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NELSON, ARNOLD CARL
(1920–1990)
PAPERS
1942-1945

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INTRODUCTION

The Arnold Carl Nelson Papers (1942 – 1945) are centered around Arnold Carl Nelson (1920 – 1990) of Tennessee and his military services in World War II. The Arnold Carl Nelson Papers are photocopies given by his son, Mark Nelson, Nashville, Tennessee.

The materials in this collection measure .84 cubic feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Arnold Carl Nelson Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Arnold Carl Nelson Papers, containing approximately 500 items, span the period 1942-1945. The collection is largely composed of correspondence and several miscellaneous items.

Correspondence consists of letters written between Arnold Carl Nelson (1920-1990) and his wife Beverly Jean (Amos) Nelson (1923-) while the former was in military service during World War II.

Sergeant Nelson writes about serving with Company A, 319th Medical Battalion, 94th Infantry. He describes army maneuvers in Tennessee; various army camps in the United States; and service overseas in England, France, Belgium, and Germany. Many letters relate his experiences during the war: army chow; sleeping arrangements; places where his outfit was billeted; recreational activities; and army personnel and civilians treated by his medical unit. Sergeant Nelson was in the Saar – Moselle campaign and the capture of Trier, Germany while serving with General George S. Patton's Third Army. At the end of the war his company was attached to the 15th Army.

In addition to describing his army experiences while stateside and overseas during World War II, the letters of Sergeant Nelson to his wife provide the researcher an insight to the concerns that the typical serviceman had separated by many miles from his loved ones at home. This soldier obviously worried about his wife's ability to cope with such responsibilities of rearing small children; of managing money and business matters; of handling travel arrangements when making visits to her husband; keeping in contact with her in-laws; writing regularly with personal and family news; looking after her health as well as that of the children; and reassuring each other of their love. For these reasons the wartime correspondence of Sergeant Arnold Nelson and his wife Beverly Jean (Amos) Nelson is a valuable contribution to the written record of Americans in World War II.

CONTAINER LIST

Microfilm Roll #1

Box 1

1. Accounts – Bills, notes receipts – Miscellaneous, 1949, 1960
2. Clippings – Nelson, Arnold C.
3. Correspondence – _____ - Neblett
4. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., February 1942
5. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., September – November 1942
6. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., March 1943
7. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., July–August 1943
8. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., September 1943
9. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., October 1943
10. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., November 1943
11. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., December 1943
12. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., January 1944
13. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., February 1944
14. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., May 1944
15. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., June 1944
16. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., July 1944
17. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., August 1944
18. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., September 1944
19. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., October 1944

Box 2

1. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., November 1944
2. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., December 1944
3. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., January 1945
4. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., February 1945
5. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., March 1945
6. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., April 1945
7. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., May 1945
8. Correspondence – Nelson, Arnold C., Miscellaneous, n.d.
9. Correspondence – Nelson, Bernice
10. Correspondence – Nelson, Beverly Jean
11. Correspondence – Nelson, Joyce
12. Correspondence – Nelson, Mack
13. Correspondence – Nelson, Robert
14. Correspondence – Nelson, Mrs. Texas Jane
15. Genealogical data – Nelson, Alfred Sanford
16. Memorabilia – Cards
17. Memorabilia – Miscellaneous

NAME INDEX

This is a name index of only the correspondence in the Arnold Carl Nelson Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the box and folder in which the material is to be found.

- _____, to Beverly Jean [Amos], 1944, re: family and weather news; please make visit to Knoxville, 1-3
- _____, (3) to Arnold Nelson, 1943, 1945, re: thinking of you; enjoying city; working in naval hospital; glad to have letter; congratulation on becoming a father; describes visit back to Tennessee, 1-3
- _____, ["Gramps"] (3) to grandchild Beverly, n.d. and 1945, re: family news, 1-3
- _____, Mildred (2) to Arnold Nelson, 1944, re: family news, 1-3
- _____, Olive (2) to Arnold and Beverly Jean Nelson, n.d., re: personal and family news, 1-3
- _____, Sam to Beverly Jean Nelson, n.d., re: family news, 1-3
- Amos, Mrs. _____ to [unknown family members], 1944, re: family news, 1-3
- Leama, Lee (2) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: hoping she will visit Knoxville; family-in-law news; sending pictures again, 1-3
- Moore, C. H. to Arnold Nelson, 1943, re: recommendation for O. C. S.; news from Tennessee, 1-3
- Neblett, Mrs. Homer to Arnold Nelson, 1943, re: describes state of Oklahoma; weather, 1-3
- Neblett, Mary and Homer to Arnold Nelson, 1943, re: general news, 1-3
- Nelson, Arnold (11) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1942, re: thanks for Valentine; sending photos; doesn't like Kansas; national color bearer for 319th Battalion; advises wife to take care of health; visit by Gen. Ben Lear of "Yo Hoo" fame; movies seen; Army duty; outfit sent to Salina, KS., 1-4, 5
- Nelson, Arnold (9) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, inquiry re son Billy; cautions her about taking care of herself; laundry complaints; sent snapshots home; army food; general advice; asks wife to write often; happy Billy is walking, 1-6
- Nelson, Arnold (2) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: thanks for surprise package; hot enough "to fry eggs in shade", 1-7
- Nelson, Arnold (26) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: location for maneuvers in Tennessee; sending laundry home; hopes she can visit Nashville; changing weather; camp life stories; hiking cross-country through heavy underbrush; wants snapshots of her and Pete; food and activities in camp; eating in the rain; advice to Beverly; plans for her visit to Nashville and instructions, 1-8

- Nelson, Arnold (17) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: pleased they were able to have time together ; weather; still on maneuvers; has she learned how to make biscuits; does she like the farm; mentions the future after the war; thanks for candy; rumors as to where they will be sent; save money for furlough; deductions from pay; all kinds of rumors about next camp; adoption proceeding for little Billy; requests that Beverly write his parents, 1-9
- Nelson, Arnold (2) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: asks about train trip back to Kalamazoo; inquires about little Billy; sleeping in the rain in a shelter half; rumors about furloughs; leaving for Camp McCain; will look for living quarters for her and Billy, 1-10
- Nelson, Arnold (12) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: take care of Billy's cold; reminder to see a dentist in Clarksville; am all right but missing her; addressed Christmas cards; waiting for payday; company officers; taking course in air-ground communications in a medical battalion; trying for various army schools; celebrating Christmas; see about the adoption of Billy and changing his name; movies seen; pledging love, 1-11
- Nelson, Arnold (14) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: friends sent war stamps; camp news; instructions on wife's health and attending to adoption of Billy; filed exercises; thanks for pictures; sent adoption papers back; weather in Mississippi; get rid of love letters that are questionable; likes quotations; more advice to Beverly; making arrangements to live in Mississippi; little leisure time in camp; urges wife to visit; setting up a budget, 1-12
- Nelson, Arnold (14) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: arrival date; camp news; movies seen; thanks for photos; made a will; much advice to how she should behave; combat training received; important to take care of her health; looking forward to her visit, 1-13
- Nelson, Arnold to Mrs. T. J. Nelson, 1944, re: announcing arrival by train, 1-14
- Nelson, Arnold (16) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: field exercises; movies seen; experiencing chiggers; reminder to apply for medical benefits; establish a checking account in both names; asks about Beverly's finding an apartment and her job selling tickets at the theater; reminder to write often, 1-15
- Nelson, Arnold (12) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: unsure when he will ship out; instructions as to medical care; weather; barracks life; shooting dice; predicts demise of Germany and Japan; battalion begins to move out; dislikes having letters censored; camp food, K. P., 1-16
- Nelson, Arnold (13) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: writes about being in England: the houses, countryside, flowers, etc.; forthcoming election in the states; use V-Mail for speed; English people and their customs; English children; unpredictable weather; comparing English and American women, 1-17

Nelson, Arnold (14) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: arrival in France; marching with a full pack; expects this to be a great adventure; Channel crossing was peaceful; weather great; in a good outfit; war news good; gives medical aid to the peasants; cooking good; good cider, hard and soft; French children win hearts; will have stories to tell when returning home; asks about family news; thanks for I. D. bracelet; costumes in this part of France very distinctive, 1-18

Nelson, Arnold (19) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: taking bath in icy streams; griping about mail service; medical service to the wounded; roasting chestnuts over a hot stove in a big station tent; playing cards; speaking of home; listening to World Series; movies seen; learning to hibernate like bears in winter; digging underground living quarters; washing and laundry almost non-existent; go to rear for a real shower; what to name the coming baby; Stars and Stripes top newspaper with troops; directions for making lamb, 1-19

Nelson, Arnold (26) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: place looks like shanty town; laundry problems solved; mail call important; most patients are French civilians; living conditions; sending money home; first hero of outfit decorated; weekly PX rations; barter cigarettes for fresh eggs; lots of idle time; comments about war; French countryside, people and customs; trying to learn French; buying clothes for the new baby; describes costumes worn by the peasants; Thanksgiving dinner eaten under apple tree in the rain, 2-1

Nelson, Arnold (19) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1944, re: leisure time spent in reading; routine remains the same; everyone well; mail slow; lace work made by local French women; enjoy hearing American music over radio; most G. I's are homesick; comments on presidential election; sending post cards from places visited; send more air mail stationery; describes Christmas gifts received; how he celebrated Christmas, 2-2

Nelson, Arnold (21) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1945, re: living in an old hotel; would like photos of all three; visited town named Quimber; meals; recreation; members of his group are named and hometowns given; many are proud fathers; town ruined by war; celebration of daughter's birth; Christmas gifts received; visit to Paris, Verdun, and Chateau-Thierry; gives weather reports; reaches Germany; village in shambles and people gone, 2-3

Nelson, Arnold (17) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1945, re: letters are from Germany; received mail from friends and photos of baby daughter; sending home German souvenirs; remarks about Gen. Patton; was able to visit all of British Isles except Wales when stationed in England; weather reports; keep writing everyday; writes about R. and R.; reminisces about the past and dreams of the future; description of farm animals; much admiration for the infantry; advice as to children, living arrangements and money matters, 2-4

- Nelson, Arnold (19) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1945, re: description of German home taken over for collection station; stay in castle owned by distiller of German champagne and wine; description of countryside around castle; plumbing facilities more up-to-date; good laundry service at front; plans for the future; stay home with children and not work; billeted now in house owned by prominent Nazi; description of house and furnishings; thanks for photo of children; appreciation for her letters with day-to-day activities, 2-5
- Nelson, Arnold (23) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1945, re: more postcards for her collection; now quartered in a Catholic hospital in a large town; Holstein cows in the area; most towns are rubble; description of food served; blooming flowers; enjoys letters and photos from home; gives advice on various subjects; asks about books she is reading and how Beverly's foot is now that the cast is off; description of trip to Paris; gifts for her and the children; comments on the death of President Roosevelt; playing softball; German people now working in their gardens; new quarters in spacious German home, 2-6
- Nelson, Arnold (17) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1945, re: movies seen and recommended to her and son; being able to workout in a gym; comments about the end of war in Europe; hopes she receives gifts sent from Paris; explains why he can't send home private property; weather; unit beginning extensive sports program; has 99 points for discharge; received liquor ration; asks about her job; headed for home; staging area in Belgium – destination Ft. Sheridan, Ill., 2-7
- Nelson, Arnold to Beverly Jean Nelson, n.d., re: [fragments of letters], 2-8
- Nelson, Bernice (4) to Arnold Nelson, 1943, 1944, re: family news; wants photos of him and his wife; thinking and praying for him, 2-9
- Nelson, Bernice (2) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, 1944, re: welcomes her into the family; family news, 2-9
- Nelson, Beverly (27) to Arnold Nelson, 1944, re: family news; going back home after his next pass to Nashville; writing everyday; doesn't always receive mail from him; has \ found a small apartment back home; has a babysitter for Bobby while she works at movie theater; day-to-day life; hopes to be able to join him at a camp some future date; pregnant and sick everyday; news about other family members; movies she has seen; weather; meals prepared, 2-10
- Nelson, Joyce to Arnold Nelson, 1944, re: announcing of birth of a daughter, Dorothy Jean; she and Clyde getting papers ready for her to come to America, 2-11
- Nelson, Mack to Arnold Nelson, 1942, re: postcard stating that family was glad to hear from her; can he get leave now?, 2-12
- Nelson, Mack (2) to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, 1944, re: sweet to write first; asks whether she likes wood carvings; come for a visit, 2-12
- Nelson, Bob to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1964, re: in Navy and sending pictures from home; went to Hiroshima for the afternoon; take care of loans for him, 2-13
- Nelson, Texas Jane to Beverly Jean Nelson, 1943, re: writes of son Zeno's wedding in England to Joyce ____; likes to hear from Beverly, 2-15
- Nelson, Texas Jane (2) to Arnold Nelson, n.d., re: asks him to let her know where his is stationed; general family news, 2-15