Phelps, Edwin Dolphus, 1948-2015 (MSS 557)

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Edwin Dolphus Phelps was born on 20 January 1948 in Bowling Green, Kentucky, the son of Edwin Foch Phelps and Effie (Miller) Phelps. He attended the Training School and College High at Western Kentucky University (WKU). After graduation, he attended WKU for three years before being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1969. While at WKU he participated in the ROTC.

In the Army, Phelps served as a platoon guide at Fort Campbell, and later trained at Fort Lewis, Washington, prior to being deployed to Vietnam. Once in country, he served near Bien Hoa in South Vietnam. He was honorably discharged in 1971.

When he returned to Bowling Green, Phelps operated the Phelps Parts and Service, a family business which opened in 1946. He remained in that business until 1998.

Phelps married Doris Lynn Eadens in 1991, and they had two children: John and Lea. Phelps married Linda Todd in 2013. He was an active member of Bowling Green's First Baptist Church, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans. He died 6 April 2015.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection consists exclusively of letters written by Edwin D. Phelps to his parents, Edwin Foch Phelps and Effie (Miller) Phelps in Bowling Green, Kentucky, during his Vietnam War service in the U.S. Army. He worked chiefly in transportation logistics as a driver and dispatcher with the 104th Engineers Company. In the letters, Phelps discusses his daily life and the activities of his unit. He was in country by mid-April 1970, so over half of the letters were written from Vietnam. He makes comments about the weather, their living conditions, the security of his region, and the Vietnamese people. In May 1971, he took a trip to Australia which he describes in a letter dated 30 May 1971. Phelps returned to the United States in August 1971. The images in Folder 1 include those of reunion t-shirts from the 104th, and over 30 snapshots taken by Phelps while in Vietnam.
Several news clippings were copied on to acid-free paper. All letters were placed in acid-free folders and acid-free boxes. Unique envelopes were kept, and envelopes that indicated address changes were kept.

The miscellaneous items in Folder 6, include a re-produced note from Ronald Reagan thanking the recipient for contacting him; a small oversheet explains that this note was reproduced following the announcement of Reagan's fight with Alzheimer's disease. Also included is a letter from U.S. Representative Ron Lewis to Edwin's first wife, Elease G. South, regarding Lewis's vote to impeach President Clinton.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1   Edwin D. Phelps  1967-1971  134 items
Folder 1 Descriptive inventory           n.d.          8 item
Folder 2 Letters to parents           Oct. 1967- May 1970  45 items
Folder 3 Letters to parents           June 1970- Dec. 1970  39 items
Folder 4 Letters to parents           Jan. 1971- May 1971  27 items
Folder 5 Letters to parents           June 1971- July 1971  15 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

557 1948-2015

Letters written by Edwin D. Phelps to his parents, Edwin Foch Phelps and Effie (Miller) Phelps, Bowling Green, Kentucky, while he is serving in the Vietnam War. Phelps discusses his training, his daily life and the activities of his unit.

1/2 box. 5 folders. 134 items. Originals, photocopies, photographs, and digital images. SC2015.81.2
SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Alzheimer's disease
Australia – Travel and description F4
Lewis, Ronald E., b. 1946 F6
Phelps, Effie (Miller), 1907-2001 – Letters to
Phelps, Edwin Foch, b. 1911 – Letters to
Reagan, Ronald Wilson, 1911-2004
South, Elease G. – Letter to
U.S. Army – Relating to
Vietnam – Comments about
Vietnam War, 1961-1975 – Relating to

Jeffrey 06/19/2015