



Edgar Lee Sliffe Papers (SP0120)

Collection Number: SP0120

Collection Title: Edgar Lee Sliffe Papers

Dates: 1879-2001

Creator: Sliffe, Edgar Lee, 1925-2010

Abstract: The Edgar Lee Sliffe Papers contains the personal papers of Edgar Lee Sliffe and related families, including correspondence, genealogical records, land documents, publications, and photographs. This collection also includes World War I panoramic photographs, as well as photo albums documenting World War II and families from Bates and Cass counties of Missouri.

Collection Size: 5 cubic feet
(16 folders, 58 photographs, 13 volumes)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research but may be stored offsite. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Springfield](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at springfield@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Edgar Lee Sliffe Papers* (SP0120); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Springfield [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Springfield].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Kelli Clark on March 9, 2026 (Accession No. SPA0157).

Processed by: Processed by Elayna Eastin, March 19, 2026

Historical Note:

Charles “Ray” Sliffe was born December 14, 1893, in Adrian, Bates County, Missouri to Lizzie Ann Becker and Edgar Griffin Sliffe. In 1917, he registered to serve in the United States military during World War I and was officially drafted and enlisted in 1918. By January of 1919, he was discharged and married Marie Williams, daughter of Ezra Chester Williams and Ida Mae Moad, later that year. They had eight children: Celestine Sliffe born in 1920, twins Paul Lester Sliffe and Pauline Esther Sliffe Morgan born in 1921, Edgar Lee Sliffe born 1923, Betty Jane Sliffe Armstrong born in 1925, Bobby Gebe Sliffe born in 1925, and twins John Sliffe and Jack Sliffe born in 1926. Charles and Marie later divorced, and he remarried to Edna Reed Plouch. They at some point relocated to Jackson County, Missouri where Charles registered with the United States military in 1942 for World War II at age 48. It is unclear how long he served. He later retired from Townley Metal and Hardware Company. Charles passed in 1975 and was buried in Crescent Hill Cemetery in Adrian, Bates County, Missouri.

Edgar Lee Sliffe was born March 15, 1923, in Adrian, Bates County, Missouri to Charles “Ray” Sliffe and Marie Williams. Edgar went to school in Cass County, Missouri, attending Highview School from age 8 to 13 and both Adrian and Archie High Schools from age 14 to 18. By 1942, at age 19, he was drafted into the military and employed by the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard during World War II. He served alongside his father Charles, stepfather Edkar Leonard Warner, brothers Paul Lester, John E., and Bobby Gene, and extended family members James and Wayne Williams and Shelby Esry. He served in the United States Army Air Forces (AAF), a subordinate branch of the United States Army during WWII and retired as Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1952, he married Phyllis Esry, daughter of Frank Esry and Mary Ellen Hungate. Edgar and Phyllis had four children born to their marriage: Gary Stephan Sliffe born in 1953, Cydne Lou Sliffe born in 1954, Kelli Susan Sliffe born in 1963, and Timothy Alan Sliffe born in 1964. He and parts of his family relocated to Pierce County, Washington where he passed August 25, 2010. Edgar is buried in Mountain View Memorial Park in Lakewood, Pierce County, Washington.

Both Camp Funston, in Kansas, and Camp Holabird, in Maryland, were military camps established during World War I. Camp Funston, constructed in 1917, was a military cantonment meant to train and house soldiers. It operated until 1919 and could house up to 50,000 soldiers. The camp was built along the Kansas River on the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad and was one of the only cantonments to have a Zone of Camp Activity. Camp Holabird was also founded in 1917 but was built as the first motor transport training center and depot for the United States Army. The camp predominately operated as a center for repairing and prepping vehicles going overseas but also acted as the initial training camp for soldiers. At the end of the war, many of the buildings were torn down but parts of the campus would further serve the military as a training school and center for counterintelligence.

Towards the end of World War II, United States operations in Japan played a huge role. One of these operations included the soldiers of the 147th Infantry Regiment, named the Army “Cave Men,” who had to flush out Japanese soldiers from the man-made caves and tunnel-systems of Iwo Jima. This operation was key in securing the island for the United States in 1945 and produced the iconic image of the Marine Corps raising the American flag on Mount Suribachi, an image contained in this collection. These caves would later be named General Kuribayashi’s Caves after Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, who established his command post there, and serves as a private military and memorial site.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 2 series:

Family Papers
Oversize

Scope and Content Note:

Family Papers

This series contains materials related to Edgar Lee Sliffe and the Sliffe family, including cemetery records, correspondence, and genealogical records. The correspondence contains various letters between different pairs of siblings and from a mother to her children, with one letter dating back to 1879. One letter written by Dewey H. Moad in 1937 to his cousin, Ida Mae Moad Williams, details the different passings of his family and the hardships he faced with the loss of his mother's Civil War widow pension towards the end of the Great Depression. The genealogical records contain both manuscripts and compiled records related to the Sliffe family, as well as the Esry, Williams, Becker, Moad, and Hungate families. One manuscript, the "Slife History," written by A.G. Slife and William Slife, not only detail the evolution of the Sliffe name over the years but also includes various anecdotes of the Sliffe family, which details the family's encounters with Native Americans as early settlers and their roles within early Missouri history.

Also included in this series are land documents, photographs, publications, and report cards. The land documents include a homestead certificate for land in Springfield, Missouri dated 1886. There are also family photographs, featuring Becker, Esry, Hungate, Musgrave, and Sliffe families, including the military photos of Paul Lester Sliffe. These have been arranged alphabetically by family then chronologically. The publications contain two compiled histories of Archie, Missouri and "The Whirlwind," the 1940-1941 yearbook of Archie High School. Included with the yearbook is a letter and photograph from the sixty-year reunion of the 1941 class of Archie High School held in 2001. The report cards contain the grades and attendance records of Edgar Lee Sliffe from elementary school in 1931 to high school in 1941. They include records of Cass County Public Schools, such as Adrian and Archie High Schools. This series has been arranged by subject and then chronologically.

Oversize

This series consists of oversized materials including WWI panoramic photographs and Edgar Lee Sliffe's family photo albums. The five panoramic photos are of Camp Funston in Kansas and of Camp Holabird in Maryland. One photo in particular captures the soldiers at Camp Funston preparing for the return of Major General Leonard Wood from France in 1918. These panoramic photographs have been arranged by location.

The photo albums include both family and military photos of Edgar Lee Sliffe. The military photo albums consist of photos relating to World War II, including Japan, taken both during and after the war from 1942 to 1945 by Edgar Lee Sliffe. These photos include aerials of the land, barracks, and islands, as well as military warships and planes. Also included is a translated pamphlet dropped by the United States in Japan and images of Iwo Jima and General Kuribayashi's Cave.

The family albums focus on both Edgar and his close family and include other extended members such as the Warner, Williams, and Woodland families. Many of these photos include

vacations and family reunions from 1953 to 1954, showing parts of Lamar and Carl Junction, Missouri and the Roaring River State Fish Hatchery. There are also images of Edgar and his family in Alaska from his time spent as a construction worker on the Alaska-Canada highway. The photo albums have been arranged by subject and then chronologically.

Container List:

Personal Papers

Box 001	f. 1	Cemetery Records, 1944, 1947
	f. 2	Correspondence, 1879, 1937, no date
	f. 3	"Family Record," 1946
	f. 4	Compiled genealogy research, 1944-1956, 1979-1998
	f. 5	"Slife History," no date
	f. 6	Land documents, 1886, 1945, 1950
	f. 7-12	Photographs, 1919-1953, no date
	f. 13	Archie, Missouri, history manuscript, no date
	f. 14	<i>From Railway to Highway: The First Fifty Years of Archie, Missouri</i> , 1994
	f. 15	<i>The Whirlwind</i> and related documents, 1940-1941, 2001
	f. 16	Edgar Sliffe report cards, 1931-1941

Oversize

OS Box 1	v. 1-4	Military photo albums, 1942-1945, no date
OS Box 2	v. 5-6	Military photo albums, no date
	v. 7-8	Family photo albums, 1948-1953
OS Box 3	v. 9-10	Family photo albums, 1953-1955, no date
OS Box 4	v. 11-13	Family photo albums, no date
OS Box 5	OS Item 1-5	World War I Panoramic Photographs, 1918

Index:

Index Terms	Folder	Mediums	Image
Adrian (Bates County, Mo.)	f. 16		
Alaska		v. 12	
Amish	f. 5		
Archie (Bates County, Mo.)	f. 13-16		
Archie High School (Archie, Mo.)	f. 15-16		Yes
Barton County (Mo.)	f. 1		
Bates County (Mo.)	f. 13-16		
Becker family	f. 3-4, 7		Yes
Camp Funston (Kan.)		OS 1-3	Yes
Carl Junction (Jasper County, Mo.)		v. 11	
Cass County (Mo.)	f. 3, 13-16		
Cass County Public Schools (Cass County, Mo.)	f. 15-16		

Index Terms	Folder	Mediums	Image
Cemeteries--Missouri	f. 1		
Esry family	f. 4, 8		Yes
Esry, Frank Elijah, 1903-1978	f. 4, 8		Yes
Esry, Mary Ellen Hungate, 1903-1956	f. 4, 9		Yes
Esry, Shelby, 1927-	f. 4, 8		Yes
Fighter planes		v. 2, 6	Yes
Fort Holabird (Md.)		OS 4	Yes
Hampshears family	f. 4		
Hensley family		v. 9	
Hungate family	f. 9		Yes
Japan--Aerial photographs		v. 6	Yes
Johnson County (Kan.)	f. 6		
Lamar (Mo.)	f. 1	v. 9	
Mansfield (Mo.)	f. 8, 12		
Military camps		v. 2-6, OS 1-5	Yes
Moad family	f. 2		
Moad, Dewey H., 1898-1968	f. 2		
Moad, James Alfred, 1848-1928	f. 2		
Moad, Joseph C.	f. 6		
Moad, Mary Anna Owens, 1855-1937	f. 2		
Musgrave family	f. 10		Yes
Native Americans	f. 5		
Panoramas--United States		OS 1-5	Yes
Roaring River State Fish Hatchery (Cassville, Mo.)		v. 7	Yes
Sliffe family	f. 4-5, 11, 13-16	v. 1-13	Yes
Sliffe, Bobby Gene, 1925-2011		v. 4	
Sliffe, Charles "Ray," 1893-1975	f. 11		Yes
Sliffe, Drusilla G. Maxwell, 1840-1918	f. 4, 11, 13		Yes
Sliffe, Edgar Lee, 1925-2010	f. 4, 15-16	v. 1-13	Yes
Sliffe, J. Benjamin, 1832-1903	f. 4, 11, 13		Yes
Sliffe, John E.		v. 4, 9	Yes
Sliffe, Paul Lester, 1921-1993	f. 11	v. 4	Yes
Sliffe, Phyllis Irene Esry		v. 7-13	Yes
Springfield (Mo.)	f. 2, 6		
United States. Army. Air Corps		v. 2	
War planes		v. 2, 6	Yes
Warner family		v. 4, 9	Yes
Warner, Edkar Leonard, 1899-1989	f. 6	v. 4, 9	Yes
Warner, Marie Helen Williams Sliffe	f. 6	v. 4, 9	Yes

Index Terms	Folder	Mediums	Image
Warships--United States		v. 1, 11	Yes
Williams family	f. 4	v. 4, 7, 9	Yes
Williams, Ezra Chester, 1867-1949	f. 1, 4		
Williams, Ida Mae Moad, 1872-1944	f. 4		
Williams, Opal W. Cummings, 1903-1998	f. 4		
Woodland family		v. 9	Yes
World War, 1914-1918		OS 1-5	Yes
World War, 1939-1945		v. 1-6	Yes
World War, 1939-1945--Aerial operations		v. 2, 6	Yes
World War, 1939-1945--Japan		v. 6	Yes
World War, 1939-1945--Japan--History		v. 6	Yes
World War, 1939-1945--Japan--Iwo Jima		v. 6	Yes
Wright County (Mo.)	f. 2, 6		