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## MS-169: Albert Chance World War II Collection

Melanie L. Fernandes  
*Gettysburg College*

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## MS-169: Albert Chance World War II Collection

### **Description**

This collection contains personal documents, correspondence, photographs, and items from Albert Chance during the time he served in WWII. His correspondence and photographic materials dominate the collection. While Chance's materials give a thorough description of his personal experience during the war in the European Theater and North African Campaign, they also provide perspective into the mind of the common soldier during this time. Through his letters Chance expressed his feelings of commitment to the war effort, his opinions about the sites and people he saw while he was away, and what he did during his leisure time.

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### **Keywords**

World War II, European Theater, North African Campaign, photographs

### **Disciplines**

History | Military History

**Guide to the  
Albert Chance World War II Collection**



**Melanie Fernandes '16, Holley Intern  
8/12/2016**

## **MS-169 Albert Chance World War II Collection**

(5 boxes, 1.5 cubic feet)

Inclusive Dates: 1942-1990

Bulk Dates: 1942-1945

*Processed by: Melanie Fernandes '16, Holley Intern*

### **Provenance:**

This collection was donated to Special Collections, Musselman Library by Barbara Chance Hall, February 2012.

### **Biography:**

Albert (No Middle Name) Chance reported for active duty with the United States Army on September 24, 1942 at Fort Dix, New Jersey. At the time of his induction Albert was 39 years old, single, and employed in purchasing for the Central Penn National Bank in Philadelphia, PA. He was meticulous – to a fault, some would say – but this characteristic probably accounts for the fascinating archive of his wartime experience which is preserved today.

Albert was a very talented amateur photographer. He took 51 rolls of film from May 1944 to August 1945 when he returned to the US. Over 400 prints present a picture of the European Theater from the perspective of a common soldier. The photos depict Sherman tanks, camp life and bomb devastation. Village children at the water tap and such tourist sites as the Leaning Tower at Pisa are captured with his photographer's eye for interest and composition. Each is labeled with date, location and subject.

In a small spiral bound notebook Albert recorded his tenure overseas. He began with the boarding of the *Kungsholm* on March 2, 1943 and concluded, 60 pages later, with his Honorable Discharge at Fort Dix, NJ on September 15, 1945. In February 1944 he wrote in Naples: "Staging area located just above Naples within sight of the sea at the College of Costanzo Ciano. It is a beautiful group of possibly 25 buildings built by the Bank of Naples and given to the city as a gift on the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bank. The college was taken over by the German army upon its completion in 1940 and occupied by them till the city was evacuated by the Germans. Signs, painting on the walls still here..." Much of the diary illuminates the aforementioned photographs.

More than one hundred letters to family chronicle Albert's experience, beginning with boot camp at Fort Stewart Georgia in the fall of 1942 and continuing through his tours in North Africa and Italy. Albert was an excellent typist, and the majority of his letters are typed. Those hand written exhibit his exemplary penmanship, making the entire archive very readable. In June of 1943 he wrote from North Africa, "I manage to go swimming in the Mediterranean about every other day. The beach is level and sandy and the water feels grand, particularly last week when the temperature must have been up in the 90s. It also helps to solve the bathing problem. The Army sets up outside showers for the men wherever it is necessary, but down here the water is salt and usually cold".

Over fifty miscellaneous items complete the archive. Memorabilia such as Albert's dog tags, medals, patches and campaign ribbons have been well preserved. Documents include his 1942 draft board

registration card, many Army brochures and memos, personal equipment inventories, copies of orders and promotions as well as his Honorable Discharge and C-1 draft classification card.

After the war the 360<sup>th</sup> AAA Searchlight Battalion, with whom Albert served in North Africa, held several reunions. Members' names and addresses through 1970 are included in this collection.

Albert Chance died on December 21, 1990 at the age of 87.

*Biography written by Barbara Chance Hall*

### **Historical Note:**

The Second World War (WWII) is the most extensive international conflict to date. It was fought between two groups of countries: the Allies and the Axis Powers. The Allies included the United States, Britain, Australia, China, the Soviet Union, France, Canada, New Zealand, and India. The Axis Powers were Germany, Italy, and Japan. Although the conflict lasted from 1939-1945, the United States did not formally join the war until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The United States fought on two different fronts during WWII: the Pacific Theater against the Japanese, and the European Theater against the Germans and Italians. The United States also gave support in the North African Campaign, which was fought between Allied and Axis powers over colonial interests in Africa. Albert Chance served in both North Africa and Italy during the time he was enlisted.

### **Scope and Content:**

This collection contains personal documents, correspondence, photographs, and items from Albert Chance during the time he served in WWII. His correspondence and photographic materials dominate the collection. While Chance's materials give a thorough description of his personal experience during the war in the European Theater and North African Campaign, they also provide perspective into the mind of the common soldier during this time. Through his letters Chance expressed his feelings of commitment to the war effort, his opinions about the sites and people he saw while he was away, and what he did during his leisure time.

### **Subjects:**

World War, 1939-1945

United States -- History -- World War, 1939-1945

World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- Italy

World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- North Africa

World War, 1939-1945 -- Campaigns -- Western Front

### **Series Description:**

This collection contains six series: *Series I – Documents, Series II – Correspondence, Series III – Journal, Series IV – Photographs, Series V – Scrapbook, Series VI – Artifacts.*

### **Box List:**

#### **Box 1:**

1-0 Finding Aid and Biographical Information

Contains Albert Chance family tree – created by donor

**Series I – Documents:**

**1-1 Albert Chance Documents:**

1942 February 14	Registration Certificate, Local Draft Board 5, Mt Holly, NJ
1942 June 27	Post card - Draft Board notice to appear for physical
1942 July 9	Post card - Notice of Classification
1942 August 29	Order to Report for Induction on September 10, 1942 at 6:30 AM
1942 September 1	Procedure of Inducted Selectees, applicable Articles of War
1942 September 10	Appointment of Leader or Assistant Leader
1942 September 10	Transfer to Enlisted Reserve Corps, Acting Corp Albert Chance and list of men to report to Fort Dix NJ on 24 September 1942 – call to Active Duty
1943 January	Publication “Personal Affairs of Military Personnel and Aid for Their Dependents”, War Department, 45 pages
1943 January 28	War Savings Bond, Class A Pay Reservation, Albert Chance, Camp Stewart, GA (Rate of \$6.25 each pay day)
1943 January 30	Letter to Union National Bank re appointment of brother as power of attorney (Letter of revocation 4 March 1983)
1943 February 5	Power of Attorney signed appointing Robert Chance (brother)
c. 1943	6.75” x 5.25” pamphlet entitled “You're In The Army Now”, illustrations by Dick Wingert (“Hubert” cartoonist for <i>Stars and Stripes</i> )
1943	Letter to Members of the United States Expeditionary Forces (with envelope) from Franklin Roosevelt
1943	Ticket stub to the Colisee Alger, “balcon 1re Serie ou Loges”, 18 fr.  Flyer (in French) for the film “Ceux Qui Servent Sur Mer”

4 page propaganda leaflet (in Russian), "dropped over Yugoslavia by the USAAF"

1943 June 8 Application, booklet, and certificate for National Service Life Insurance

1943 August 28 Signal Corps, Allied Force Headquarters, Bulletin (radio and newspaper stories)

1943 August 31 Memo from Headquarters, 360<sup>th</sup> AAA Searchlight BN; congratulations re: raid on Algiers 27 Aug 1943

1944 May 5 Special orders #4, promotion of Albert Chance to be Technician Grade 4, Med Detachment

1944 December 4 Fifth Army Association ID card, signed by Lt. General Mark W Clark

1944 December 9 Special orders #140, transfer of T/4 Albert Chance to 383<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Depot Company, by order of Col. Clark

1945 January 3 Receipt For Soldier's Deposit for Albert Chance, in the amount of \$70, to be credited to his account

1945 March 31 Four page *Individual Clothing and Equipment Record* for Albert Chance

1945 June 25 Owner's Inventory (2 copies), contents of Duffel Bag to be shipped to brother in US

1945 24 July Air Travel Clearance Certificate for Albert Chance, for air shipment to the United States as part of the "Green Project Movement"

1945 July 26 4"x 2.5" certification of Fifteenth Air Force, part of Home Bound Task Force, that Albert Chance was flown on a 7.5 hour flight from Italy to Casablanca on the first leg of his journey home

1945 July Transient Service brochure, 1272<sup>nd</sup> AAF Base Unit, Port Lyautey, French Morocco

1945 July "A Preview Of Your Next Air Transport Command Stop", Dakar to Natal

1945 September Publication of 1262<sup>nd</sup> SCU, Separation Center, Fort Dix, NJ "What Next", 7 pgs

1945 September 15 Laminated wallet sized copy of Honorable Discharge  
Photostat of discharge, two sides 8.25" x 6.25"

Several Xerox copies, as above

- 1945 September 17 Post card from Local Draft Board, Mt Holly NJ, classification I-C, discharged
- 1945 September Correspondence from President of Central-Penn National Bank and Albert Chance re: reinstatement of his employment (September 1 and September 18)
- 1959 July 27 Xerox copy of birth certificate for Albert Chance, born 12 August 1903
- 1990 December 21 Copy of death certificate for Albert Chance, deceased 19 December 1990. Memorial card, Perinchief Chapels, Mt Holly, NJ

### **1-2 360<sup>th</sup> AAA Searchlight Battalion Documents:**

- c. 1945 Typed list containing names and addresses of HQ Battery, 360<sup>th</sup> AAA Searchlight Battalion members
- 1954 May 1 Typed copy of History of the 360<sup>th</sup> AAA Searchlight Battalion. 8 pages; compiled by Winfield A Thompson and Samuel Brown.
- 1957 September 6 Names and addresses of members of Battery B, 360<sup>th</sup> (as above), typed
- 1959 November 22 Names and addresses of members of Battery B, 360<sup>th</sup> (as above), typed
- 1970 November 15 Names and addresses of members of Battery B, 360<sup>th</sup> (as above), typed
- Unknown Date Historical Record of 360<sup>th</sup> Antiaircraft Artillery Searchlight Battalion

### **1-3 Awards and Certificates**

- 1945 May 14 Letter containing recommendation for award of Bronze Star
- 1945 June 10 Letter stating Bronze Star not awarded; Commendation Citation issued in lieu
- 1969 March 28 Letter requesting ribbon for commendation signed 14 May 1945



1969 September 9 Certificate pertaining to the Army Commendation Medal; letter indicating award

1991 July 23 United States Certificate Honoring the Memory of Albert Chance

1991 July 23 Office of Presidential Correspondence, recognition of military service.

**1-4 A Cook's Tour Thru \*\*\*\*\***

1943 Three page document "A Cook's Tour Thru \*\*\*\*" (probably Algiers)

***Series II – War Correspondence:***

**1-5 War Correspondence:**

1942 September 27 post card from friend Julian Stratton, Air Force, Atlantic City NJ

1942 October 7 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 October 18 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 November 5 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 November 21 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 December 2 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 December 2 to Mr Swift, President of Central Penn Bank, from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 Tuesday evening to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1942 Friday evening to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1943 January 24 to Tom Conklin (Central Penn Bank) from Camp Stewart, GA

1943 January 25 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1943 February 3-4 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1943 February 12 to family from Camp Stewart, GA

1943 February 19 from Tom Conklin at Central Penn Bank

1943 April 8 to family from North Africa

1943 June 13 to Tom Conklin from North Africa

1943 August 29 Birthday telegram to Albert Chance received from family in US

1943 October 26 to Tom Conklin (V Mail photostat, format approximately 5" x 4")

1943 November 17	from Tom Conklin (V Mail photostat)
1943 December 3	to Tom Conklin (V Mail photostat)
1943 December 19	to Mr Swift (V Mail photostat)
1943	Western Union cable to family – Christmas greetings. Certification of duty free gifts from armed services personnel
1944 January 8	from brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 February 5	to family – four post cards from North Africa
1944 March 2	to family from Italy (with Algerian, Moroccan and French currency)
1944 April 27	from Dot Sullivan (V Mail photostat)
1944 April 28	to family from Italy
1944 May 8	from Dot Sullivan (V Mail photostat)
1944 22 May	from Dot Sullivan (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 5	from Dot Sullivan (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 18	from brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 21	to family from Italy
1944 August 29	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 September 8	to brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 September 30	from brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 October 6	to family from Italy
1944 October 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 October 11	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 October 27	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 October 31	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 November 9	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 December 15	to family from Italy
1944 December 30	to family from Italy
1945 January 16	from brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1945 January 26	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 March 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 March 19	to family (V Mail photostat)

1945 Easter Sunday	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 April 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 April 18	to family from Italy
1945 April 26	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 May 21	to family (V Mail photostat)
1945 May 29	post card to family from Florence, Italy
1945 May 29	post card to family from Florence, Italy
1945 June 4	to family from Modena, Italy (V Mail photostat – 2 pages)
1945 June 11	to family from Modena, Italy (V Mail photostat)
1945 June 23	to family from Naples, Italy
1945 June 30	to family from Naples, Italy
1945 July 6	to family from Naples, Italy
1945 August 4	Western Union telegram, Albert Chance to family - re: arrival in Miami.
1945 September 13	from Dot Sullivan
1945 September	post card from Dot Sullivan, from her trip to Switzerland

***Series III – Albert Chance Personal Journal:***

**1-6 Albert Chance Journal:**

1943 March 2 to 1945 September 15

Handwritten diary (3.5" x 6") of service in Italy and North Africa, 60 pages

***Series IV – Photographs:***

**Approximately 408 prints, each dated with location and subject noted**

**Photos taken by Albert Chance in the following locations in Italy 1944-1945 and on his return journey to the US**

**Box 2:**

**2-1 Photographs: Rolls 1-15**

May 1944 Lucera

June 1944 Foggia

	Lucera
July 1944	Bari Lucera Foggia Cerignola Manfredonia
August 1944	Lucera Manfredonia
September 1944	Lucera

**2-2 Photographs: Rolls 16-30**

October 1944	Lucera Foggia Ariano Cassino Florence
November 1944	Piancoldoli Barberino Rome
December 1944	Barberino
January 1945	Florence
February 1945	Florence Sesto Fiorentino
March 1945	Sesto
April 1945	Sesto Florence Bologna
May 1945	Modena

**Box 3:**

**3-1 Photographs: Rolls 31-43**

May 1945                      Bologna  
   Florence  
   Pisa

June 1945                     Verona  
   Modena  
   Parma  
   Naples  
   Pompeii

July 1945                      Naples  
   Pozzuoli

**3-2 Photographs: Rolls 44-51**

July 1945                      Capri  
   Rome

Return Journey:

July 1945                      Naples  
   Sardinia  
   Casablanca  
   The Sahara  
   Dakar, Senegal

August 1945                   Natal, Brazil  
   British Guiana  
   Trinidad  
   Miami Beach, Florida

**3-3 Miscellaneous Photographs:**

1942 September              4" x 6" Chance family photograph

1942 September 14          8" x 10" portrait photograph of Albert Chance

1943 February 4              5" x 3.5" portrait photograph of Albert Chance

1944 February 1	4.5" x 3.5" portrait photograph of Albert Chance
1944 May 16	Two 4.75" x 3" photographs of Albert Chance, in camp, probably Lucera , Italy
1944 July/Aug	4.5" x 2.75" photograph of Albert Chance with three other soldiers in bathing suits, probably Manfredonia, Italy – on the Adriatic

***Series V: Scrapbook (correspondence)***

**Box 4:**

**The following letters and documents are mounted in a scrapbook – in this order:**

1943 February 18	change of address notice
1942 December 12	notice of Christmas leave 12/17 for ten days
1942 October 10	to brother, Robert Chance from Camp Stewart, GA
1942 October 2	post card to family from Camp Stewart, GA Undated post card of Casablanca annotated – not mailed
1942 Tuesday evening	to family from Camp Stewart, GA
1943 25 June	post card to family showing air war
1943	two post cards of Casablanca annotated – not mailed
1942 Sunday evening	to family from Camp Stewart, GA
1943	three post cards of North Africa annotated – not mailed
1943 March 19	to family
1943 March 24	to family
1943 February 28	to family from Camp Stewart, GA
1943 April 6	to family from Africa (on Camp Stewart stationery)
1943 May 3	to family (2 pages)
1943 May 7	to family – 2 pages (V Mail photostat)
1943 May 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 May 15	to family
1943 May 21	to family
1943 June 1	to family – 2 pages
1943 June 10	to family
1943 May 27	to family (V Mail photostat)

1943 June 7	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 June 17	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 June 23	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 July 2	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 July 17	to family
1943 July 13	to family (V Mail photostat – <i>Number 1</i> )

Note: Beginning on July 13, 1943, Albert numbered each of the letters he wrote, and later often referred to them by number. For the most part letters *to* him were not retained, but he also referred to letters from family members by a numbering system that they apparently used. Albert's last letter, written from Naples on July 6, 1945, was numbered 99.

1943 July 29	to family – 2 pages (V Mail photostat)
1943 August 7	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 August 14	to brother Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1943 August 17	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 August 21	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 September 1	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 September 29-30	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 October 7	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 October 13	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 October 23	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 October 26	to brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1943 November 3	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 November 11	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 November 14	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 November 25	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 December 11	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 Christmas	to family – Christmas Greetings (V Mail photostat)
1943 December 22	to family (V Mail photostat)
1943 December 28	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 January 2	to family (V Mail photostat)

1944 January 2	to brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 January 5	to brother, Robert Chance (V Mail photostat)
1944 January 16	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 January 22	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 January 29	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 February 6	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 February 26	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 March 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 March 12	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 March 16	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 March 23	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 March 30	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 April 5	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 April 13	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 May 5	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 May 11	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 May 16	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 May 26	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 2	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 8	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 17	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 24	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 June 27	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 July 3	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 July 23	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 July 26	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 August 5	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 August 10	to family (V Mail photostat)
1944 August 22	to family (V Mail photostat)



Note: With few exceptions, the letters written by Albert Chance were typed. In cases where a letter was hand written, his penmanship was exemplary.

### ***Series VI: Artifacts & Miscellaneous Memorabilia***

#### **Box 5:**

Medal: "For Military Merit", with ribbon and bar

Medal: "European African Middle Eastern Campaign", with bar, three stars

Medal: "Good Conduct", with ribbon

Medal: "Campaign and Service – Victory World War II", with ribbon

Various campaign ribbons

3 small stars

2 Dog Tags on chain

US and Fortress insignia buttons

5<sup>th</sup> Army patch

Patch with four gold bars

2 Tech Sergeant patches

Honorable Discharge Emblem - trapezoidal eagle patch

Steel (German?) uniform insignia

Wallet with note reading, "Morocco (goatskin) leather wallet purchased in Casablanca, Morocco in April 1943 and carried through war tour. AC"