

Information Sheet

R **Smith, Eleanor E.**
935 **Letters, 1944.**
 One folder.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are two "V-Mail" letters from Eleanor E. Smith at Fort Leonard Wood in Pulaski County, Missouri, to S/Sgt R. J. Bettis, Jr., an Army enlistee serving overseas. The letters are dated 18 January and 20 January 1944.

Eleanor Smith worked at the Post Transportation Office at Fort Leonard Wood, where Sgt. Bettis had previously been stationed, and it is clear that they had a romantic relationship. The letters are friendly chitchat concerning daily life during wartime. Smith complained that at "our little PX ... You are lucky if the bread in your sandwich is not older than a week and still luckier if you can find any meat on the bread," and having had to use ration stamps to purchase a new pair of shoes.

The letters are in "V-Mail" format, being that the originals were microfilmed and then reprinted by a photographic process from the microfilms after their arrival overseas.

Nothing definite is known about either Eleanor E. Smith or R. J. Bettis, Jr. Smith addressed him only as R. J. Bettis, Jr., and the salutation was "Bettis," with no first name. An R. J. Bettis, Jr., was born on 15 July 1917 at Scandia, Kansas, and died on 24 October 2001 at Belleville, Kansas. He was a retired rural mail carrier who left a widow names Mayson. An Eleanor Bettis was born on 30 June 1919 and died on 6 December 2003 at East Carondelet, Illinois. Her Social Security card had been issued in Missouri. However, it is not known whether either one is a principal in this collection, or if there was any marriage between the two. In one of the letters Eleanor jokingly remarked that taking her shoes off in a car was "just the Ozark in me."

r1041

10 June 2004

Michael Myers

Purchase

Index Cards

Bettis, R. J., Jr.
Fort Leonard Wood (Mo.)
Pulaski County (Mo.)
Smith, Eleanor E.
V-mail
World War, 1939-1945