

**OVERBY FAMILY PAPERS
1915-1967**

Tennessee Historical Society Collections

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Accession Number: THS 812
Date Completed: January 5, 2001
Location: (THS) III-M-3-4; IV-C-1v
Microfilm Number: 1641

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INTRODUCTION

The Overby Family Papers are centered around the family of Oma C. Overby (1875-1972) and her children Nella May (1911-1992), Morris William (?-1970), Clara E. (1914-1937), and Lacy Rosco (1920-____), all of Trigg County, Kentucky, and later, Nashville, Tennessee.

Born and raised in rural Kentucky, Oma Overby separated from her husband Allous (1882-1962) and brought her children to Nashville in the early part of the 1930s. The papers in the collection are mainly about the lives of Mrs. Overby and her children while they lived in east Nashville and elsewhere. Nella May, the oldest living child and around whom the family papers are centered, never married and worked at McClellan's, Sears-Roebuck and Company, and Washington Manufacturing Company in Nashville for approximately thirty years. There are many references in Nella's correspondence regarding associates at her last place of employment. The youngest member of the Overby family, Lacy, was employed at Abbott Laboratories in North Chicago, Illinois, for many years following naval service in World War II. His letters to his mother and sisters comprise a large part of the correspondence.

The materials in this collection were acquired at a yard sale and subsequently sold to the Tennessee Historical Society. The nature of the original acquisition perhaps explains the mystery of the three diaries in the collection, as these diaries bear no apparent relationship to the rest of the Overby Family Papers.

There are no restrictions on the use of the collection. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Overby Family Papers may be made for individual or scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Overby Family Papers containing approximately 800 items span the period 1915-1967, although the bulk of the collection is concentrated in the years 1935-1965. The collection is composed of account books, correspondence, diaries, genealogical data, legal documents, photographs, and miscellaneous items.

A major portion of the collection consists of correspondence within the Overby family, as well as among relatives and friends of Nella May Overby and Mrs. Oma Overby. Of particular interest are the letters of Ensign Lacy Overby to his mother and elder sister written while he was in the navy serving on the USS LST 718 in the western Pacific during World War II. Among the events reported by Ensign Overby is listening to the propaganda messages of "Tokyo Rose"; Japanese suicide attacks by kamikaze pilots off Okinawa; submarine attacks; the problem of malaria; the Japanese acceptance of surrender terms in Tokyo Bay in September 1945; the attitude of the Japanese civilians immediately after the war; description of the damage done by a typhoon on Okinawa; and island invasions he participated in which military censorship did not allow him to write about earlier. At the end of the war Overby was promoted to Lt. (jg) and assigned as executive officer of his ship. Between mid-September 1945 and his return to the states in early 1946, Overby and his ship's crew were involved in returning Japanese soldiers from Korea and China to their homeland, as well as returning Chinese military from Japan, and Korean civilians from Japan. During these repatriation voyages Overby describes how emaciated the Japanese were. In the remaining service letters Overby covers such topics as the difficulty of securing replacements for personnel rotated to stateside for discharge; the problem of receiving mail from home; a measles epidemic among Japanese civilians being returned to Japan; and awaiting transportation back to the states.

Letters of Nella May Overby to her brother Lacy during the immediate post-war period describes civilian life in Nashville. Ms. Overby mentions signs of demobilization; scarcity of jobs; shortages of consumer goods; a near race riot in Columbia, Tennessee; escalation of prices due to the ending of price controls; and a lack of housing.

The balance of the correspondence in the collection consists of the usual type of topics which family members and friends commonly write about: births and deaths; sickness; jobs; church activities; vacations planned or taken; etc.

A diary compiled by a Josephine Pitcock for the years 1942-1943 annotates her life as a commercial education teacher at Litton High School in Nashville, and later as a staff member of the Business Education Department at Campbell College in North Carolina.

Photographs are largely snapshots of the children of Lacy and Elizabeth ("Libby") Overby as well as photographs taken by Lacy Overby while on naval duty in the Pacific during World War II.

CONTAINER LIST

Box Number 1

1. Account books—Nella May Overby, 1937-1938
2. Accounts—Bills, notes and receipts—Lee, Thomas, 1915
3. Cards—Membership—Nella May Overby, 1941
4. Correspondence—Baker, Frances and Frances May, 1946, 1952-1956
5. Correspondence—Baker, Paul and Doris, 1955-1957, 1960
6. Correspondence—Barrow, "Goldie" (Mrs. George R.), 1951-1966
7. Correspondence—Bischoff, Martha, 1949-1952
8. Correspondence—Cannon, Jane, 1942-1953
9. Correspondence—Carlock, Hester, 1953-1956
10. Correspondence—Curle, Lula, 1955-1962
11. Correspondence—Damron, Leona, 1950-1954
12. Correspondence—Duke, Nellie, 1953-1954
13. Correspondence—Faulkner, Grace and Joe, 1948-1960
14. Correspondence—Fowlkes, Mae, 1948-1960
15. Correspondence—Fraser, Barbara (Mrs. Harold), 1954
16. Correspondence—Harding, Mary K., 1955-1961
17. Correspondence—Henneman, Iva (Knight), 1948-1961
18. Correspondence—Hite, Lula (Mrs. Herman), 1936-1953
19. Correspondence—Hobgood, Bettye, 1951

Box Number 2

1. Correspondence—Jagol, Rhea, 1944-1959
2. Correspondence—Key, Judy and Frazer, 1952-1953
3. Correspondence—Kresse, Anna, 1947-1950
4. Correspondence—Legg, Dorothy ("Dot") (Mrs. W.H.), 1948-1959
5. Correspondence—Lineberger, Annie B., 1945-1960
6. Correspondence—Martin, Flossie (Mrs. Herschel), 1952-1958
7. Correspondence—McCray, Mildred and Tom, 1962-1965
8. Correspondence—McElvain, Aner, 1956-1957
9. Correspondence—Mezick, Donna, 1959-1961, 1966
10. Correspondence—Moores, Molly, 1948-1966
11. Correspondence—Overby, Clara and Oma, 1929-1930
12. Correspondence—Business/Personal—Overby, Clara, 1935
13. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy R., 1941-1943
14. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy R., 1943-1946
15. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy R. and "Libby," 1948-1950

Box Number 3

1. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy and “Libby,” 1951-1952
2. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy and “Libby,” 1953-1954
3. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy and “Libby,” 1955-1956
4. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy and “Libby,” 1957-1959

Box Number 4

1. Correspondence—Overby, Lacy and “Libby,” 1960-1965
2. Correspondence—Overby, Morris and Vira, 1943-1961
3. Correspondence—Overby, Nella May, 1935-1936
4. Correspondence—Overby, Nella May, 1944-1946
5. Correspondence—Overby, Nella May, 1947-1948, 1954
6. Correspondence—Business/Personal—Overby, Nella May, 1935-1937, 1954
7. Correspondence—Overby, Odie (Mrs. J.H.), 1963-1967

Box Number 5

1. Correspondence—Overby, Oma, 1939, 1946, 1948, 1954
2. Correspondence—Reeves, Mildred, 1948-1962
3. Correspondence—Sarman, Daurice, 1944-1966
4. Correspondence—Schebo, Phyllis, n.d.

Box Number 6

1. Correspondence—Sharpe, Laura, 1948-1960
2. Correspondence—Simmons, Mildred (Mrs. Lacy), 1950-1966
3. Correspondence—Sayars, W.O. (Department of Justice), 1942
4. Correspondence—Thomas, Ann, 1944
5. Correspondence—Thomas, Ardell, 1959
6. Correspondence—Thomas Glynnna, 1944-1965
7. Correspondence—Turner, Lois, 1948-1966
8. Correspondence—Ward, Mildred, 1944

Box Number 7

1. Correspondence—Weatherly, Sam, Ella, 1948-1967
2. Correspondence—West, Jean, 1951-1957
3. Correspondence—Willard, Bessie and Jeff G., 1955-1966
4. Correspondence—Willard, Joseph G., 1942-1955
5. Correspondence—Wood, Izra, 1948-1953
6. Correspondence—Yeager, Kathleen, 1948-1950
7. Correspondence—Miscellaneous—Alexander, Glenda-Yeager, C.A.
8. Correspondence—Miscellaneous—author unknown

Box Number 8

1. Court records—Cases—Edmonson v. Tennessee Central Railway Co., 1938
2. Diaries, memoirs, etc.—Josephine Pitcock, 1942-1943
3. Genealogical data—Overby-Thomas families
4. Insurance papers—Correspondence—Bolling and Hinricks, Apr. 5, 1945
5. Legal documents—Contract—Jewel Tea Co. Inc. and Morris Overby, 1936
6. Legal documents—Lease—Wiley C. Wilson Realtors and Mrs. A.W. Overby, 1937
7. Legal documents—Lease—Wiley C. Wilson Realtors and Nella May Overby, 1939
8. Legal documents—Petition-Eviction—Nella May Overby, 1943
9. Programs—Army-Navy “E” Award—Nashville Bridge Company, Aug. 7, 1943
10. Scrapbook—Clara Overby
11. Writings—Nella may Overby, n.d.

Box Number 9

1. Photographs—Lt. (jg) Lacy Overby (4)
2. Photographs—Lacy and Elizabeth (“Libby”) Overby children (2)
3. Photographs—Lacy and Elizabeth (“Libby”) Overby children (1)
4. Photographs—Lacy and Elizabeth (“Libby”) Overby children (1)
5. Photographs—Lacy and Elizabeth (“Libby”) Overby children and Oma Overby (1)
6. Photographs—Lacy and Elizabeth (“Libby”) Overby children and Oma Overby (1)
7. Photographs—Ross Overby (1)
8. Photographs—Kenneth Thomas (1)
9. Photographs—USS LST 718 (1)
10. Photographs—W.W. II Naval scenes (2)
11. Photographs—Unknown (2)