



# Smithsonian

## *National Air and Space Museum*

### Walter J. Kropf World War I Balloon Diary

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2022

National Air and Space Museum Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Walter J. Kropf World War I Balloon Diary
<b>Date:</b>	1918-1919, 1961-1970
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.2022.0034
<b>Creator:</b>	Kropf, Walter J.
<b>Extent:</b>	0.13 Cubic feet (1 flat box)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	Walter J. Kropf served as a Balloon Pilot (Observer) with the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during World War I and later served for 25 years as a civilian employee of the US Air Force including work in contract management and purchasing. This collection consists of Kropf's diary kept during his military service in 1918, some of his military records, a news clipping from 1961 regarding Kropf meeting Joe Kittinger, and a letter to Kropf from 1970 from the National American Balloon Corps Veterans Association.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

John Kropf, Gift, 2022, NASM.2022.0034

### Processing Information

Arranged and described (2022) and encoded (2023) by Jessamyn Lloyd.

### Preferred Citation

Walter J. Kropf World War I Balloon Diary, NASM.2022.0034, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

No restrictions on access

### Conditions Governing Use

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## Biographical / Historical

Walter J. Kropf served as a Balloon Pilot (Observer) with the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during World War I. Kropf received training at the Army Balloon School at Fort Omaha, Nebraska and later at Camp John Wise, Texas. Kropf served overseas in France where he participated in the Battle of Saint-Mihiel and

the battles of the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Kropf was honorably discharged in 1919 at the rank of second lieutenant. Kropf later served for 25 years as a civilian employee of the US Air Force including work in contract management and purchasing.

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## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of Walter J. Kropf's diary kept during his time in service in 1918. The diary, which measures approximately 3.5 by 6 inches and has a brown leather cover, includes entries for each day of the year as well as a section of names and addresses in the back. The collection also contains Kropf's American Expeditionary Forces Officers' Identity Card which includes a photograph of Kropf in uniform and some additional biographical information including a copy of Kropf's military record and discharge certificate, a news clipping from 1961 regarding Kropf meeting Joe Kittinger, and a letter to Kropf from 1970 from the National American Balloon Corps Veterans Association.

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## Arrangement

Collection is arranged by type of material.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Aeronautics, Military  
Balloons  
World War, 1914-1918

Types of Materials:

Correspondence  
Diaries  
Newspaper clippings

Names:

United States. Army Air Service. American Expeditionary Forces. Balloon Section