

**The Filson Historical Society**

**Robert Earl Samer, 1921-1995  
Papers, 1939-1986 (bulk 1942-1945)**

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

**Size of Collection:**

.33 cubic feet

**Locator Number:**

Mss./A/S287

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**Scope and Content Note**

Sgt. Robert Samer, a native of Ludlow, Ky., served as a gunner on a B-17 bomber in the 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 97<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, in 1944. The collection includes a brief diary (1943-1944) and correspondence between Robert, his wife, Norma, and other family members, primarily while he was in flight training in the U.S. There are extensive military records, including training and combat flight records (1943-1944), passes, permits and health records and certificates. Several uniform patches and medals awarded to Sgt. Samer have been transferred to the Museum collection.

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**Biographical Note**

Robert Earl Samer was born 27 Feb. 1921 in Ludlow, Ky, the first child of Henry and Beatrice Samer. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force on 21 Aug. 1942. He was assigned to the Boeing Aircraft Factory school in Seattle, Wash. in May 1943, where he began training with B-17 bombers. Further gunnery training was received at army air bases in Las Vegas, Dyersburg, Tenn, Tampa and Lakeland, Fl. On 10 July 1943 he married Norma Jean Kintner of Sedalia, Mo. On 11 March 1944 he arrived at the Army Air Force base in Amendola, Italy where he began flying combat missions over Europe as a waist gunner on B-17s. Over the next 4 months he successfully completed 50 combat missions. On 15 July 1944 he was promoted to the rank of staff sergeant. In August 1944, upon completing his last mission, he was transferred back to the U.S. After further assignments at various airfields, he was transferred to Camp Atterbury, Ind. where he was discharged from the Army on 10 Sept. 1945. A son, Terry Lee, was born to Robert and Norma in Feb. 1946. The family moved to Greenville, Ohio, after the war. Robert died 24 May 1995 in Dayton, Ohio, at the age of 74. Norma died 7 October 1995 in Dayton, Ohio, at the age of 69.

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**Folder List**

- Folder 1: Correspondence, 1939-1949
- Folder 2: Diary, 1943-1944
- Folder 3: Military papers
- Folder 4: Poetry, newspaper clippings
- Folder 5: Printed materials
- Folder 6: Miscellaneous materials

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**Subject Headings**

B-17 bomber  
Boeing Aircraft Company  
Censorship – United States  
Diary  
Draft – United States  
Military passes  
Rationing – United States  
United States. Army – Non-commissioned officers  
United States. Army – Military life  
United States. Army Air Forces  
United States. Army Air Forces. Bombardment Group, 97<sup>th</sup>  
United States. Army. Enlisted Reserve Corps  
World War, 1939-1945 – Aerial operations, American  
World War, 1939-1945 – Campaigns – Europe  
World War, 1939-1945 – Economic aspects  
World War, 1939-1945 – Religious aspects