



Collection Summary

Title

Mary (McKim) Ray Collection

Date

Late 1800s through 1990s

Extent

2 archival boxes and 1 oversized folder

Name and Location of Repository

Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence (Mo.)

Reference code: MGC 1170-MMRC

Processed by: Jolene Clark, 2019; Finding aid created by Jolene Clark, 2019.

Name of Creator

Mary (McKim) Ray

Biographical History

Mary McKim was born on the family farm to Curtis Wayne McKim and Helen Spillman. Helen's sister Ophie married Harry S. Beal who was the son of Walter E Beal and Carrie Hotchkiss. The Spillman family lived in Kansas before coming to St. Joseph, Missouri. They eventually moved to Grant City, Missouri. The McKim family moved to Grant City after Helen's father, William P. Spellman, died in 1932. Grant City is where Mary met her future husband, William "Bill" Ray. She was fifteen and they met at a Valentine's Day party. The following year, Mary's family moved to Kansas City. She began corresponding with Bill in high school and continued while she attended William Jewell College. After high school, Bill enlisted in the Army Air Corps. The couple wrote almost daily to each other while he was gone for two years. Soon after his discharge from the military, they were married on October 19, 1946 in Kansas City. Together they had five children.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of letters written back and forth between Mary McKim and Bill Ray while they were dating during World War II. The letters were kept in their original envelopes and later Mary or another family member made some notes on the envelopes. Additionally, the collection contains photos from both sides of the family dating back to the 1800s. Some of the photographs have been identified. Other family items in the collection include funeral cards, autograph books from the 1890s, cards, school grade cards, obituaries, and family heirlooms.



Collection Inventory

System of Arrangement

These records are arranged in 6 series.

Box 1

Series 1, Letters from Mary McKim to Bill Ray

- Folder 1, 1942
- Folder 2, January 1943
- Folder 3, February 1943
- Folder 4, March 1943
- Folder 5, April 1943
- Folder 6, May 1943
- Folder 7, June 1943
- Folder 8, July 1943
- Folder 9, August 1943
- Folder 10, September 1943
- Folder 11, November 1943
- Folder 12, December 1943
- Folder 13, February 1944
- Folder 14, March 1944
- Folder 15, July 1944
- Folder 16, August 1944
- Folder 17, September 1944
- Folder 18, October 1944
- Folder 19, November 1944
- Folder 20, December 1944
- Folder 21, January 1945
- Folder 22, February 1945
- Folder 23, March 1945
- Folder 24, April 1945
- Folder 25, May 1945
- Folder 26, June-August 1945
- Folder 27, September 1945
- Folder 28, October 1945
- Folder 29, November 1945
- Folder 30, December 1945

Series 2, Letters from Bill Ray to Mary McKim

- Folder 1, December 1942-January 1943
- Folder 2, February-March 1943
- Folder 3, April-May 1943
- Folder 4, June-July 1943
- Folder 5, August-September 1943
- Folder 6, January-April 1944
- Folder 7, May 1944
- Folder 8, June 1944



- Folder 9, July 1944
- Folder 10, August 1944
- Folder 11, September 1944
- Folder 12, October 1944
- Folder 13, November 1944
- Folder 14, December 1944
- Folder 15, January 1945
- Folder 16, February 1945
- Folder 17, March-June 1945
- Folder 18, July 1945
- Folder 19, August-September 1945
- Folder 20, November-December 1945
- Folder 21, January 1946
- Folder 22, February 1946
- Folder 23, March 1946
- Folder 24, April-August 1946

Series 3, Misc. Letters

- Folder 1, Misc. letters, 19-1952
- Folder 2, Cards and postcards

Box 2

Series 4, Photographs

- Folder 1, Harry S. Beal photo album
- Folder 2, Harry S. Beal scrap album
- Folder 3, Helen and David Beal 50th Anniversary album
- Folder 4, Beal family photos
- Folder 5, Hotchkiss family photo photos and album
- Folder 6, Hotchkiss photo album
- Folder 7, Ray photos, South Nodaway High School photos
- Folder 8, Spillman family photos
- Folder 9, Tracie family photos
- Folder 10, John David Beal in photo of company 299-43, Regiment 3, Battalion 10—U.S. Naval Training station, Farragut, Idaho, June 29, 1943 [oversized folder]

Series 5, Family history documents

- Folder 1, Beal family
- Folder 2, Ray family

Series 6, Family items

- Folder 1, Hot pad made by Ophie Beal out of crochet covered milk lids
- Folder 2, Needlepoint made by Ophie Beal
- Folder 3, Handcrafted items made by Ophie Beal
- Item 1, Grooming kit/brush belonging to Harry Beal



Rights and Access

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use by appointment.

Physical Access

Most records within this collection are housed in file folder. Some items are wrapped in acid-free tissue paper.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Languages and Scripts of the Material

Materials in the collection are entirely in English.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated by Mary (McKim) Ray.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected for this collection.

Existence and Location of Originals

Originals owned by the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Related Collections:

- *South Nodaway 50 year anniversary*

Notes

The following sources were consulted during the preparation of the biographical history:

- Ancestry.com. *United States Federal Census* [database-on-line].
- Kansas County Marriages, 1855-1911, database with images, *FamilySearch*.
- *Find A Grave*. Find A Grave.
- Mary (McKim) Ray Collection