

The Filson Historical Society

**Mitchell, Bernice, b. 1913
Added Papers, 1941-1997, bulk 1941-1946**

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

Size of Collection:
2 cubic feet

Location Number:
Mss./A/M681a

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Scope and Content Note

The Bernice Mitchell added papers consist of letters, clippings, and photographs received during World War II from approximately eighty correspondents in multiple theaters including Europe, Northern Africa, and the Pacific. The letters were written by enlisted men and women (and occasionally their spouses) primarily from Burnside, KY. The correspondence represents the typical war-time experience for servicemen as well as small-town life in Kentucky during World War II.

Additionally, the collection includes a VHS cassette recording of a 1997 episode of the KET (Kentucky Educational Television) program *Kentucky Life*. Host Byron Crawford explores "Old Burnside" and talks with locals, including Bernice Mitchell. Mitchell discusses historic Burnside with regard to landmarks, recreational activities, and modes of transportation.

The collection is arranged alphabetically by correspondent name with Mitchell's letters interfiled, when available.

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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. Mitchell created a weekly newsletter called 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. In addition to this publication, Miss Mitchell corresponded extensively with locals serving in the war.

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Folder List

Box I

- Folder 1: Akorn, Tom, 1946
Folder 2: 'B'
- Barnes, William, 194?
- Baylor, George, 1943
- Bolton, Grant, 1942
- Bryant, C.W., 1946
Folder 3: Bates, Leslie E., 1944
Folder 4: Baugh, Eugene, 1942-1943
Folder 5: Bell, Elvin, W., 1943
Folder 6: Biggs, George, 1943-1944
Folder 7: Bolin, James, 1943-1943
Folder 8: Bolin, John (the Joker), 1944
Folder 9: Bolin, Thomas, 1942-1946
Folder 10: Bray, Lukie, 1943-1944
Folder 11: Brown, Ralph B., 1942-1944
Folder 12: Bryant, Paul, 1946
Folder 13: Buckner, M. C., 1942
Folder 14: Buckner, M. C., 1943
Folder 15: Buckner, M. C., 1944
Folder 16: 'C'
- Chesna, Thomas, 1943
- Cox, Robert, 1942
Folder 17: Cline, Willie, 1942-1943
Folder 18: Davis, Arvel, 1943-1944
Folder 19: Denny, James Harvey, 1942
Folder 20: Dick, Ray, 1943
Folder 21: Duff, C. W., 1942-1944
Folder 22: Dyer, Ben H., 1942
Folder 23: Edwards, Oral Herman, 1943-1944
Folder 24: Elliott, William & Jenny, 1942-1943
Folder 25: Fitzgerald, Charles, 1943
Folder 26: Flynn, Herman, 1942
Folder 27: 'G'
- Gailand, Norman, 1942
- Gibbs, Arliss, 1943
- Grant, Roy, 1944

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- Folder 28: Gable, Henry, 1942-1944
Folder 29: 'H'
- Hayes, Charlie C., 1943
- Heath, David, 1942
Folder 30: Halcomb, Robert Lee, 1942-1946
Folder 31: Helton, Edward V., 1942-1943
Folder 32: Helton, Kenneth, M., 1942-1944
Folder 33: Hobart, Howard, 1943-1944
Folder 34: Holcomb, Jody, 1943-1944
Folder 35: Jones, Robert D., 1943
Folder 36: Lee, Paul, 1944
Folder 37: Lewis, Robert, 1943
Folder 38: Lloyd, James W. (Pappy), 1942-1949
Folder 39: Love, George, 1942-1944
Folder 40: McCarty, Elizabeth, 1943
Folder 41: McCarty, J. B., 1942-1944
Folder 42: McLane, Carl W., 1942-1944
Folder 43: Marcum, Robert S., 1942-1944
Folder 44: Maynard, S. E., 1942-1944
Folder 45: Maynard, William H., 1942-1944
Folder 46: Mitchell, Bernice, 1941-1943
Folder 47: Newhall, Sally A., 1943-1944
Folder 48: Owens, Earl, 1942
Folder 49: Peters, Henry Mrs., 1942
Folder 50: 'R'
- Ragle, Wesley, 1942
- Rakestraw, Harris, 1942
Folder 51: Richardson, Clarence T., 1942
Folder 52: 'S'
- Silvers, Chester, 1943
- Silvers, George, 1952
- Stomper, Horten, 1943
Folder 53: Simpson, J. W., 1943
Folder 54: Sloan, John D., 1942-1944
Folder 55: Stigall, Edward, 1942
Folder 56: Stigall, James A., 1942-1944
Folder 57: Surber, Edward, 1942
Folder 58: Surber, Edward, 1943
Folder 59: Surber, Edward, 1944

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Box 2

- Folder 60: 'T'
- Taylor, Bob, 1946
- Terry, William, 1946
- Folder 61: Taylor, George, 1942-1943
Folder 62: Taylor, James, 1942-1944
Folder 63: Thompson, Charles, 1942
Folder 64: Townsend, Maurice B., 1943-1944
Folder 65: Turpen, Andrew R., Jan. - March 1943
Folder 66: Turpen, Andrew R., April –June 1943
Folder 67: Turpen, Andrew R., July – Dec. 1943
Folder 68: Turpen, James H., 1943-1944
Folder 69: Tuttle, John W., 1942-1943
Folder 70: Wilkinson, (John W. & Janet), 1942-1943
Folder 71: Wilkinson, Maurice, 1942
Folder 72: Wilson, Frank, 1944
Folder 73: *Kentucky Life* episode on “Old Burnside” featuring Bernice Mitchell, 1 videocassette, 1997
- Ovrsz Folder 74: McLane, Carl W., 1943-1944
Scott Field Broadcaster

Mellon Survey

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Title/Ownership:

- **Excellent** – No restriction as to access or use.

Category 1: Subject Content Interest

- **Rating: 3**
- This collection is almost entirely comprised of correspondence. The letters represent the typical war-time experience for servicemen as well as small-town life in Kentucky during World War II.

Category 2: Subject Quality of Documentation

- **Rating: 4**
- The collection contains extensive information about a Burnside, KY, during WWII.

Category 3: Physical Arrangement

- **Rating: 3**
- The collection is arranged alphabetically by correspondents' name.

Category 4: Physical Condition

- **Rating: 5**
- The collection is in ideal condition, showing no wear or damage.

Category 5: Related Materials

- **Rating: 3**
- Materials in the collection compliment the Filson's current WWII related collections.