. Papers

**Inclusive Dates:** 1945-1993

**Bulk Dates:** 1951-1993

**ID No.:** MSS84719

**Creator:** Robinson, Roscoe, Jr., 1928-1993

**Extent:** 10,500 items

**Extent:** 31 containers plus 5 classified

**Extent:** 120.2 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English, French, German, Japanese, and Vietnamese

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm00084719>

**Summary:** Army officer. Correspondence, speeches, interview transcripts, office files, thesis and term papers, photographs, scrapbooks, personnel records, awards and certificates, reports, and miscellaneous papers related to Robinson's military career.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Abshire, David M.--Correspondence.

Becton, Julius W. (Julius Wesley), 1926-2023--Correspondence.

Blanchard, George S. (George Samuel), 1920-2006--Correspondence.

Bowers, Emmet W.--Correspondence.

Cocklin, Robert F.--Correspondence.

Corcoran, E. F.--Correspondence.

Danforth, William H.--Correspondence.

Denton, Jeremiah A., Jr. (Jeremiah Andrew), 1924-2014--Correspondence.

Gavin, James M. (James Maurice), 1907-1990--Correspondence.

Hamlet, James F.--Correspondence.

Legere, Laurence J.--Correspondence.

Nagy, Ernest A.--Correspondence.

Ridgeway, Matthew B.--Correspondence.

Robinson, Roscoe, Jr., 1928-1993.

Thurman, J. R.--Correspondence.

Vessey, John William, 1922-2016--Correspondence.

Weyand, Alexander M. (Alexander Mulqueen), 1928- --Correspondence.

### Organizations

National War College (U.S.)

North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

United States Military Academy.

United States. Army--Foreign service--Europe.

United States. Army--Foreign service--Japan.

United States. Army. Airborne Division, 82nd.

University of Pittsburgh. Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

### Subjects

African-American soldiers.

Universities and colleges--New York--West Point.

Universities and colleges--Pennsylvania--Pittsburgh.

Universities and colleges--Washington (D.C.)

Vietnam War, 1961-1975.

**Places**

United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.

**Occupations**

Army officers.

Paratroopers.

## Acquisition Information

The papers of Roscoe Robinson Jr., army officer, were given to the Library of Congress by Mildred Robinson in 2000.

## Processing History

The papers of Roscoe Robinson Jr. were arranged and described by Joseph K. Brooks with the assistance of Brian McGuire in 2000. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

## Transfers

Video recordings have been transferred to the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of the papers.

## Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Roscoe Robinson Jr. is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## Access and Restrictions

Restrictions apply concerning the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in the collection. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for information concerning these restrictions.

## Security Classified Material

Government regulations control the use of security classified material in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified items.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Roscoe Robinson Jr. Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

**Date**

1928, Oct. 11

**Event**

Born, St. Louis, Mo.

1951	B. S., United State Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. Commissioned second lieutenant, Infantry, United States Army
1952	Married Mildred Sims
1952-1953	Rifle company commander, 7th Infantry Division, Korean War
1954-1957	Instructor, United States Army Infantry School, Airborne Department, Fort Benning, Ga.
1957-1959	Training officer, United States Military Mission to Liberia
1962-1963	Attended United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.
1964	M. A., international affairs, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.
1965-1967	Personnel management officer, Infantry Branch, Office of Personnel Operations, Department of the Army
1967-1968	G-4 (Logistics), 1st Air Cavalry Division, Vietnam Commander, 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Division, Vietnam
1968-1969	Attended National War College, Washington, D.C.
1969-1972	Plans officer and Southeast Asia special action officer, J-5, United States Pacific Command Executive to the chief of staff, United States Pacific Command, Hawaii
1973	Promoted brigadier general
1972-1973	Commander, 2nd Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.
1973-1975	Deputy commander, United States Army Garrison, Okinawa
1975-1976	Commander, United States Army Garrison, Okinawa
1976	Promoted major general
1976-1978	Commander, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N. C.
1978-1980	Deputy chief of staff for operations, United States Army, Europe and Seventh Army
1980	Promoted lieutenant general
1980-1982	Commander, United States Army, Japan, IX Corps
1982	Promoted full general
1982-1985	United States representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee
1993	Died, Washington, D.C.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Roscoe Robinson, Jr. (1928-1993), paratrooper and first African American four star general in the United States Army, span the years 1945-1993, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1951-1993. The papers are organized in the following series: [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#), [82d Airborne Division](#), [United States Army Japan](#), [Academic File](#), [Subject File](#), and [Classified](#). There are a few documents in French, German, Japanese, or Vietnamese. Correspondence throughout the collection is arranged in the order established and indexed by Robinson or his staff.

The [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#) (NATO) series documents Robinson's tour in 1982-1985 as United States representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee. The correspondence file in the NATO series is the only instance of a reverse chronological arrangement. NATO series correspondents include David M. Abshire, E. F. Corcoran, William H. Danforth, Laurence J. Legere, Ernest A. Nagy, and John W. Vessey.

Between 1959 and 1979, Robinson was intermittently associated with the [82d Airborne Division](#) as a staff officer, company, battalion, and brigade commander, and finally as commanding general. The papers focus on his command of the division's 2d Brigade during 1972-1973 and on his stint during 1976-1978 as commanding general of the 82d Airborne. The Thomas L. Doran file in the series relates to an enlisted man who attempted to organize a trade union within the division. Correspondents include George S. Blanchard, Emmet W. Bowers, Jeremiah A. Denton, James M. Gavin, Matthew B. Ridgeway, J. R. Thurman, and Alexander M. Weyand.

The [United States Army, Japan](#), series comprises two subseries, [United States Army Garrison, Okinawa](#), and [IX Corps](#). The [United States Army Garrison, Okinawa](#) files document Robinson's assignment as deputy commander and then commander of army troops stationed in the Ryukyu Islands during 1973-1976. During 1980-1982, Robinson commanded [IX Corps](#), headquartered at Camp Zama on the island of Honshu, Japan, and this assignment is the focus of the IX Corps subseries. Correspondents in both subseries include Julius Becton, Robert F. Cocklin, and James F. Hamlet.

The [Academic File](#) relates to the United States Military Academy at West Point, from which Robinson graduated in 1951, and various graduate and advanced training schools. Featured are the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia; the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; the National War College in Washington, D.C.; the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs; and Harris-Stowe College and Washington University, institutions in St. Louis, Missouri, Robinson's hometown, that awarded him honorary degrees.

The United States Military Academy file includes material on Robinson's investigation in 1988 of John P. Edwards, a second-classman (junior) expelled from West Point for refusing to participate in the fourth-class system, which Edwards considered hazing of plebes (freshmen). Also in 1988, Robinson served on the Chief of Staff's Special Commission on the Honor Code and Honor System. Material on this activity is included in the honor code folder of the Military Academy file. Robinson's class of 1951 included five Black graduates, up to that time the largest contingent of African American cadets to graduate from West Point. In the military academy file there is a folder specifically relating to the class of 1951 and another generally relating to African American cadets.

Robinson attended the National War College in 1968-1969. The presence of material relating to the War College class visit to Liberia ten years earlier in 1958 probably results from his service with United State Military Mission to that West African country in 1957-1959. Robinson's major thesis was on the national security implications of Black nationalist movements in the United States.

The [Subject File](#) relates to Robinson's other assignments and commands, including his Vietnam war service with the 1st Air Cavalry (Airmobile) Division and with the United States Army, Europe. His 201, or personnel, file is the official record of his military career from his matriculation at West Point in 1947 to his retirement from the army in 1985. Covering the same ground is a lengthy, in-depth interview of Robinson by the Senior Officer Oral History Program.

Also in the [Subject File](#) is a 1989 review by Robinson, with background material, of the combat performance in the Korean War of the 24th Infantry Regiment, the army's last segregated, all Black infantry unit.

## Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in seven series:

- [North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1968-1986](#)
- [82d Airborne Division, 1944-1980](#)
- [United States Army, Japan, 1972-1982](#)
- [Academic File, 1951-1993](#)
- [Subject File, 1947-1993](#)
- [Classified, 1982-1985](#)
- [North Atlantic Treaty Organization Classified Material, 1983-1984, undated](#)

## Description of Series

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## North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1968-1986

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## North Atlantic Treaty Organization Classified Material, 1983-1984

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