

Elijah Reynolds Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79003963>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms020019>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2022

Collection Summary

Title: Elijah Reynolds Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1897-1959

Bulk Dates: 1940-1959

ID no.: MSS3963

Creator: Reynolds, Elijah, 1875-1959

Extent: 350 items

Extent: 1 container plus 1 oversize

Extent: 0.5 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79003963>

Summary: United States Army officer. Writings, certificates, photographs, correspondence, medals, and other papers related chiefly to Reynolds's service in the Twenty-Fifth Infantry Regiment during the Spanish-American War and Philippine American War, and his position as the instructor of military science and tactics at Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C.

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

Reynolds, Elijah, 1875-1959.

Organizations

Dunbar High School (Washington, D.C.)

United States. Army--African American troops.

United States. Army. Infantry Regiment, 25th.

United States. Army. Infantry Regiment, 368th.

Subjects

African American soldiers.

African Americans--Segregation.

African Americans--Social conditions.

Military education--United States.

Race discrimination--United States.

Race relations.

Racism--United States.

Spanish-American War, 1898--Cuba.

Spanish-American War, 1898--Participation, African American.

Spanish-American War, 1898.

World War, 1914-1918--Europe.

World War, 1914-1918--Participation, African American.

World War, 1914-1918.

Places

Philippines--History--Philippine American War, 1899-1902--Participation, African American.

Philippines--History--Philippine American War, 1899-1902.

United States--Race relations.

Occupations

Army officers.

Clerks, U.S. War Department.

Educators.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Elijah Reynolds were given to the Library of Congress by Vivian Johnson in 1959. Additional items were given by Thelma Raney in 2020.

Processing History

The papers of Elijah Reynolds were arranged and described by Manuscript Division staff in 1978. An addition was processed and a finding aid was created in 2021 by Nate Scheible.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

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

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Elijah Reynolds was born on July 22, 1875 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1894, and was assigned to the racially segregated Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment wherein he served until his retirement in 1919 as a captain. He married Maggie D. McInham (died 1950) in 1906. After retiring from the Army in 1919, he worked as a clerk at the War Department and as a military instructor at Dunbar High School in Washington, DC. He died on November 3, 1959 in Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Elijah Reynolds span the years 1897-1959, with the bulk of the material dating from 1940 to 1959. The collection primarily documents Reynolds's military career between 1894 and 1919, most of which was spent in the racially segregated Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment of the United States Army, which consisted solely of African American troops. It also documents his position as an officer in the 368th Infantry Regiment. It includes certificates, medals, photographs, correspondence, and other textual documents. The centerpiece of the collection is the memoir "A Negro Soldier," written by Reynolds. In the memoir, Reynolds recounts his daily experiences as a soldier and describes significant events such as fighting in Cuba during the Spanish-American War in 1898, guerilla warfare in the Philippines during the Philippine American War from 1899 to 1902, "uprisings" in Indian Territory, and tours of duty in Europe during World War I. The collection contains little documentation of Reynolds's civilian and personal life.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or material type.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1942-1951
BOX 1	Death, 1959, undated
BOX 1	Deeds and property, 1919, 1940-1947
BOX 1	Dunbar High School, Washington, D.C., 1942-1943
BOX OV 1	Marriage license, 1906
BOX 1	"A Negro Soldier," memoir, undated (3 folders)
BOX 1	Photographs, circa 1900, circa 1940s, undated
BOX 1	"Reason for Prejudice," circa 1947
BOX 1	United States Army
BOX 1	Certificates, 1897-1947
BOX 1	Commissary permit, 1953
BOX 1	Medals and ribbons, 1899-1902, undated
BOX 1	Pension and financial documents, 1934, 1949-1950, undated