

The Filson Historical Society

**Mitchell, Bernice, b. 1913
Papers, 1941-1988**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator
of Special Collections, James J. Holmberg

Size of Collection:
1 Cubic Foot

Location Number:
Mss./A/M681

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Scope and Content Note

The Mitchell papers include correspondence, newsletters, photographs, and clippings related to the town of Burnside in Pulaski County, Kentucky. This collection documents some of the people, places, and events in the town, which now resides under the waters of Lake Cumberland.

Small-town life during World War II is particularly well represented through Bernice Mitchell's weekly newsletter, the *Burnside Gazette*, which she wrote and mailed to Pulaski County residents serving in WWII. From 1941 to 1947, the *Burnside Gazette* chronicled town news and gossip as well as provided updates on various soldiers' deployment and wellbeing. Additionally, there are letters, photos, and clippings from specific Burnside servicemen that Mitchell "adopted" and wrote to weekly in association with "The Burnside Home Front."

Other topics include Harriet Simpson Arnow and growing up in historic Burnside. Mitchell correspondences with her brother Jerry Lindley Mitchell plus friends Vear Mann and Harriet Simpson Arnow to recollect and compile experiences about "Old Burnside" for Arnow's book on the subject.

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Biographical Note

Born in 1913, Bernice Mitchell was a resident of Burnside, Kentucky. Originally located on the Cumberland River, Burnside was known for its lumber industry and was a center for railroad and steamboat shipping. The town was relocated in 1952 with the construction of the Wolf Creek Dam and the creation of Lake Cumberland. The town's original location is now buried under water.

During WWII, Mitchell devoted much of her personal time to corresponding with servicemen from Pulaski County. She encouraged her community to rigorously support their "boys" abroad and to commit to writing weekly letters to at least one service member, even if they were not related to or acquainted with the individual. She challenged, "My neighbor's sons deserve every bit of encouragement I can give them and certainly their worth is far too great to compare to my time and money. What about your neighbor's son?"

Later, in the 1970's after Burnside had been relocated, Bernice helped her friend, Kentucky writer Harriet Simpson Arnow, compile accounts and information about their hometown. Arnow's *Old Burnside*, published in 1977, is homage to growing up in the small Kentucky town.

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Folder List

Box 1

- Folder 1: Correspondence, 1942-1946
- Folder 2: Correspondence with WWII soldiers: Alcorn – Cameron
- Folder 3: Correspondence with WWII soldiers: Cline – E. Helton
- Folder 4: Correspondence with WWII soldiers: K. Helton – Rakestraw
- Folder 5: Correspondence with WWII soldiers: Simpson – Surber
- Folder 6: Correspondence with WWII soldiers: Tarry – Wilkinson
- Folder 7: Correspondence about Burnside, 1974-1988
- Folder 8: Vear Mann
- Folder 9: *Burnside Gazette*, 1941
- Folder 10: *Burnside Gazette*, January – June 1942
- Folder 11: *Burnside Gazette*, July – December 1942
- Folder 12: *Burnside Gazette*, January – June 1943
- Folder 13: *Burnside Gazette*, July – December 1943
- Folder 14: *Burnside Gazette*, January – June 1944
- Folder 15: *Burnside Gazette*, July – December 1944
- Folder 16: *Burnside Gazette*, January – June 1945
- Folder 17: *Burnside Gazette*, July – December 1945
- Folder 18: *Burnside Gazette*, January – June 1946
- Folder 19: *Burnside Gazette*, July – December 1946
- Folder 20: *Burnside Gazette*, 1947
- Folder 21: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, 1941
- Folder 22: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, January – June 1942
- Folder 23: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, July – December 1942
- Folder 24: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, January – June 1943
- Folder 25: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, July – December 1943
- Folder 26: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, January – June 1944
- Folder 27: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, July – December 1944
- Folder 28: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, January – June 1945
- Folder 29: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, July – December 1945
- Folder 30: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, January – June 1946
- Folder 31: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, July – December 1946
- Folder 32: *Burnside Gazette* mimeographs, 1947
- Folder 33: WWII Miscellaneous
- Folder 34: Harriett Simpson Arnow, clippings & photocopies, 1956 - 1987
- Folder 35: Newspaper clippings, 1942-1986
- Folder 36: Duplicates

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Subject Headings

Arnow, Harriette Louisa Simpson, 1908-1986

Burnside (Ky.) – History

Cumberland Lake (Ky.)

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Soldiers – Kentucky

World War, 1939-1945 – Social aspects – United States