

A Guide to the Ella Thomas Whitten Papers MS.59

Ella Thomas Whitten papers
circa 1914-1979



Title Statement

A Guide to the Ella Thomas Whitten Papers MS.59

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Notes

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Profile Description

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Revision Description

10/18/2024 Updated in October 2024 by archivist Amanda Greenwood.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MS.59

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/7/resources/55

Unit Date

circa 1914-1979

Language

English, French

Extent

2 Linear Feet 2 boxes and 14 artifacts

Extent

14 items

Extent

2 linear feet: 1 box with the dimensions of 5.5 inches x 10 inches x 15.5 inches and 1 box with the dimensions 17.25 x 3.5 x 11.5

Repository

Claude Moore Health Sciences Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open to research.

Conditions Governing Use

No use restrictions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The materials were donated to the Claude Moore Health Sciences Library in or before 2000.

Preferred Citation

Ella Thomas Whitten Papers, MS-59, Historical Collections & Services, Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

Biographical / Historical

Ella Thomas Whitten was born in Faber, Nelson County, Virginia on 7 February 1890, to William Thomas Whitten and Martha Ann Clements, and had nine brothers and sisters. In 1915 she graduated from the Davis-Fischer Sanatorium Training School of Atlanta, Georgia. When she was 27, she enlisted as a nurse in the United States Army Nurse Corps, and traveled overseas to serve in Blois, France, at Base Hospital No. 43, a unit sponsored by Emory University. She finished her service and returned to the United States in 1918. After the war, she received a certificate of commendation from the Graduate Nurses Association of Virginia for her service. She later attended the College of William and Mary, attaining a certificate in public health nursing from the School of Social Work and Public Health of the College of William and Mary in 1933, and graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1937. Whitten was a long-time member of the American National Red Cross and the Graduate Nurses Association of Virginia. She received an American Red Cross certificate for 50 years of service in 1967. In 1958 she married Dr. Carl Clinton; the couple lived in Lynchburg, Virginia. Dr. Clinton died 12 January 1969, and Ella Whitten Akers died 2 March 1984. Both are buried in Faber, Virginia.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of 28 folders containing postcards, photographs, and publications pertaining to Ella Thomas Whitten's experiences in World War I and later service as a nurse in Virginia. The collection also includes 9 certificates and diplomas recieved by Ella Thomas Whitten throughout her nursing career. 14 nursing artifacts, mostly related to Ella Thomas Whitten's service during World War I, are cataloged with the medical artifacts collection and are also listed as part of this collection.

Separated Materials

14 artifacts included in the collection are catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection.

Arrangement

Materials are arranged by type and chronology.

Description of Subordinate Components

French postcards depicting scenes of World War I battlefields

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2444

Unit Date circa 1914-1915

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Language French

Extent 9 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images of trench digging, bombardment sites, and German prisoners.

French postcards of World War I graves and an American hospital in Mesves-sur-Loire

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2445

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Language French

Extent 10 postcards

Postcards of World War I battle scenes

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2447

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Language English

Extent 12 postcards

Scope and Contents

Postcards from the Chicago Daily News War Postals, include captions in English

Postcards of United States soldiers in uniform

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2446

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Extent 6 postcards

Scope and Contents

Subjects unidentified. One postcard is stamped "Grout Blois Photo," likely from Blois, France.

Photographs of unidentified subjects and landscapes

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2448

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Extent 8 photographs

Scope and Contents

Item number 1 is possibly a photograph of Ella Thomas Whitten.

Scope and Contents

Item number 4 shows a soldier standing in front of a house and palm trees. The reverse of the image contains text: "Frank, It's awful hot down here today, I am turning black. Al."

Postcards from Ella Thomas Whitten to Mrs. William T. Whitten and Mr. F.H. Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2449

Unit Date 1918 October 10-1918 December 20-26

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Extent 5 handwritten postcards

Scope and Contents

Postcards depict various French cities and landscapes

Postcards from Earl B. Boyce to an American woman, and from Frye, Haggard, Campbell, and Baugus to "Big Sis"

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2450

Unit Date 1918 October 16 - 1918 December 2

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Language English

Extent 2 handwritten postcards

Scope and Contents

Both postcards are labeled "Blois, France."

Postcard from Lew Shepherd (?) to Miss Virginia Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2451

Unit Date 1918 November(?)

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 handwritten postcard

Scope and Contents

Postcard sent to Hospital Américain #43 in Blois, France. Postcard depicts Monte-Carlo, message reads "Am down at Nice at last & having a fine time. Was over at Monte Carlo yesterday, but didn't win a fortune. Bestest, Lew Shepherd(?)."

Postcard from Pvt. George C. Cotten to Miss Mildred Kidd

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2452

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 handwritten postcard

Scope and Contents

Postcard sent to Covesville, VA from France. Postcard depicts Monte-Carlo, message reads "I am spending my furlough in Nice, went to Monte Carlo day before yesterday, am having a good time [unknown]."

Postcards wishing good luck, honor, and victory to the children of France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2453

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Language English, French

Extent 2 postcards in English and French

French postcards of locations in France and Monaco

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2454

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Language French

Extent 44 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images of Nièvre, Digne, Arcy-sur-Cure, Bretagne, Amboise, Monte Carlo, and other locations.

French postcards of locations in France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2455

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Language French

Extent 46 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images of Arcy-sur-Cure, Chambord, Amboise, and Brest.

French postcards of locations in France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2456

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Language French

Extent 38 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images of Vierzon, Nice, Loup, La Turbie, Nevers, Cosne, and Vezelay.

French postcards of locations in France including images of cattle, dog carts, and French dress

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2457

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Language French

Extent 29 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images from Sologne, Leon, Velay, and other locations.

French postcards of landmarks in Tours, Orleans, Le Mans, and Bourques, France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2458

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 15 (folder)

Language French

Extent 35 postcards

French postcards of landmarks in Paris and Versailles

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2459

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Language French

Extent 23 postcards

Postcard depicting 15 American soldiers in uniform

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2460

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 17 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 postcard

Scope and Contents

Soldiers are identified by name in writing on the front of the postcard: Row 1: "Unidentified, Fabaiano, E. Pope, Creeknore Richmond VA, Wread, Slobda, Puchella." Row 2: "Sorenson, Morgan, Anderson, F.E.B., Longson, Owens, Bartoes, Johnson".

French postcard depicting a plaque from Chateau de Blois in France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2461

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

Language French

Extent 1 postcard

Scope and Contents

No text on verso, but front of postcard is annotated with the words "Anne of Bretagne."

French postcards depicting views of Blois, France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2462

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

Language French

Extent 47 postcards

Postcard albums depicting views of Blois, France

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2463

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 20 (folder)

Extent 2 bound photo souvenir books

Miscellaneous postcards

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2464

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 21 (folder)

Extent 11 postcards

Scope and Contents

Includes images of steamer ships, trains, Monaco, and unknown locations.

Memories of Jane A. Delano, District III Graduate Nurses' Association of Virginia Spring Newsletter, and memorial for Ida Lillian Gilchrist written by Ella Whitten Akers and published in The Lynchburg News

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2465

Unit Date 1934 April, 1955 April 1, 1968 February 7

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 22 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 bound book, 1 72-page pamphlet, 1 photocopy

American Red Cross Nursing Services history

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2466

Unit Date circa 1956

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 23 (folder)

Language English

Extent 18-page, unbound pamphlet

American Red Cross Home Nursing Care of the Sick and Injured, Instructor's Guide

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2467

Unit Date 1957 January

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 24 (folder)

Language English

Extent Unbound, printed, 154-page guide

American National Red Cross (Lynchburg Chapter) Certificate of Appreciation for 40 years of service presented to Mrs. Carl Clinton Akers (Ella Thomas Whitten Akers)

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2468

Unit Date 1958 May

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 25 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 certificate

Virginia Nurse Quarterly Summer 1967: "District III Nurse Honored" and a photograph of a World War I nursing certificate

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2469

Unit Date 1967

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 26 (folder)

Language English

Extent 100 page pamphlet, photograph with autograph addition

Scope and Contents

The photograph shows a certificate given to Ella Whitten by the Graduate Nurses Association of Virginia for her service during WWI.

Letter from Ella Whitten Akers ("Sister Ella T.") to Estelle, Brother Lee, and Mother Pamplin

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2470

Unit Date 1979 November 11

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 27 (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 typed letter and envelope

Scope and Contents

Written on the 60th anniversary of Armistice Day.

Nurse's uniform

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2471

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 uniform

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00272.

Nurse's cap

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2472

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 cap

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00918.

Nurse's shoes

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2473

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 pair of shoes

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00058.

Concealed hip pocketbook

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2474

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00820.

Canteen

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2475

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts01082.

Mess kit

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2476

Unit Date 1917

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Scope and Contents

Mess kit inscribed "1917 Ft. Sill Camp Mill"

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00794.

Beaded flowers grave decoration

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2477

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Scope and Contents

Hand-beaded flower decoration for a WWI soldier's grave

Hand beaded flower decoration for a WWI soldier's grave.

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00750.

Trench lice preserved in alcohol inside a French perfume container

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2478

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00872.

U.S. Army Medical Department cup and saucer

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2479

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 2 items

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00921.

World War I Medallion

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2480

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00893.

World War I Medallion

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2481

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00894.

Red Cross nursing pins and patches

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2482

Unit Date circa 1917-1918

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 item

Scope and Contents

Pins and patches related to the American Red Cross and WWI Nursing.

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00800.

American Red Cross certificate for 50 years of service, presented to Mrs. Ella Whitten Akers

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2483

Unit Date 1967 March 21

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Language English

Extent 1 item

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts01084.

Veteran's cap with poppy patch

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2484

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 28 [artifacts collection] (folder)

Extent 1 cap

Separated Materials Note

Item catalogued and stored with the medical artifacts collection: artifacts00917.

Davis-Fischer Sanatorium Training School of Atlanta, Georgia, Diploma presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2485

Unit Date 1915 November 27

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

Registered Nurse certificate for Georgia presented to Ella T. Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2486

Unit Date 1916 May 18

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

The Graduate Nurses Association of Virginia certificate of appreciation for nursing service during World War I, dated 1917 April 6-1918 November 11, presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2487

Unit Date circa 1918

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

Scope and Contents

Dates on certificate represent the period that the United States was actively involved in WWI, not necessarily Ella T. Whitten's dates of service.

Registered Nurse certificate for Virginia presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2488

Unit Date 1925 March 17

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

Certificate in Public Health Nursing from the School of Social Work and Public Health of the College of William and Mary, presented to Ella T. Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2489

Unit Date 1933 June 8

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

College of William and Mary Diploma for Bachelor of Science in Nursing, presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2490

Unit Date 1937 June 7

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language Latin

Extent 1 document

Scope and Contents

Diploma is in Latin.

Registered Nurse certificate for North Carolina presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2491

Unit Date 1941 April 7

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

Nurse's Certificate of Registration for North Carolina presented to Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2492

Unit Date 1941 June 10

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document

The American Public Health Association Membership Certificate for Ella Thomas Whitten

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/2493

Unit Date 1943 June

Mixed Materials 2 (box)

Language English

Extent 1 document