

Accession #2011-01  
Lilah Bell Personal Papers  
Location: Range 37 Sections 9 & 10

Collection Overview

16 Boxes = 10.0 linear feet  
1920's – 2010

Acquisition: Items were donated to RS-SC Center at request of Lilah Bell after her death and were delivered by her son, Jerry, and his family in February 2011 shortly after her death.

Access: The collection is open for research.

Copyright: Copyright held by the donor has been transferred to Richardson-Sloane Special Collections Center, Davenport Public Library

Photographs: in albums and scrapbooks as well as Box 8

Location: Range 37 Sections 9 & 10 of Compact Shelving

Processing: container list and partial processing by Karen O'Connor Feb/Mar 2011

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Lilah [Mergy] Bell (1908-2011) was a lifelong resident of Scott County, graduating in 1925 from Davenport High School. She graduated in 1929 from St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing. On March 1, 1932 she married Walter Bell, a long time worker at Rock Island Arsenal. He died in 1980. Bell worked as a visiting nurse in Scott County during the Great Depression years then taught home nursing classes for the American Red Cross in the 1940's. After raising her children she began a 14-year tenure working as financial secretary and school board secretary for the Pleasant Valley School District. Mrs. Bell started the Homemaker Service in 1963 and served as its director until her departure in 1977. Later, she was a volunteer counselor for the Senior Health Insurance Information Program, or SHIIP and served on many local boards and volunteered for a variety of programs and organizations. Bell was an avid traveler and compiled a variety of scrapbooks documenting her life. She was one of the original inductees to the Senior Voice QC Hall of Fame. [Acc.#2008-22]

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Box 1

Personal Papers

- Estate papers for family members and friends
- Land documentation

80<sup>th</sup> birthday cards and newspaper clippings

Get well cards

Box 2

4 photograph albums – scrapbooks "My Life"

Box 3

Photograph Albums

- 1920's
- 1937-1940's

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- 1942 including Home Nursing classes
- 1952-1995 activities

Box 4 & 5

Scrapbooks of trips to Africa, Europe, Holland, Australia & New Zealand [Plus 60 group], and others

Box 6

Albums

Scrapbooks

Greeting cards

Poems and stories

Box 7

Speeches – story of her life

Green 3-ring book of local organizations and activities

- St. Lukes Hospital School of Nursing – 1928 Yearbook
- Red Cross
- Certificates and membership cards
- IA Registered Nurses Conference 1931
- Farm Bureau
- Public health; March of Dimes 1952-58 Polio work; VNA
- Clarissa Cook Home
- Putnam
- Pleasant Valley – School Board, Grit Club, Graffiti Barn

Service pins

- Celebrate Bettendorf 1903-2003
- Steamboating Society
- Whalen for Congress
- Civil War Museum
- Habitat for Humanity
- L.C.W. [Lutheran Church Women]
- Crosses
- Red Cross
- St. Lukes School of Nursing 1929
- Quota Club
- PTA
- Plus 60
- CASI
- Association of Retired Federal Employees
- Homemaker Service 1977 on chain
- Rock Island Arsenal Service Pins – Walter S. Bell
- Unidentified 25 + emblem

Box 8

Photographs – mainly of Mergy and Bell family members

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Box 9

Awards and plaques  
Diana  
Volunteer awards

Box 10

American Red Cross  
3 BLUE 3-RING BINDERS

- Local Home Nursing Classes – class lists, attendance, worksheets, miscellaneous
- Home Nursing Instructor's Guide-Draft [1962]
- Home Nursing Manuals [1961]

FOLDER:

- Care of the Sick & Injured Instructor's Guide [1963]

Box 11

Homemaker Service

- Examples of other existing programs when Scott County was trying to begin service
- Photographs

Box 12

American Red Cross - miscellaneous items and disaster preparedness 1950's-1960's  
Meal Service of Scott County

- By-laws
- Directory
- Meeting documentation

Box 13

Homemaker Service of Scott County, Inc.

- Beginnings in Scott Co.
  1. Ledger with cases from 1960's
  2. Diary – Lilah Bell's 1963 Oct – Dec
  3. Binder [see contents below
- HOMEMAKER SERVICES
- Contents of one Black 3-ring Binder as organized by Lilah Bell. Binder intact in box. Some photographs are included.
  - In the Beginning
  - National Homemaker Service
  - Progress Reports-State Council
  - Homemakers
  - Steering Committee
  - Publicity
  - Policies and Formal Standing Rules
  - Training Sessions
  - Budget & Hours
  - In Service Meetings

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Box 14

Journals  
Clarissa Cook Home

Box 15

Davenport High School

- Class of 1924-1925
- Hall of Honor

Box 16

Oversized flat items

- St. Lukes School of nursing diploma
- Certificates
- Photographs