Robertson, Gabrielle, 1889-1970 (MSS 323)

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Gabrielle Robertson was born 8 December 1889 in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, to Charles Albert Robertson and his second wife, Cassandra Ann (Jackson) Robertson. She was the second of their seven children. Miss Robertson received a teacher’s Life Certificate from Western Kentucky State Normal School in 1912, the A.B. degree from Indiana University in 1917, and her M.A. degree from the University of Chicago in 1920. Additionally, she studied at the University of London in 1925 and pursued research at the Library of Congress in 1927-1928.

“Miss Gabie,” as she was known to her students, began teaching classes in the History Department at Western Kentucky State Normal School in 1916 and continued there until her retirement in 1960, at that time the school had become Western Kentucky State College. It is today Western Kentucky University. She was known to hold her students to exceedingly high standards and endeavored to inspire in them her own love for history. She took a personal interest in her students which continued long after their graduation.

Miss Gabie saw the need to supplement her Kentucky History and Southern History courses with primary source materials and began a collection that became the foundation of the Manuscripts Department of the Kentucky Library and Museum on Western’s campus. Over the years she personally donated books and monies to further the growth of this library. In her honor, former student Charles Roy Martin established the Gabrielle Robertson Kentucky Library Fund for the purchase of rare Kentucky documents.

Gabrielle Robertson never married. She died 11 January 1970 in Owensboro, Kentucky and is buried with other family members in Pine Grove Cemetery, near South Carrollton in Muhlenberg County. After her death, a room in the Kentucky Library was named in her honor.

This collection consists primarily of letters written to Gabrielle Robertson from 1912 to 1969. Box 1 of the two-box collection contains letters from family, friends, and former students; items related to her professional career; letters related to her activities on behalf of the Kentucky Library; genealogical material dealing chiefly with the McReynolds and Robertson families; and
family photographs. The letters in Box 2 cover only the period from 1943 to 1946. Much of this correspondence comes from her former students serving in the military during World War II. The letters reflect the writers’ attachment to the Western Kentucky State Teachers College campus community, a desire to return to the “Hill” to finish their degrees, and their hopes for a lasting postwar peace. Many of these former students write seeking “Miss Gabie’s” assessments of the political and social situations in the U.S. and the world. The last folder of the second box contains letters from multiple correspondents; they are arranged alphabetically by the correspondent’s last name rather than strictly chronologically. Several postwar letters from these same former students can be found in Box 1.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1  ROBERTSON, Gabrielle  1861-1984  311 items

Folder 1  Inventory and collection notes  10 items

Folder 2  Correspondence  24 July 1912-5 Aug. 1949  48 items

Folder 3  Correspondence  25 Feb. 1950-27 Sept. 1959  27 items

Folder 4  Correspondence  10 March 1960-23 Dec. 1967  45 items

Folder 5  Correspondence  5 Jan. 1968-12 Sept. 1969  52 items

Folder 6  Materials related to European trip  March-Oct., 1925  8 items

Folder 7  Letters of introduction related to research at War Department  August 1928  2 items

Folder 8  Correspondence related to illness and death of Miss Robertson  January 1970  10 items

Folder 9  Membership cards and certificates  29 Sept. 1917-30 Sept. 1969  11 items

Folder 10  Anonymous student writings about Miss Robertson  n.d.  3 items
| Folder 11 | Condolence letters received by Arv (Robertson) McReynolds, Miss Robertson’s half-sister | October 1947 | 8 items |
| Folder 12 | Photocopy of will of C. F. Robertson | 1874 | 1 item |
| Folder 13 | Genealogical materials related to Jackson, Landrum, Metcalf, Randolph, and Robertson families | 16 Feb. 1923-15 Dec. 1956 | 37 items |
| Folder 14 | Items related to the McReynolds family | 31 May 1886-[1964?] | 8 items |
| Folder 15 | Legal papers of McReynolds and Robertson families | 22 April 1861-20 Jan. 1948 | 10 items |
| Folder 16 | Photos | 1893-1968 | 27 items |
| Folder 17 | Original plaque dedicating room in Kentucky Building to Miss Robertson; letter | 1 June 1984 | 2 items |
| Folder 18 | “President’s Charge,” University of Chicago; Masonic certificate, T.V. McReynolds | 1920-1921 | 2 items |

**Box 2**

**ROBERTSON, Gabrielle**

| Folder 1 | Letters from Gayle Raymond Carver | 6 Jan. 1943-23 May 1944 | 4 items |
| Folder 2 | Letters from Basil E. Craddock; one from John P. Hanes | 18 July 1943-10 May 1946 | 27 items |
| Folder 3 | Letters from George W. Harrison | 26 June 1945-12 Oct. 1946 | 14 items |
| Folder 4 | Letters from Lowell Harrison | 7 March 1943-21 July 1946 | 27 items |
| Folder 5 | Letters from George Kackley | 7 March 1943-21 July 1946 | 4 items |
BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS ROBERTSON, Gabrielle, 1889-1970
323
1861-1984

Chiefly letters to Miss Robertson, History Department faculty member, Western Kentucky University, 1916 to 1960. Of particular interest are those letters from former students serving in the military during World War II. Also includes genealogical materials and family photographs.

2 boxes. 32 folders. 477 items. Originals and photocopies.

1970.18.1

SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Carver, Gayle Raymond, 1913-2005 B2,F1
Cherry, Henry Hardin, 1864-1937 B1,F2
Christmas cards, 1943-1945 B1,F2; B2,F8-9,11-2
Clagett, Marjorie, 1900-2000 – Mentioned B1,F2
Clark, Thomas Dionysius, 1903-2005     B1,F2
Cochran, Robert Gilmore, 1919-1971     B1,F3,4; B2,F13
Consolation, 1947     B1,F11
Coombs, Elizabeth, 1893-1988     B1,F4
Craddock, Basil E., [1923?] - 1987     B1,F3; B2,F2
Davis, Virginia Wood, 1919-1990     B1,F4
Deeds - Butler County, 1913     B1,F15
Deeds - Indian Territory, 1904, 1906     B1,F15
Dickey, John E.     B1,F2,4; B2,F13
Dodd, William Edward, 1869-1940     B1,F2
Downing, Dero Goodman, b. 1921     B1,F4
Eisenhower, Dwight David, 1890-1969 – Mentioned     B1,F2,3
Elections and election campaigns – U.S., 1948 – Comments about     B1,F2
Elections and election campaigns – U.S., 1960 – Comments about     B1,F4
Elections and election campaigns – U.S., 1968 – Comments about     B1,F5
Franklin, C. Ray, d. 1985     B1,F4
Funeral invitation, 1895     B1,F14
Genealogy – Jackson family     B1,F13 subfolder 1,2
Genealogy – Landrum family     B1,F13 subfolder 3
Genealogy – Metcalf family     B1,F13 subfolder 4
Genealogy – Randolph family     B1,F13 subfolder 4
Genealogy – Robertson family     B1,F13 subfolder 4
George VI, King of Great Britain – Death – Comments about     B1,F3
Germany – Photos, 1945     B2,F13
Goodman, Julian, b. 1922     B1,F4
Griffith, Harriet Henry (Stickles)     B1,F5,8
Hanes, John P.     B2,F2
Harrison, George W.     B1,F2,4; B2,F3
Harrison, Lowell Hayes, b. 1922     B1,F1-4; B2,F4
Henlein, Konrad Ernst Eduard, 1898-1945 – Relating to     B2,F2
Indiana University – Relating to     B1,F5,9
Integration and segregation, Racial – Comments about, 1957-1960     B1,F3-4
Japan – Photos, 1946     B2,F13
Jillson, Willard Rouse, 1890-1975     B1,F2
Kackley, George     B1,F2,3; B2,F5
Kentucky Library and Museum – Relating to     B1,F2-5,17
Klick, Robert Burns, d. 1944     B2,F6
Korea – Comments about, 1945-1946     B2,F3
Korea – Comments about, 1954-1957     B1,F3
Krock, Arthur, 1886-1974     B1,F5
Lancaster, Lennie Young, 1886-1974     B1,F5
Legal papers – Robertson family     B1,F12,15
McCarthy, Joseph, 1908-1957 – Comments about, 1950     B1,F3
McLaughlin, Andrew Cunningham, 1861-1947     B1,F2
McReynolds, Arry (Robertson) – Letters to     B1,F11
McReynolds family – Relating to     B1,F14
Marriage record – Daviess County, 1916 B1,F15
Marriage record – Muhlenberg County, 1935 B1,F15
Masons (Fraternal organization) – Butler County, 1921 B1,F18
Martin, Charles Roy B1,F4,5
Martin, Charles Roy – Relating to B1,F4,5
Natcher, William Huston, 1904-1994 B1,F4
Neal, Mary Julia, 1905-1995 B1,F4,5
Offner, Arnold A. B1,F4
Ogden College – Relating to, 1902 B1,F4
Petroleum industry and trade – Muhlenberg County – Relating to, 1966 B1,F4
Regan, Lena (Logan) B1,F2,5,8; B2,F13
Reeves, Ben F. B1,F3,4; B2,F8
Robertson, Absalom, 1887-1971 B1,F2
Robertson, Beckham Alfred, 1900-1978 B1,F4-5
Robertson family – Photos B1,F16
Robertson, Gabrielle, 1889-1970 – Photos B1,F6,16
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Robertson, Virginia B1,F2,4; B2,F9
Rosser, J. V. B2,F10
Sackett, Frederic Mosley, 1868-1941 B1,F7
Stickles, Arndt Mathias, 1872-1968 – Mentioned B1,F2-5; B2
Stickles, James Channing, b. 1923 B2,F11
Thompson, Edwin Kelly, 1909-1993 B1,F4,5
Thompson, Sarah B1,F8
U.S. Army – 104th Infantry Division – Relating to B2,F4
University of Chicago – Relating to B1,F2,5,9,18
Watts, Virginia B1,F2
Western Kentucky State Teachers College – Relating to B1,F2-5; B2
Wills – Butler County, 1861 B1,F15
Wills – Muhlenberg County, 1874 B1,F12
Wilson, Gordon, 1888-1970 B1,F5
Woodson, James Albert, 1856-1943 B1,F2
World War II, 1939-1945 – African Americans – Comments about B2,F2,4
World War II, 1939-1945 – Germany – Comments about B2,F2,4,9,11,12
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Yarbrough, John V. B2,F12

Lile/Jeffrey 07/26/2010