

A1799

Ruth Lightner Willis (-1994) Papers, 1940-1952

3 boxes

Processed by Chris Stein, June 2002

REPOSITORY

Missouri Historical Society Archives

P.O. Box 11940

St. Louis, MO 63112-0040

314-746-4510

archives@mohistory.org

DONOR INFORMATION

Papers were purchased from manuscript dealer Charles Apfelbaum in 1999.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

St. Louisan Ruth Lightner Willis was the daughter of Bruce and Anna Lightner. In the winter of 1944 she married Staff Sergeant Ralph Willis, who was stationed at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis. Ralph was later stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky; Pine Camp, New York; Fort Dix, New Jersey; and Camp Bowie, Texas, with the 754th Tank Battalion. Ralph was shipped to Australia in March 1941, and returned to the United States in late 1943 or early 1944. In November 1944 he transferred to the 59th Armed Infantry and in January 1945 was ordered to France, where he saw action. Ralph and Ruth Willis had two children: Ralph, Jr., and Sharon. Ruth died December 17, 1994, in St. Louis.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Collection contains 274 letters of Ralph Willis to his girlfriend and future wife, Ruth Lightner, while he served in the U.S. Army during World War II and in postwar years. Collection also contains a total of 62 wartime letters of the following U.S. servicemen to Ruth Lightner: Edward Nachtweih, Harry Bratton, Ray Bainter, Donald Cork, John Labbanez, James McCormick, William Karpechi, Henry Rasbenau, Joe Sedletzeck, and Charles Woselik.

Box 1

- folder 1 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1940 July-October (9 items)
- folder 2 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1940 November-1941 January (10 items)
- folder 3 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1941 February-April (10 items)
- folder 4 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1941 May-July (6 items)
- folder 5 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1941 August-1942 January (12 items)
- folder 6 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1942 February-July (9 items)
- folder 7 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1942 August-October (7 items)
- folder 8 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1942 November-December (7 items)
- folder 9 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1943 January-March (10 items)
- folder 10 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1943 April-May (9 items)
- folder 11 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1943 June-July (7 items)
- folder 12 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1943 August-1944 February (13 items)
- folder 13 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1944 April-May (13 items)
- folder 14 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1944 June-July (13 items)
- folder 15 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1944 August-September (11 items)
- folder 16 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1944 October (8 items)

Box 2

- folder 1 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1944 November-1945 January (11 items)
- folder 2 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner, 1945 February (9 items)
- folder 3 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1945 March (6 items)
- folder 4 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1945 April (5 items)
- folder 5 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1945 May-1947 June (20 items)
- folder 6 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1947 July-1949 May (11 items)
- folder 7 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1949 June-July (10 items)
- folder 8 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1949 August-October (13 items)
- folder 9 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1949 November-1951 July (10 items)
- folder 10 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1951 August-1952 June (13 items)
- folder 11 Letters of Ralph Willis to Ruth Lightner Willis, 1952 July-September (9 items)
- folder 12 Letters of Edward Nachtweih to Ruth Lightner, 1941 September-1942 March (13 items)
- folder 13 Letters of Edward Nachtweih to Ruth Lightner, 1942 April-1943 April (16 items)

Box 3

- folder 1 Letters of Edward Nachtweih to Ruth Lightner, 1943 June-1945 October (10 items)
- folder 2 Letters of Harry Bratton to Ruth Lightner, 1939 October (1 item)
- folder 3 Letters of Ray Bainter to Ruth Lightner, 1940 June (1 item)
- folder 4 Letters of Donald H. Cork to Ruth Lightner, 1942 August-October (2 items)
- folder 5 Letters of John Labbanez to Ruth Lightner, 1943 June (1 item)

- folder 6 Letters of James McCormick to Ruth Lightner, 1943 September-December (3 items)
- folder 7 Letters of William Karpechi to Ruth Lightner, 1943 June-September (4 items)
- folder 8 Letters of Henry Rasbenau to Ruth Lightner, 1943 September-1944 March (6 items)
- folder 9 Letters of Joe Sedletzeck to Ruth Willis, 1944 November-1945 October (4 items)
- folder 10 Letters of Charles Woselik to Ruth Lightner, 1943 April-July (12 items)
- folder 11 Miscellany: Includes postcards, calling cards, invitations, photographs, etc. (26 items)