

The Filson Historical Society

**Brooks, Julian G.
Letters, 1944-1945**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator of Special Collections.

Size of Collection:
0.33 Cubic Feet

Location Number:
Mss./A/B873

**Brooks, Julian G.
Letters, 1944-1945**

Scope and Content Note

The Julian G. Brooks letters are those letters sent to Sgt. Julian Brooks during World War II. He is from Chicago, which is also the home of his direct family. His mother and sister, Cecile; write the most often, along with a number of letters from his brother, Donald, cousins, and other relatives in Washington, DC, Selma and Prairie, AL, Henderson and London, KY. The direct family correspondents write candidly about day-to-day life and general current events of the time. Other family and friends stateside write of attending universities, night life, and ask him questions. Brooks also receives letters from friends serving in the military across the globe and write using U. S. Army letterheads or V-mail forms.

His mother writes about his younger brother Donald skipping classes and his pursuit and receipt of work at the Post Office, the long hours worked by his father, the holidays, visits from friends and relatives, and the use of his service pay for house repairs. Cecile keeps her brother up to date on the Chicago jazz scene, working night shifts, and attending college during the day, and many letters chronicle her relationship with George. She elopes with him they live at the Brooks house and she becomes pregnant while he is away.

Education is a common subject within the letters. His sister, Cecile, tells Brooks to use his G.I. Bill when he returns from abroad, and finances her tuition at an unnamed school with plans to attend Loyola for social service work. His cousin Ruth graduated high school and applied to Hampton Institute (VA). Jacquelyn Gordon in Washington, DC, dropped out of school her senior year to take a job in the War Department, then reconsidered and enrolled at Howard University, and then decided to work on her Master's degree at the University of Chicago. Cousin Lorena in Henderson, KY, worked at the Douglas High School, part of Henderson City Schools. The Educational Director of the Lincoln Institute of Kentucky, Whitney Young, writes a generic letter of encouragement to Brooks, greeting him with 'Dear Pupil.'

Correspondence received from friends in the military include "John B." of the 618th Bombardment Squadron, 477th Bomb Group at Godman Field, KY; Pfc. James H. Williams, Jr. in New Guinea; S/Sgt. Nathaniel Freeman in Italy; "Lawrence," stationed in New Guinea and the Philippines; Col. Jesse Williams in India; and a Pfc. James A. Jones. Each offers limited thoughts about their war experiences and are more prone to writing details of recreational affairs or complaints about the jungles where many are located. A few of them write using slang words.

**Brooks, Julian G.
Letters, 1944-1945**

Biographical Note

Julian G. Brooks was born on April 26, 1923 and died on December 26, 2005. According to the 1940 census, he was born in Kentucky to Henry M. Brooks and Celia Brooks and was living with his family in London, Kentucky, at the time of this census. He had two younger siblings, his sister Cecila (Cecile) and his brother, Donald. He served in the 1888th Engr. Aviation Battalion in the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II. He held the rank of Sergeant and was overseas at least in the years of 1944 and 1945.

Sources:

Social Security Death Index [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.
Cowan Auctions auctioneer notes.

**Brooks, Julian G.
Letters, 1944-1945**

Folder List

Box 1

Folder 1: Letters, February-June, 1944

Folder 2: Letters, July-September, 1944

Folder 3: Letters, September-October, 1944

Folder 4: Letters, November-December, 1944

Folder 5: Letters, January-February, 1945

Folder 6: Letters, February-April, 1945

Folder 7: Letters, April-June, 1945

Folder 8: Letters, June-July, 1945

Folder 9: Letters, August 1945

Folder 10: Letters, September-October, 1945

Brooks, Julian G.

Letters, 1944-1945

Subject Headings

African American jazz musicians – Chicago.
African American soldiers.
African Americans – Chicago.
Chicago (Ill.) – Social life and customs.
Education.
English language – Slang.
Fort Knox (Ky.) – Godman Field.
Music – jazz musicians.
Night clubs.
United States – Armed Forces – African Americans.
World War, 1939-1945 – African Americans.
World War, 1939-1945 – Burma.
World War, 1939-1945 – New Guinea.
World War, 1939-1945 – Public opinion.
World War, 1939-1945 – Social aspects.
World War, 1939-1945 – War work.