

Title: Gearhard Family Papers

Reference Code: Mss-3239

Inclusive Dates: 1918 – 1945, 1974

Quantity: 0.7 cu. ft.

Location: CV, Sh. 024

Abstract: Augustus Gearhard, son of Nicholas and Theresa, was born in Milwaukee in 1893. He attended St. Francis Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood in 1917. After the United States entered World War I, August was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Army in March 1918 and assigned as chaplain to the 328th Infantry Regiment. He earned a Distinguished Service Cross for risking his life to remove wounded soldiers to the rear lines.

He was honorably discharged from the Army in June 1919 and returned to parish work in Milwaukee at St. Michael's and then St. Mary's parishes. In 1920, he became rector of the Fenwick Home for Boys, an organization for young Catholic workers in Milwaukee. He remained at that post until World War II, when he was recalled in January 1942 to active duty. August served as chaplain with the Fourth Air Force at San Francisco, the Fifth Fighter Command in Australia, the Fifth Air Force and the Far East Air Forces in the South Pacific.

Following the war, he was named chaplain of the Air Defense Command and chaplain of the United States Air Forces in Europe in 1949. He returned to the U.S. in 1950 and was promoted to brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve and appointed deputy chief of Air Force Chaplains at U.S. Air Force headquarters, Washington, D.C. August retired from the military in 1953 and served as pastor of St. Joseph's parish in Waukesha, Wisconsin, for 18 years. He died on March 19, 1974.

Mildred Gearhard, daughter of Cyril N. and Mildred Ament Gearhard, was born on November 23, 1921 in Milwaukee. She attended St. Robert's Grade School and St. Mary's Academy, graduating in June 1939. In August, she entered the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, an international Community of Women Religious founded in 1925 in Washington, DC, by Austrian-born Doctor Anna Dengel to bring the full scope of professional health care to those in need. Mildred took the name Sr. Mary David, and during World War II, she took a science course at Trinity College, and went on to receive her BSN from Catholic University. From 1948-1965 she served in many different positions in the Society's hospitals in India.

Scope and Content: The bulk of the collection consists of August's correspondence with his mother and other family members. It discusses his military service as well as family matters. The collection also includes Sister Mary David's correspondence with her family and a variety of August's military records.

Access and Use: No restrictions

Language: English

Notes: Material originally donated to the Waukesha County Historical Society by Greg Nogard. Collection transferred to Milwaukee County Historical Society.

Arrangement:

Folder Heading	Box #	File #
August Gearhard – Letters sent to his mother, 1939, 1942	1	1
August Gearhard – Letters sent to his mother, 1943	1	2
August Gearhard – Letters sent to his mother, 1944-1945	1	3
August Gearhard – Letters sent to his brother Nick, 1942-1945	1	4
August Gearhard – Letters received, 1940-1945	1	5
August Gearhard – Miscellaneous Military & Personal Records, 1918-1974	1	6
Theresa Gearhard – Letters received (Miscellaneous), 1942-1945	2	1
Theresa Gearhard – Holiday & Miscellaneous Cards Received	2	2
Sister Mary David – Letters sent to Gearhard Family, 1942-1945	2	3
<i>La France et Ses Alliés</i>	2	Loose
<i>La Gloire de La France</i>	2	Loose
<i>Generals of the British Army</i> by Francis Dodd	2	Loose
Photos: See M-252		