

Noel Francis Parrish Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
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Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

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Collection Summary

Title: Noel Francis Parrish Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1894-1987

Bulk Dates: 1930-1987

ID No.: MSS62154

Creator: Parrish, Noel Francis

Extent: 29,500 items

Extent: 58 containers plus 1 oversize and 2 classified

Extent: 29.5 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm88062154>

Summary: Air force general and university professor. Correspondence, speeches and writings, academic and military files, family papers, photographs and slides, and other papers documenting Parrish's military and academic careers, including as commander of Tuskegee Army Air Field (Ala.) where he was responsible for training the Army Air Force's first African-American pilots during World War II.

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

Bosch, Adrian--Correspondence.
Davis, Benjamin O., 1880-1970--Correspondence.
Davis, Benjamin O., Jr., 1912-2002--Correspondence.
Fellers, Bonner Frank, 1896-1973--Correspondence.
Fitzgerald, F. Scott (Francis Scott), 1896-1940.
Fitzgerald, Zelda, 1900-1948--Correspondence.
Goldberg, Alfred, 1918- --Correspondence.
Gruenther, Alfred M. (Alfred Maximilian), 1899-1983--Correspondence.
Hazard, John T.--Correspondence.
Henderson, F. D. (Frank David), 1922- --Correspondence.
Horne, Lena.--Correspondence.
Hoyt, Austin, 1915-1976--Correspondence.
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967--Correspondence.
Kohn, Richard H.--Correspondence.
McClellan, Pam A.--Correspondence.
Parrish family.
Parrish, Garland C. Garland C. Parrish papers. 1913-1942.
Parrish, Noel Francis.
Patterson, Frederick D. (Frederick Douglass), 1901-1988--Correspondence.
Robinson, Donald B., 1913- --Correspondence.
Wilkins, Roy, 1901-1981--Correspondence.

Organizations

Air University (U.S.). Air Command Staff School.
Air University (U.S.). Air War College.
NATO Defence College.
Rice University.
Trinity University (San Antonio, Tex.)--Faculty.
Tuskegee Army Air Field (Ala.)
United States. Air Force--Officers.
United States. Army Air Forces.

United States. Army. Women's Army Corps.
United States. Department of Defense.

Subjects

African American air pilots--History.
Airports--Alabama.
Civil-military relations--United States.
International agencies--France--Paris.
Military history--Study and teaching.
Vietnam War, 1961-1975.
Women air pilots--History
World War, 1939-1945--Aerial operations, American.
World War, 1939-1945--Participation, African American.
World War, 1939-1945--Participation, Female.

Occupations

Air Force officers.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Noel Francis Parrish, air force general and university history professor, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Florence Tucker Parrish, in 1987 and 1988.

Processing History

The papers of Noel Francis Parrish were processed by Connie L. Cartledge in 1989. The finding aid was revised by Connie L. Cartledge in 2003.

Additional Guides

A description of the Parrish Papers appears in *Library of Congress Acquisitions: Manuscript Division, 1987*, pp. 12-15.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. Sound recordings have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Noel Francis Parrish Papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Noel Francis Parrish in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Noel Francis Parrish are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Security Classified Documents

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

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1909, Nov. 11	Born, Lexington, Ky.
1928	B.A., Rice University, Houston, Tex.
1930	Private, 11th Cavalry, United States Army, Monterey, Calif.
1931-1932	Appointed to the flying cadet program and served one year as reserve officer with the 13th Attack Squadron, Fort Crockett, Tex.
1933	Enlisted as pilot, Air Corps Tactical School, Chanute Field, Ill., and the 1st Air Transport Squadron, Dayton, Ohio
1935	Accepted regular commission and served with the 13th Attack Squadron, Barksdale Field, La.
1938	First lieutenant and flying instructor, Randolph Field, Tex.
1939	Supervisor, Air Corps Flying School, Glenview, Ill.
1941	Assistant director of training, Eastern Flying Training Command, Maxwell Field, Ala. Promoted to major and became director of training, Tuskegee Army Flying School, Tuskegee, Ala.
1942	Promoted to lieutenant colonel and became commander of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Ala.
1943	Promoted to colonel
1947	Graduated, Air Command Staff School, Maxwell Field, Ala.
1948	Graduated, Air War College, Maxwell Field, Ala. Deputy secretary, Air Staff, Air Force Headquarters, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
1949	Appointed to the permanent grade of colonel
1951	Appointed special assistant to vice-chief of staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
1954	Promoted to brigadier general Air deputy, NATO Defence College, Paris, France
1956	Deputy director, Military Assistance Division, United States European Command, Paris, France
1958	Assistant to the deputy chief of staff, Plans and Programs, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
1961	Director, Research Studies Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
1964	Retired from United States Air Force
1966	M.A., Rice University, Houston, Tex.
1968	Ph.D., Rice University, Houston, Tex.
1969-1975	Professor of military history, Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex.
1976-1977	Visiting professor, Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
1979	Retired from Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex.
1987, Apr. 7	Died, Perry Point, Md.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Noel Francis Parrish (1909-1987) span the years 1894-1987, with the bulk of the papers concentrated in the period 1930-1987. The papers document Parrish's military service, his academic career as a student and professor of history,

and his interests in writing and photography. The papers consist of twelve series: [Family Papers](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Personal Correspondence](#), [Tuskegee File](#), [Military File](#), [Academic File](#), [Speeches and Writings File](#), [Photographs and Slides](#), [Miscellany](#), [Classified](#), [Restricted Data](#), and [Oversize](#).

The [Family Papers](#) series is divided into two subseries, [Correspondence](#) and [Other Papers](#). The [Correspondence](#) subseries consists primarily of [letters](#) and [postcards](#) written by family members to Parrish concerning family matters and local news. Also included are a few early letters of Parrish and his brother, Garland C. Parrish, describing training and life in the United States Army. The [Other Papers](#) subseries includes diaries and writings of Garland Parrish, recollections of Parrish's parents, Garland J. and Lucy L. Parrish, and genealogical papers pertaining to the family.

The [General Correspondence](#) series includes incoming and outgoing correspondence relating to Parrish's personal interests and activities. Much of the correspondence is between Parrish and his military friends and acquaintances and relates to the Vietnam War and Pentagon politics. Correspondence after 1964 relates chiefly to Parrish's academic career and his efforts to publish his writings. There is additional correspondence concerning these matters in the [Academic File](#) and [Speeches and Writings File](#). Two items worthy of note in the [General Correspondence](#) series are a 1986 letter from Parrish to Adrian Bosch and Austin Hoyt describing Robert S. McNamara's efforts to drive Parrish out of the air force and a 1943 Zelda Fitzgerald letter to Parrish discussing the lost generation and her husband, F. Scott Fitzgerald.

The [Personal Correspondence](#) series consists chiefly of Parrish's incoming correspondence. The majority of these papers pertain to Parrish's relationship with women friends and contain local news and gossip. In addition, there is correspondence in the 1940s from Pam A. ("Anne") McClellan, a women's army corps pilot, describing the training of women pilots.

The [Tuskegee File](#) documents Parrish's service as director of training of the Tuskegee Army Flying School and commander of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Alabama. In these assignments, Parrish was responsible for the military's first systematic effort to train black pilots for combat duty at a time when the armed forces were still segregated. This series includes incoming and outgoing correspondence and memoranda pertaining to the operation of the air field. There are also a few letters from black pilots in Europe describing battles and army life. Significant correspondents include Benjamin O. Davis (1880-1970), Benjamin O. Davis (1912-2002), Lena Horne, Langston Hughes, Frederick D. Patterson, and Roy Wilkins. Other papers in the series such as newspapers, pamphlets and publications, programs and invitations, clippings, photographs, and printed matter, provide a glimpse of daily life at the Tuskegee Air Field. Additional items worthy of note are intelligence summaries reporting incidents of racial violence in the South, statistical reports comparing the proficiency of white and black pilots, and army reports about blacks in the military training program.

The [Military File](#) consists chiefly of correspondence, memoranda, certificates, reports, lectures, and other educational materials pertaining to Parrish's classes at the Air Command Staff School and the Air War College, both located at Maxwell Field, Alabama. Also included is correspondence, memoranda, speeches, and reports relating to his duties at the Pentagon and with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Paris.

The [Academic File](#) contains material relating primarily to Parrish's undergraduate and graduate years at Rice University, his teaching career as assistant professor of military history at Trinity University in Texas, and as a guest lecturer at the Air War College, Maxwell Field.

The [Speeches and Writings File](#) reflects not only Parrish's military and academic career but also his interest as a young man in becoming a writer. Several of his early articles were published in aviation magazines and the *South Texan*, a newspaper edited by his brother. This series also includes Parrish's uncompleted memoirs.

The [Photographs and Slides](#) series contains photographs, slides, negatives, and scrapbooks documenting Parrish's personal life and military career. Many of the photographs and slides were taken by Parrish, including a number of aerial overviews and scenic shots of various locations in the United States and Mexico. Also included are numerous photographs of airplanes from the 1930s and 1940s.

The [Miscellany](#) consists primarily of awards and certificates, notes and jottings, interviews, and printed matter.

Among the significant and frequent correspondents not mentioned previously are Bonner Fellers, Alfred Goldberg, Alfred M. Gruenther, John T. Hazard; F. D. ("Dave") Henderson, Richard H. Kohn, and Donald B. Robinson.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in twelve series:

- [Family Papers, 1912-1987](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1931-1987](#)
- [Personal Correspondence, 1931-1985](#)
- [Tuskegee File, 1940-1986](#)
- [Military File, 1931-1987](#)
- [Academic File, 1924-1984](#)
- [Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1986](#)
- [Photographs and Slides, 1931-1985](#)
- [Miscellany, 1894-1987](#)
- [Classified, undated](#)
- [Restricted Data, undated](#)
- [Oversize, 1930-1931](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-7	<u>Family Papers, 1912-1987</u>
BOX 1-6	<u>Correspondence, 1912-1987</u>
BOX 1-4	<u>Letters, 1912-1986</u> Letters sent and received by family members with attachments and enclosures. Arranged alphabetically by name of author and therein chronologically.
BOX 5-6	<u>Postcards, 1914-1987</u> Postcards sent and received by family members. Arranged by name of author and therein chronologically.
BOX 7	<u>Other Papers, 1913-1983</u> Diaries, recollections, genealogical material, writings, and an art sketch relating to members of the Parrish family. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member or type of material.
BOX 7-11	<u>General Correspondence, 1931-1987</u> Correspondence and memoranda between Parrish and friends, acquaintances, and the general public, including attachments and enclosures such as clippings, pamphlets, and photographs pertaining to Parrish's military and academic careers and his personal life. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 12-18	<u>Personal Correspondence, 1931-1985</u> Correspondence, including attachments and enclosures such as clippings and photographs, documenting Parrish's personal activities. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 19-26	<u>Tuskegee File, 1940-1986</u> Correspondence, memoranda, articles, bulletins, news releases, orders, addresses, reports, yearbooks, directories, photographs, clippings, lists, radio transcripts, programs, and printed matter relating to Parrish's duties as director of training and commander of the Tuskegee Army Air Field. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically, although correspondence precedes other material.
BOX 26-31	<u>Military File, 1931-1987</u> Correspondence, memoranda, a diary, orders, lectures, reports, rosters and lists, interviews, statements, addresses and speeches, certificates, charts, flight records, clippings, and printed matter documenting Parrish's military career, including his course work at the Air Command Staff School and the Air War College. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material and therein chronologically, although correspondence precedes other material.

- BOX 32-37** **Academic File, 1924-1984**
Correspondence, memoranda, lecture materials and notes, research proposals and papers, thesis and dissertation material, calendars, yearbooks, course outlines, course evaluations, examinations, and printed matter documenting Parrish's college years and academic career. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and name of institution, although correspondence precedes other material.
- BOX 38-46** **Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1986**
Correspondence, memoranda, speeches, articles, short stories, book reviews, memoirs, recollections, notebooks, poetry, pamphlets, clippings, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.
- BOX 47-55** **Photographs and Slides, 1931-1985**
Photographs, slides, negatives, and scrapbooks pertaining to Parrish, his family, friends, interests, and military service. Separated into three groups: photographs, slides, and negatives. Arranged alphabetically by subject within each group and therein chronologically.
- BOX 55-58** **Miscellany, 1894-1987**
Correspondence, memoranda, interviews, biographical material, financial and legal papers, notes and jottings, passports, art sketches, playbills and programs, and printed matter pertaining chiefly to Parrish's personal activities and interests. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
- BOX CL 1** **Classified, undated**
Government classified documents containing sensitive security information. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.
- BOX RD 1** **Restricted Data, undated**
Government classified documents containing sensitive security information. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.
- BOX OV 1** **Oversize, 1930-1931**
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Family Papers, 1912-1987

Container

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Personal Correspondence, 1931-1985

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Military File, 1931-1987

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Military File, 1931-1987

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BOX 32-37

Academic File, 1924-1984

Correspondence, memoranda, lecture materials and notes, research proposals and papers, thesis and dissertation material, calendars, yearbooks, course outlines, course evaluations, examinations, and printed matter documenting Parrish's college years and academic career. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and name of institution, although correspondence precedes other material.

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	1936

Photographs and Slides, 1931-1985

Container	Contents
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Photographs and Slides, 1931-1985

Container	Contents
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BOX 56	Art sketches, unidentified, undated Awards and certificates, 1933-1987, undated Biographical file, 1935-1985, undated Business cards Clippings, 1964, 1971, 1977-1986 Financial and legal papers, 1944, 1958, 1966, undated Interviews, United States Air Force oral history Parrish, Noel Francis Drafts, 1974-1975 (2 folders) General, 1974 (1 folder)
BOX 57	(3 folders) Questions and survey, 1974 Notes and jottings, 1938-1978, undated (5 folders)
BOX 58	Oddments, 1933-1982, undated (2 folders) Passports, 1954-1972 Playbills, programs, and tickets, 1939-1958, undated Printed matter, 1894, 1914-1970, undated (3 folders) Scrapbook, 1930-1931 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX CL 1	Classified, undated Government classified documents containing sensitive security information. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.
BOX CL 1	Photographs and Slides Photographs Lecture material, undated <i>See also Restricted Data</i> (Container 50)
BOX RD 1	Restricted Data, undated Government classified documents containing sensitive security information. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.
BOX RD 1	Photographs and Slides

Restricted Data, undated

Container

Contents

Photographs

Lecture material, undated (Container 50)

BOX OV 1

Oversize, 1930-1931

Scrapbook.

Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which it was removed.

BOX OV 1

Scrapbook, 1930-1931 (Container 58)