Finding Aid for the Bernard Stein Greendorfer Second World War correspondence collection 2016.173.w.r

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Center for American War Letters Archives  
11/14/2016  
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URL: http://www1.chapman.edu/library/archives/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Center for American War Letters Archives
Title: Bernard Stein Greendorfer Second World War correspondence
creator: Greendorfer, Bernard Stein, 1910-1985
source: Greendorfer, Jeffery Rhine
Identifier/Call Number: 2016.173.w.r
Physical Description: .08 Linear Feet(1 folder)
Date (inclusive): 1945-02-07-1975-12-17
Date (bulk): 1942-02-07-1946-11-10
Abstract: This collection contains 12 correspondence of Sgt. Bernard Stein Greendorfer, 233rd General Hospital of the US 10th Army in Okinawa during the Second World War. Greendorfer writes to his parents and his two sisters. The collection also contains one photograph of Greendorfer from 1975 and several uniform pieces including coat, pants, hat, and cap.

Storage Unit: WWII 3
Storage Unit: 32
Storage Unit: Greendorfer 1

Content Description
This collection contains 11 correspondence written by Bernard Stein Greendorfer to his family during the Second World War. The collection also contains one Japanese 5-Yen note (inscribed saying it was taken from a Japanese prisoner of war) and one photograph of himself and his much-younger sister Rhoda taken in 1975. He calls his sister Rhoda "Babe" and signs his letters "Bud."

Greendorfer was a very capable writer and his intelligence and sense of humor are evident throughout his letters. His letters begin in Oahu, Hawaii, and then he writes several from a ship as he is making his journey to the Pacific Theater. His arrived at Okinawa via the Ryukyu Islands of Japan, where he remained until he aged out of the Army at age 35 in December 1945. Since his letters begin in 1945, he frequently references reports of peace talks and hopes that the war will be over soon. He writes that "Okinawa is all but secure" but that "there is still a lot of war left to be won, even tho from a civilian's viewpoint, it may look to be just about over."

Greendorfer does not describe seeing military action. Rather, he writes several letters in October and November describing a tremendous typhoon that hit Okinawa and caused widespread damage and destruction. The final letter of the collection is written after he has returned home from war. He writes to his sister Rhoda about his upcoming marriage, reassuring her that just because he is getting married it doesn't mean he won't still be close to her.

Biographical / Historical
Bernard (called Bud by his family and Barney by his wife) was born in San Francisco on December 17, 1910 to William and Mollie. He had two sisters, Lilian and Rhoda. He grew up in S.F. and attended Lowell High School. He volunteered to serve in the US Army during the Second World War despite having an eye impairment that resulted from a chemistry accident in high school. He was in his 30s when he entered the service. He was part of the 233rd General Hospital unit in the 10th army medical corps. He served in Okinawa.

After the war, he married Leona Rhine and had two sons, Andrew and Jeffrey. He built a successful insurance business in San Francisco and was a member of a variety of organizations including the Optimist Club, Masonic Temple, Camp Tawonga, and Congregation of Emanu-El.

Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of Jeffrey Greendorfer.

Preferred Citation
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
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Greendorfer, Jeffery Rhine