

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

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Finding Aid for the

M. Annie Leitch Papers, 1936-1984

Collection # 028

May 2007 version

Abstract

The M. Annie Leitch Papers contain those of the Director of Nursing and the School of Nursing at Butterworth Hospital, Grand Rapids, Michigan from 1936-1952. Throughout her career, Ms. Leitch promoted professionalism in nursing, encouraged the proper recognition of its practitioners, and possessed a keen interest in the history of nursing. For these reasons she chose to make public her collection of papers and memorabilia. The bulk of the collection relates to Ms. Leitch and Butterworth Hospital nurses' contributions to World War II, through enlisted service and recruiting efforts at home. The collection also includes a considerable amount of memorabilia from the Butterworth School of Nursing for the Classes of 1936 to 1954. It contains the following series: correspondence, Butterworth Nursing School memorabilia, World War II, minutes, transcripts, theses, reports, pamphlets, miscellaneous, personnel records and clippings.

Collection #: 028

Accession #: 00.028

Donor: M. Annie Leitch

Span dates: 1936-1984

Processor: Original processor, Wendy K. Walker, 1987.

Inventory, Andrea Stadt, 10/1999.

Box summary, Marcella Beck, August 31, 2000.

Size: 2 cu.ft.

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
1	correspondence	standard
2	nursing school mem.	Standard
3	WW II/ minutes	standard
4	transcripts/reports/misc.	Standard
5	personnel records/clippings	slim legal

Biography

M. Annie Leitch was born in Ontario, Canada to Alexander Leitch and Annie McEachern of Scotland. She developed an early interest in health due to family illnesses and death, including the loss of her mother when Annie was five years old. She began teaching at age 17 and planned to specialize in history or English, but changed her field when the topic of hygiene was introduced. World War I piqued her interest in becoming a nurse and she promptly entered Winnipeg General Hospital School of Nursing in 1917. Her studies were interrupted due to illness, but she completed the program in 1924.

After two years work at a clinic upon graduation, she began work at Butterworth Hospital, but soon left to become Assistant Director at Jackson Hospital. In subsequent years she worked as an instructor at Women's Hospital in Detroit and Grace Hospital, and then as Educational Director at University Hospital in Ann Arbor. During this time she also completed her Masters Degree in Nursing School Administration.

In August 1936, M. Annie Leitch returned to Butterworth Hospital to be Director of Nursing and the School of Nursing. Upon accepting her duties, she found the nursing program in a great state of confusion, as were most programs at that time. While there she established classrooms, improved the library, attended and sent other personnel to professional conferences, developed a recreation program for student nurses, fought against anti-nursing biases, and instituted an eight-hour work day for nurses. Her most admirable accomplishments involved World War II, during which she worked under desperate conditions to maintain an able nursing staff while her student nurses were serving overseas in growing numbers. She kept contact through correspondence with the enlisted nurses and provided them a much-needed feeling of closeness to home. Leitch also served as president of state and district nursing associations and was a member of the Michigan State Board of Registered Nurses. She retired from Butterworth Hospital in 1952.

Butterworth Hospital is a non-profit corporation, organized in 1873. On February 11, 1873, the first recorded meeting of St. Marks Church Home, from which Butterworth Hospital developed, was held on the west side of what is now Bond Avenue, just south of Crescent Street. In 1876 articles of association were executed incorporating the church home under the name of St. Marks Home and Hospital. The construction of the new St. Marks Hospital began in 1888 after a sizable donation by Richard Butterworth. In 1894 the name was changed to Butterworth Hospital, and all connection with St. Marks Church was dissolved in 1902. A new building was erected in 1925 and the hospital has undergone many structural changes and improvements since that time.

Scope and Content

The bulk of the collection relates Leitch and the Butterworth Hospital nurses' contribution to World War II through efforts to maintain an effective nursing staff at home and enlisted service abroad respectively. Another large portion of the collection consists of Butterworth Hospital Nursing School memorabilia for the Classes of 1936 to 1954. The collection contains the following series: correspondence, Butterworth Nursing School memorabilia, World War II, minutes, transcripts, theses, reports, pamphlets, miscellaneous, personnel records and clippings.

Series Descriptions

Series I. Correspondence

Arranged by category and chronologically

Consists of originals and transcriptions of letters, notes, postcards, V-mail, etc. from Butterworth nurses serving in various theaters of World War II to Leitch, Director of Butterworth Nursing School. Originals are arranged chronologically. The transcriptions follow, arranged categorically by theater of war and then chronologically. Also includes letters from Ms. Leitch to the nurses and their parents. 1942-1946.

Series II. Butterworth Nursing School Memorabilia

Arranged chronologically by graduating class

Consists of programs from various nursing school events, graduation announcements, yearbooks, clippings and photographs grouped by graduating class to which they relate. Also includes an unarranged folder of photographs. 1936-1950.

Series III. World War II

Arranged categorically, chronologically

Consists of minutes and correspondence relating to the War Manpower Commission and the Nursing Council for War Service, 1940-1945. Also includes photos, pamphlets, clippings, a book and insignia relating to the Cadet Nurse Corps, ca. 1940-48.

Series IV. Minutes

Arranged categorically and chronologically

Consists of minutes of the Nursing Committee of the Board of Trustees of Butterworth Hospital, the Practical Nurse Committee of the Kent County Council on Community Nursing and the Michigan Council on Community Nursing. 1936-1952, not inclusive.

Series V. Transcripts

Arranged as listed below

Contains transcripts of interviews of Leitch by Gordon Olson, Grand Rapids City Historian, 1981, tapes of which are located in the Michigan Room's Oral History Collection. Arrangement corresponds to tapes. Also includes transcripts of two separate radio broadcasts of Leitch, one a discussion with then Michigan Governor Murray D. VanWagoner, 1942 and 1943, arranged chronologically.

Series VI. Theses

No arrangement

Consists of various undated research notes and drafts of an introduction to this collection by Gordon Olson, Grand Rapids City Historian, and various theses by Leitch relating to the nursing profession and nursing education, 1934-1958.

Series VII. Reports

No arrangement

Contains the Report of Survey of the Butterworth School of Nursing and related materials, 1940-1952 not inclusive, as well as three additional reports concerning the status of nursing, no dates.

Series VIII. Pamphlets

No arrangement

Consists of various pamphlets related to nursing, the majority of which are recruitment pamphlets for the Butterworth School of Nursing, 1941-1945 not inclusive, and no date. They provide good basic information about the school.

Series IX. Miscellaneous

Arranged categorically, chronologically

Includes the following items: commencement program of Butterworth Training School for Nurses, 1897; invitation and program of Butterworth's new hospital opening, 1925; 50th Anniversary Program of Butterworth Hospital Alumnae Association, 1940; nurses' leave permission card, 1943; programs and related items from various conferences and events; blank Butterworth birth certificate; Constitution and by-laws of the Faculty Organization of Butterworth School of Nursing; two issues of Courier, 1980 and 1981; various World War II-related items; one issue of Guinea Gold, in-the-field newspaper from World War II, 1944; various research notes and written histories of Butterworth Hospital and nursing; material related to Mothercraft Classes and the Susan Lowe Guild of Butterworth Hospital; the Bixler Survey on Michigan's nursing needs and related material, 1946; and materials reporting Leitch's analysis of nursing conditions upon her arrival at Butterworth Hospital, 1936 and follow-up through 1951. 1897-1981.

Series X. Personnel Records

Arranged chronologically

Consists of miscellaneous personnel records of Butterworth Hospital. 1936-1952.

Series XI. Clippings

Arranged by category

Contains numerous clippings sorted into the following categories: World War II, Butterworth nurses; World War II, recruitment; World War II, Butterworth staff non-nursing; Butterworth Nursing School; Butterworth Nursing School, Wayne State Program; Butterworth Hospital, improvements; Butterworth Nursing School, misc.; nursing, misc.; and obstetrics.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		Series I. Correspondence, 1942-1945.
1	1	1942-1943.
	2	1944.
	3	1945-1946, n.d.
	4	Francis Bacon and Laurine Smith, 1941-1945.
	5	Transcriptions, U. S., 1942-1946.
	6	Transcriptions, Europe, 1941-1945.
	7	Transcriptions, N. Africa/Italy, 1943-1945.
	8	Transcriptions, S. Pacific/Australia, 1943-1945.
	9	Transcriptions, Iran, 1943-1945.
	10	Misc., 1942-1945.
		Series II. Butterworth Nursing School Memorabilia, 1936-1954.
2	11	Classes of 1936-9.
	12	Class of 1940.
	13	Classes of 1941-3.
	14	Classes of 1944-6.
	15	Classes of 1947-51.
	16	Classes of 1952-54.
	17	Capping Exercises, 1937-1950.
	18	Photographs, ca.1940.
		Series III. World War II, 1940-48.
3	19	Councils and Commissions, 1940-1945.
	20-21	Cadet Nurse Corps, ca. 1940-1948.
		Series IV. Minutes
3	22-4	Nursing Committee of the Board of Trustees 1936-42, 1944-52.
	25	Practical Nurse Committee, 1947-52.
	26	Michigan Council on Community Nursing, 1946-47.
		Series V. Transcripts
4	27	Oral History Tapes, 1981.
	28	Radio Broadcasts, 1942-3.

		Series VI. Theses
4	29	Collection introduction, n.d.
	30	Misc., 1934-1958.
		Series VII. Reports
4	31	Accreditation, 1940-1952.
	32	Misc., n.d.
		Series VIII. Pamphlets
4	33	1941-1942, 1945, n.d.
		Series IX. Miscellaneous
4	34	1897-1981.
	35	World War II, ca. 1940-1945.
	36	Butterworth Hospital and Nursing History, n.d.
	37	Mothercraft and Susan Lowe Guild, 1949-1984.
5	38	Bixler Survey, 1946.
	39	Leitch Analysis, 1936-1951.
		Series X. Personnel Records
5	40	1936-1952.
		Series XI. Clippings
5	41	World War II, Butterworth Nurses, ca.1941-6.
	42	World War II, Recruitment, ca.1941-6.
	43	WW II, Butterworth Staff non-nursing, ca.1941-6.
	44	Butterworth Nursing School, ca.1938-52.
	45	Butterworth Nursing School, Wayne State Program, ca.1943-52.
	46	Butterworth Hospital improvements, ca.1937-52.
	47	Butterworth Hospital, misc., ca.1937-51.
	48	Nursing, misc., ca.1935-52.
	49	Obstetrics, ca.1937-52.