



Wagner Family Collection, 1941-1945

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Wagner Family Collection, 1941-1945
13.5 cubic ft.

In July of 1941, David H. (aka Dave) Wagner (1919-1982), of Long Island City, N.Y., was taking U.S. Army basic training at Fort Bragg, N.C. On October 30, 1941, while on leave, he married Laurice (aka Mickey) Reser (1919-2010) of Laurelton, N.Y. Wagner continued his basic training at a number of different locations: Fort Jackson, S.C.; Fort Sill, Okla.; Camp Forrest, Tenn.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Desert Maneuver Area in California-Arizona (also known as Desert Training Center and California-Arizona Maneuver Area); and again at Camp Forrest, Tenn. He became a private first class on February 3, 1942, and a corporal (the rank he would remain for the duration of World War II) on December 2, 1942. He later shipped out to England and arrived there on December 20, 1943. His tour of duty in Europe included the following locations: England, Northern Ireland, France and Luxembourg.

In November 1944, David became afflicted with jaundice and, according to his own description, was "as yellow as a lemon at its worst." He spent time in hospitals in France and England before being sent to Rhoads General Hospital, Utica, N.Y., in April of 1945. Due to the relatively close proximity of Utica to Laurice's residence in Laurelton, N.Y., David and Laurice were able to see each other quite frequently on weekends.

Sometime after the war, the Wagners moved to Oceanside, N.Y. They had five children: Claire Wagner (Cheesman), who was born during the war; David Wagner; Marianne Wagner (Sorace); Bettie Wagner (Burtch); and John Scott Wagner. David H. Wagner died on September 10, 1982, and Laurice, who was a teacher and a member of the Island Porcelain Artists Club, died on December 1, 2010. Her last known residence was in Bellport, N.Y.

The collection, which spans the years 1941-1945, is comprised mainly of letters between David and Laurice, but also includes other types of correspondence, such as V-Mails, telegrams, greeting cards and postcards. Other correspondents include family members, friends, organizations and institutions.

The earliest letters between David and Laurice were written while David was stationed at Fort Bragg, and begin just months before the couple were married. The correspondence between the two carries on throughout World War II, and ends while David was recovering at Rhoads General Hospital in Utica, N.Y. Topics covered in their letters include daily routines, basic training, religion and going to church, visits to Rhoads General Hospital and intimate moments that the two shared. Also discussed are various family topics, other family members involved in the war, Laurice's job, their wedding, the World Series between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees in 1941, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, presidential speeches and state of the union addresses, Eisenhower, David's thoughts on the war and his desire to be with his family, and the birth and growing up of their daughter, Claire.

The collection also includes photographs, negatives, coin and paper currency, newspaper and magazine clippings, two devotionals, wedding announcements, ephemera, an Army/ Navy Service Book and A Prayer Book for Soldiers and Sailors.

Indexing Terms:

Names:

Churchill, Winston, 1871-1947.
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969.
Hope, Bob, 1903-2003.
Reser, J. Worden.
Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945.
Stalin, Joseph, 1879-1953.
Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972.
Wagner, Charles.
Wagner, Claire.
Wagner, David H.
Wagner (Reser), Laurice.
Wagner (Paretys), Lillian.
Rhoads General Hospital.

Geographical Terms:

Belfast (Northern Ireland)
Belgium.
Berlin (Germany)
California.
Camp Forrest (Tenn.)
Canada.
Chattanooga (Tenn.)
Costa Rica.
England.
Europe.
Fort Bragg (N.C.)
Fort Jackson (Columbia, S.C.)
Fort Leonard Wood (Mo.)
Fort Sill (Okla.)
France.
Germany.
Guantánamo Bay (Cuba)
Japan.
Laurelton (New York, N.Y.)
Lawton (Okla.)
Le Mans (France)
Long Island (N.Y.)

Geographical Terms:

Long Island City (New York, N.Y.)
Los Angeles (Calif.)
Luxembourg.
Memphis (Tenn.)
Missouri.
Nashville (Tenn.)
New York (N.Y.)
New York.
Northern Ireland.
Queens (New York, N.Y.)
Rosedale (New York, N.Y.)
Spain.
Tullahoma (Tenn.)
Utica (N.Y.)

Subject Terms:

Armistice Day.
Birth.
Brooklyn Dodgers (Baseball team)
Church.
D-Day, 1944 (Normandy invasion)
Episcopalians
God.
Hurricanes.
Jaundice.
Marines
Mr. Smith goes to Washington (Motion picture)
New York Yankees (Baseball team)
Pearl Harbor (Hawaii), Attack on, 1941.
Red Cross and Red Crescent.
United Service Organizations (U.S.)
V-E Day, 1945
Wedding
World Series (Baseball)
World War II
World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--France--Normandy.
Desert Training Center and California-Arizona Maneuver Area (Calif. and Ariz.)

Forms and Genre Terms:

Bible Thumb Bibles
Black-and-white photography.
Books

Forms and Genre Terms:

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)

Coins, American.

Ephemera.

Flowers.

Greeting cards.

Letters.

Miniature books

Paper money--Belgium.

Photographs.

Photography--Negatives.

Postcards.

Prayer books.

Printed Materials.

Telegrams

V-Mail.

The Wagner Family Collection is arranged into six series:

- I. Correspondence between Dave and Laurice: This includes letters, V-Mails, and postcards between David and Laurice. This is organized chronologically by year and months. There are more letters in the collection from David to Laurice due to David moving around so much. They would write to each other almost every day. Other materials includes various newspaper clippings, magazine clippings, other letters from others as attachments, coins, foreign currency, photographs, negatives, flowers, and legal documents.

The following address is David's home address that he shared with his parents. It was taken from the front page of the Army/ Navy Service Book. No letters were actually sent to this address:

12-35 31st Drive, Long Island City, NY

Laurice Wagner resided with her parents for the entirety of this collections date range of July 1941 to July 1945. It is understood to be her parents' home due to various letter heads that she used with the following heading:

Mrs. J Worden Reser, 139-12 Two Hundred Thirty Third Street, Rosedale, NY

Letters with important attachments:

December 4, 1941:	Negatives
December 8, 1941:	Negatives
March 8, 1942:	8 th Infantry Division Badge
August 13, 1942:	Flowers
January 16, 1943:	Dime
February 1, 1943:	Photographs of Laurice and David
June 23, 1943:	Negatives
September 9, 1943:	Photographs of Laurice pregnant
November 12, 1944:	Belgian currency 15 Francs (10 Francs, 5 Francs)

- II. Other Correspondence: This includes correspondence between friends and family to either David or Laurice or both.
- III. Greeting Cards: In the greeting cards you will find all those between David and Laurice, those that were sent from others to David and Laurice, sent to David or Laurice, blank cards and those to Unknown recipients.
- IV. Blank Post Cards/ Photos/ Negatives: Included are four negatives, two photographs and two blank post cards.

- V. Printed Religious Materials/ Wedding Announcements/ Mini Books, Devotionals: Included in this are two devotionals (Forward – day by day Summer – 1943 and Forward – day by day 1941-1942), an Army/ Navy Service Book and A Prayer Book for Soldiers and Sailors. Also included are various church bulletins and typed correspondence. Announcement for David and Laurice on October 30, 1941. As well as David's brother Charles Wagner to Lillian Paretys on April 15, 1945.
- VI. Ephemera: Included in this series is a brochure from the Red Cross, scrap pieces of paper, Twenty Eighth Field Artillery Battalion tests/ notes and Thanksgiving Day note from the GIs.

Wagner Family Collection
Box and Folder List

Series I. Correspondence Between David and Laurice

Box /
Folder

Inclusive dates

1-1

July - Sep., 1941

[David's Address is the following from July 1941 to November 1941:

Pvt. David Wagner (ASN 32161042), Battery C-11 BN, 4th Regiment F.A.R.T.C. ,
Fort Bragg, NC

David's letters to Laurice is addressed to her in the following way from July
1941 to October 30, 1941:

Miss Laurice Reser, 139-12 233rd St., Rosedale, Queens, N.Y.C., N.Y.

Laurice's letters to Dave used the following as the return address:

Laurice Reser, 139-12 233rd Street, Laurelton, Long Island

Also used:

L. Reser, 139-12 233rd Street, Rosedale, LI

Also used:

L Reser, 139-12 233rd Street, Laurelton, LI]

1-2

Oct. 1-10, 1941

1-3

Oct. 11-22, 1941

[Dave and Laurice were married October 31, 1941. Laurice's Address and Name
are now:

Mrs. David H. Wagner or Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233rd St., Rosedale, Queens,
N.Y.C. N.Y

Also used:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233rd St., Laurelton, Queens, N.Y.C. N.Y

Also used:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233rd St, Rosedale, L.I., N.Y.

Also used:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233 St., Laurelton, L.I. (sometimes adds N.Y.)

Dave sent his mail to this address:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233 St., Rosedale, L.I.
New York (sometimes N.Y.C., N.Y.)

Also used:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233 St., Rosedale, Queens, N.Y.C., N.Y. (or N.Y. N.Y)

Also used:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233 St., Rosedale, L.I, N.Y., N.Y.]

1-4 Nov. 1-15, 1941

[David's address changes to the following between November 7, 1941-February 1942:

Pvt. David Wagner ASN 32161042, Battery C-28 F.A. Battalion, Fort Jackson, S.C.

Also used:

Pvt. David H. Wagner, Battery C-28 F.A. Battalion, Ft. Jackson, S.C.]

1-5 Nov. 16-30, 1941

1-6 Dec., 1941

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

2-1 Jan. 1-17, 1941

2-2 Jan. 18-31, 1941

2-3 Feb., 1942

[As of February 3, 1942 David was promoted from Private to a Private First Class. David's Address changes to the following between February 3, 1942-July 23, 1942:

P.F.C. DH Wagner, Battery C-28 F.A. Bn., Fort Jackson, S.C.

Also

P.F.C. D.H. Wagner, C Battery 28th Field Artillery, 8th Division, Fort Jackson, S.C.

Also

P.F.C David H Wagner, Battery C, 28th F.A. Bn., Fort Jackson, South Carolina]

- 2-4 March, 1942
- 2-5 April, 1942
- 2-6 May 4-17, 1942
- 2-7 May 18-31, 1942

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

- 3-1 June 1-15, 1942
- 3-2 June 16-29, 1942
- 3-3 July, 1942

[The following address issues are noted:

Addresses are still for Fort Jackson, South Carolina, however they are postmarked differently.

July 23, 1942 the camp is moving to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Letter dated 7/25/1942 is addressed as Fort Jackson, S.C. but is postmarked as Chattanooga, TN.

Letter dated 7/27/1942 is addressed as Fort Jackson, S.C. but is postmarked as Memphis, TN.

The following address issues are for July 27, 1942-September 10, 1942:

July 27 until End of August 1942 all envelopes are Postmarked Lawton, OK but are still addressed with Fort Jackson, S.C.]

- 3-4 Aug., 1942

[8/1/42- Dave tells Laurice he is getting tired of the mail situation and wants her to mail to the address for Fort Sill Oklahoma:

D.H.W. 32161042, Btry. C-28 FA. Bn., Fort Sill, Oklahoma

However, Dave continues to use the address for Fort Jackson, S.C. but they are postmarked as Lawton, OK.]

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

3-5

Sep., 1942

[For the letter dated September 1, the address is just noted as:

P.F.C D.H. Wagner, Battery "C" 28th Field Artillery Bn.

Dave's mail to Laurice has the following Address as of September 6-9, 1942 with Postmark of Fort Still, Oklahoma or Lawton, Oklahoma:

PFC David Wagner ASN 32161042, Btry C-28 FA. Bn., Nashville, TN.

Laurice's letter of September 6, 1942 is addressed to the following:

P.F.C David H. Wagner 32161042, Battery C 28th F.A. Bn., 8th Division, Fort Sill, Oklahoma

September 11, 1942 until approximately November 28, 1942

Dave is in Camp Forrest, Tennessee as of September 11, 1942.

Address:

PFC David Wagner ASN 32161042, Btry C-28 FA. Bn., Nashville, TN]

3-6

Oct., 1942

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

4-1

Nov., 1942

[November 21, 1942 Dave tells Laurice they will be leaving for Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri on Sunday November 29, 1942 and arrive their on Tuesday December 1, 1942. He starts using the following address on November 27, 1942:

Btry C-28 FA. Bn., Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri]

4-2

Dec., 1942

[For December 1942-March 1943 the addressed is changed to the following due to promotion on December 2, 1942 from Private First Class to Corporal (Cpl.) more specifically Non-Commissioned Technician 5th Grade:

Cpl. D.H. Wagner, Btry C-28 FA. Bn., Ft. Leonard Wood, MO]

4-3

Jan. 1-15, 1943

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

4-4 Jan. 16-31, 1943
4-5 Feb. 1-16, 1943
4-6 Feb. 17-28, 1943
4-7 March 1-15, 1943

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

5-1 March 16-31, 1943

[On March 21, 1943 Dave writes to Laurice that he will be moving to California to the Desert Maneuver Area. He arrived at the Desert Maneuver Area on March 27, 1943.

Only on March 25, 1943 (postmarked March 27, 1943) his address is noted on the envelope as only being (this envelope has been kept):

CPL DH Wagner, U.S. Army

Between March 22, 1943-August 14, 1943 the following is noted as the new address:

Cpl. DH Wagner, Btry C-28 FA Bn., C/O Postmaster LA, CA]

5-2 April 1-15, 1943
5-3 April 16-30, 1943
5-4 May 1-21, 1943
5-5 May 22-31, 1943
5-6 June 1-15, 1943
5-7 June 16-30, 1943

[On June 18, 1943 Laurice's address changes to the following:

Mrs. D.H. Wagner (or Laurice R. Wagner), 139-12 233 St., Rosedale, #10, L.I., N.Y.

Or

Mrs. D.H. Wagner, 139-12 233 St., Rosedale, #10, L.I., N.Y.]

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

- 6-1 July 1-15, 1943
- 6-2 July 16-30, 1943
- 6-3 Aug. 1-15, 1943
- 6-4 Aug. 16-31, 1943
- 6-5 Sep., 1943
- 6-6 Oct. 1-15, 1943

[Between August 15, 1943-November 21, 1943 David's Address is:

Cpl. David H Wagner ASN 32161042, Battery C 28th FA. Bn., Camp Forrest, TN.]

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

- 7-1 Oct. 16-31, 1943
- 7-2 Nov., 1943
- 7-3 Dec., 1943

[The following address is used for the dates of November 22, 1943- April 2, 1945 but the locations are different. Due to censorship which began with the letter dated 11/23/1943 and the Army not allowing the soldiers to specifically identify their locations the address is the following:

Cpl. DH Wagner 32161042, Serv. Btry. 28 FA Bn., New York, NY]

[The December 20, 1943 letter was written in the middle of the ocean on the way to England. David is now in England but the address remains the same. He is England from the letter dated December 19, 1943 to approximately January 11, 1944.]

- 7-4 Jan., 1944

[David is In Northern Ireland from about January 12, 1944 to approximately July 8, 1944. This is based on commentary made in his Letters. He states in a few letters that this is "Northern Ireland GI", through his visits to Belfast, post cards that he sends from Ireland, etc.]

- 7-5 Feb., 1944
- 7-6 March, 1944

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

7-7 April- May, 1944

7-8 June- Aug., 1944

[David is In France from July 9, 1944 to approximately September. This is based on letters for July he notes at the top of the letter the Date and France.]

**Box /
Folder**

Inclusive dates

8-1 Sep.- Oct., 1944

[David is In Europe/ Luxembourg: from sometime in September 1944 until approximately November 27, 1944. At the top of the letter for October 2, 1944 he notes only "Europe", most likely due to traveling and he is not permitted to state the exact location. October 3, 1944 he notes "Europe/ Luxembourg". He starts to note only "Luxembourg" at the top of letters beginning with October 7, 1944 until sometime November 1944. There are no letters between November 12 and November 28.]

8-2 Nov.- Dec., 1944

[David is In France again on November 28, 1944. He is in a hospital due to having Jaundice.

After a brief stay in France he moves to a hospital/ rehab center In England from November 30, 1944 to April. In this time period the address is now:

Cpl. D.H. Wagner 32161042, Det. Of Patients, Hosp. Plant 4108]

8-3 Jan.- March, 1945

8-4 April- July, 1945 + Legal Document/ Undated letters-Telegrams

[Beginning with Laurice's letter dated April 3, 1945 his letters from her are redirected to Rhoads General Hospital in Utica, NY.

As of April 22, 1945 to July 1945 his address is:

Cpl. David H. Wagner 32161042, Rhoads Gen. Hosp., Utica, NY, Ward 209]

Box /
Folder

Inclusive dates

Series II. Other Correspondence

8-5 Oct., 1941- Feb., 1943

8-6 June, 1943- June, 1945

Box /
Folder

Title/Inclusive dates

Series III. Greeting Cards

9-1 Between David and Laurice

9-2 To David and Laurice

9-3 To David

9-4 To Laurice

9-5 Cards to Unknown Recipient/ Blank Greeting Cards/ To Thomas Reser from Irene

Series IV. Blank Post Cards/ Photos/ Negatives

9-6 Blank Post Cards/ Photos, Negatives

Series V. Printed Religious Materials/ Wedding Announcements/ Mini Books, Devotionals

9-7 1941-1945

Series VI. Ephemera

9-8 Red Cross Advertisement/ Written Notes/ Army Documents