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Dell Hunt Culbreath papers

Title: Dell Hunt Culbreath papers
Collection No: MSS.405
Extent: 0.5 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1875-1952

Abstract: The collection comprises correspondence and documents related to Dell Hunt Culbreath (1903-1920) of Tipton County, Tennessee, as well as copies of her poetry. Some family documents are also included.

Donor: Nancy Dell Culbreath Horsman, 1995.
Processed by: Amy Shope, 2001; Gerald Chaudron, 2018.
Access: Open to all researchers.
Language: English
Preferred Citation: Dell Hunt Culbreath papers, Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

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Biographical information

Dell Hunt Culbreath was born February 22, 1903, in Tabernacle, Tipton County, Tennessee. She was the oldest child of Jordan Clark Farrar Culbreath (1869-1930) and Caroline (Carrie) Maudette Hunt (born circa 1885). Their other five children included Lula, Sarah, Elizabeth, William F. and Avery. Dell attended the Tabernacle school through ninth grade and then attended high school in Covington. In 1919 she went to Memphis to attend West Tennessee State Normal School to become a teacher. While at the school she became engaged to William Ruffin who was distantly related to John Ruffin, her uncle by marriage. At the end of her first year at WTSNS she became ill with typhoid fever and died on August 30, 1920.

Scope and contents

The collection comprises family correspondence and documents related to Dell Culbreath, as well as copies of her poetry. There is a large group of photocopied correspondence Dell received from soldiers serving during World War I, primarily members of her extended family James E. Ruffin, Leon G. Hunt and Robert B. Hunt, and family friend Edward C. Bull.

Subject terms

Culbreath, Dell Hunt, 1903-1920.
World War, 1914-1918--Correspondence.

Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1. Dell Culbreath.

1. Photograph, black and white, Dell Hunt Culbreath.
2. Letter, handwritten, Dell Culbreath, Memphis, Tenn., to Caroline Culbreath, no date, mentions influenza outbreak at West Tennessee State Normal School.
3. Postcard: Mynders Hall, West Tennessee State Normal School, Memphis, Tenn. Dell Culbreath to Sarah Culbreath, Covington, Tenn., October 7, 1919.
4. Letter, handwritten, Dell Culbreath, Memphis, Tenn., to Farrar Culbreath, no date.
5. Letter, handwritten, from Eber [Nebuchadnezzar], Memphis, Tenn., to Dell Culbreath, Covington, Tenn., August 1, 1920.
6. Receipt, handwritten, "Received of Dell Culbreath \$1.00 for the "Earn & Give" Division of the N.W.W.C. [Y.M.C.A. National War Work Council] Jessie B. Buford. Amt. in full," November 13, 1918.

7. Letter, handwritten on notebook paper, from Dell Culbreath, Memphis, Tenn., to Caroline Culbreath, Covington, Tenn., March 8, 1920.

8. Valentine, from William Ruffin?.

9. Clipping: "Letter to Mother on Mother's Day," by Dell Culbreath, *Covington Leader*, circa May 21, 19??

10. Clipping: Obituary, "Lovely Young Lady Passes Away Monday," *Covington Leader*, undated.

Folder 2. Dell Culbreath: Short story, handwritten on notebook paper, "Greater Love Hath No Man Than This," 2 drafts, 17 & 18 pages.

Folder 3. Poems of Dell Culbreath:

1. No title, undated; "Her Picture, Yes." On verso of letter, handwritten, to Mr. T.H. Evans, Memphis, Tenn., February 22, 1918.

2. "My Soldiers", written by Dell Culbreath, March 27, 1918.

3. "Because I am a Girl," no date.

4. "Four Score & Five," no date.

5. "Forgetfulness," May 16, 1918.

6. "Forgetfulness," rough draft, no date.

7. No title, no date.

8. No title, "Oh Sailor Lad!..." no date.

9. No title, "My Duties I'm Shirking..." two drafts, no date.

10. Song, typed: "Our 'Old High '" no date.

11. Poem, handwritten: "Welcome Home," no date.

12. Poem, handwritten: "Behold Our Flag Waving on High," no date.

13. Clipping: "If I Were a Boy," by Dell Culbreath, 9th grade, Tabernacle School.

14. Clipping: "A Vision", June 1918; "The Service Flag", *Covington Leader*, June 1918.

15. "The Soldier," no date.

Folder 4. School Documents of Dell Culbreath:

Tabernacle School, Covington, Tipton County, Tenn.:

1. Report card: eighth grade, 1916-1917.

2. Report card: ninth grade, 1917-1918.

3. Program, April 18, 1918.

OS Diploma: Tennessee Public School, May 18, 1917.

West Tennessee State Normal School, Memphis, Tenn.:

4. Report card, Modern Language, French, Winter Quarter, March 12, 1920.

5. Report card, English, Winter Quarter, March 13, 1920.

6. Report card, Drawing, Winter Quarter, March 13, 1920.

7. Report card, Math, Winter Quarter, March 13, 1920.

8. Report card, Latin, Winter Quarter, March 13, 1920.

Folder 5. Yearbook: "DeSoto", West Tennessee State Normal School, 1919-1920. Dell Culbreath was in the Three A Class, and the Latin, Tipton County and Manual Arts Clubs.

Folder 6. Correspondence (with transcriptions), 1918:

1. Clippings: "115th Field Artillery Is Ready to Fight," February 26, 1918; article about American Soldiers in France.

2. Clippings: "Just a Private Lost" by Helen Hunt; "Passing the Buck" by American Khakiland; "Lee County Boy Who Died in Service", re: Oscar B. Caruth; "On Duty Somewhere in the Navy on Atlantic Ocean", re: George A. Foster; "Training at Paris Island for Active Service Abroad", re: Raymond A. Lecoq; "Cecil H. Cole Named To Humboldt Faculty," *Commercial Appeal*, 1937; "Started to War as a Private, Returns as a General", re: Charles H. Cole; "Giving Bearman Case Testimony Final Check-Up", photograph of Judge Marion Boyd, Charles Rond, James Ruffin; "Federal Prosecutor Enters Bankrupt Case", re: James E. Ruffin; "In France With The 166th Ambulance Company", re: Michael Maloney; "Left Vocational High To Enlist In The U.S. Navy", re: C.J. Miller; "A Soldier With Major Battle Malone In France", re: Herman J. Moore; "Dr. Porter Now Lieutenant In The Regular Army", re: Lt. Arthur R. Porter; "Mongolia, First American Ship to Sink a German Submarine," *Commercial Appeal*, April 29, 1917; photograph of house where General Pershing was born; "Training for Finish Fight with the Kaiser", re: Battery E, 115th Field Artillery.
3. Letter, James E. Ruffin, Camp Lee, Va. to Dell Culbreath, January 2, 1918, discusses Christmas in Richmond, Va. Ruffin was Dell's first cousin, the son of Mary (Mamie) Josephine Culbreath Ruffin, the sister of Farrar Culbreath.
4. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, January 7, 1918. Edward Carmack Bull's family were the closest neighbors to the Culbreaths in Tabernacle.
5. Letter, James E. Ruffin, Camp Wadsworth, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, February 9, 1918.
6. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, February 12, 1918.
7. Letter, James Ruffin, Camp Wadsworth to Dell Culbreath, February 24, 1918.
8. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, February 25, 1918. Leon Green Hunt was the son of Nathaniel Henry Hunt and Daunce Webster. Nathaniel and Dell's grandfather, James Fletcher Hunt, were brothers.
9. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 5, 1918.
10. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 9, 1918.
11. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Elizabeth Culbreath, March 9, 1918.
12. Letter, Robert B. Hunt to Dell Culbreath, March 11, 1918. Brother of Leon G. Hunt.
13. Letter, James Ruffin, Camp Wadsworth to Dell Culbreath, March 16, 1918.
14. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 21, 1918, discusses desire to go to France.
15. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 21, 1918.
16. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 13, 1918, discusses war movie made in France.
17. Easter Card from Edward C. Bull to Dell Culbreath, March 25, 1918.
18. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, March 31, 1918.
19. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, March 31, 1918, discusses army food.
20. Poem: "The Service Flag."
21. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 8, 1918, talks of Co. L's dog Stynx attempting to bite 47 recruits from Iowa.
22. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath., April 13, 1918, complains about job as a cook.
23. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, April 15, 1918,

discusses duties as Battalion Adjutant.

24. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 17, 1918, describes a "sham battle."

25. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 20, 1918.

26. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 27, 1918, discusses people in Appalachian Mountains.

27. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 29, 1918, mentions how the effects of a gas attack are claimed to be minimized by smoking tobacco.

28. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, April 30, 1918.

29. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, May 9, 1918, discusses duties as Active Battalion Adjutant.

30. Letter, Henry Grady Royal, U.S.S. North Dakota to Dell Culbreath, May 11, 1918.

31. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, 115th U.S. Field Artillery to Dell Culbreath, May 15, 1918.

Folder 7. Correspondence (with transcriptions), 1918:

32. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, Greenville, S.C. to Dell Culbreath, May 16, 1918, mentions a "gas attack" in which one "fellow" was almost killed.

33. Two cards from Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade, May 1918, announcing his safe arrival overseas.

34. Letter, from Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade, May 25, 1918, discusses seasickness on the journey to Europe.

35. Letter, Henry Grady Royal, U.S.S. North Dakota to Dell Culbreath, May 25, 1918.

36. Letter, Leon G. Hunt, New York, N.Y. to Dell Culbreath, May 26, 1918.

37. Letter, Henry Grady Royal, U.S.S. North Dakota 1 to Dell Culbreath, June 15, 1918.

38. Letter, from Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, June 30, 1918, discusses conditions, people, and food in France.

39. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, June 30, 1918, discusses duties of his regiment.

40. Postcard, Robert B. Hunt, 115th U.S. Field Artillery to Dell Culbreath, July 1, 1918 .

41. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, July 8, 1918, mentions air battles, torn-up towns, and finding a four foot by fourteen inch shell that failed to explode.

42. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, July 11, 1918, discusses conditions in the French trenches, burial services for soldiers, and air battles.

43. Letter, Robert B. Hunt, 115th U.S. Field Artillery to Dell Culbreath, July 12, 1918.

44. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, July 13, 1918, discusses a "Lewis Gun," Scottish soldiers, anti-aircraft guns, and mentions the weather in Flanders, France.

45. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, July 21, 1918, mentions Bayonet School.

46. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, July 28, 1918, discusses being on the front lines and a rumor about a Japanese invasion of Russia.

47. Postcard, R. L. Nisbit to Dell Culbreath, August 28, 1918. Nisbet had been the principal of

Tabernacle School.

48. Letter, Leon G. Hunt to Dell Culbreath, August 11, 1918, writes about his job as a driver in the army.
49. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, August 18, 1918, writes about destruction of towns, and compares the south's destruction in the American Civil War to France and Belgium.
50. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, August 25, 1918.
51. Two printed cards, from Robert B. Hunt, September 1, 1918; from Leon G. Hunt, September 7, 1918.
52. Letter, Dell Culbreath to Robert B. Hunt, September 12, 1918, discusses going to Covington High School.
53. Printed card, from Edward C. Bull, September 13, 1918.
54. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, September 15, 1918, writes about German destruction of Ypres, Belgium, and mosquitoes.
55. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, September 21, 1918, talks of French countryside and French people.
56. Postcard: La Savoie, from Jesse M. Sanders, December 17, 1918.
57. Letter, Dell Culbreath to Robert B. Hunt, September 26, 1918, writes of wanting to do something to help the war effort.
58. Letter, W.E. Jacques, Normal School, Memphis, Tenn. to Dell Culbreath, October 24, 1918. Jacques was a friend of Dell who also came from Tipton County.
59. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, November 23, 1918, discusses reactions to armistice and mentions influenza at home.
60. Letter, John Ruffin, Base Hospital, Camp McArthur, Waco, Texas to Dell Culbreath, November 1918.
61. Letter, Henry Grady Royal, U.S.S. North Dakota, Guantanamo Bay , Cuba to Dell Culbreath, December 21, 1918.
62. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, December 28, 1918, writes about traveling around France.
63. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, February 9, 1919, discusses Marseilles, Nice, Monte Carlo, the Alps, Lyon, and Paris.
64. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, February 21, 1919, discusses attempts to get a discharge, overviews his experiences in France and the different nationalities he fought with.
65. Postcard: U.S. Customhouse, Charleston, S.C., February 2, 1919.
66. Letter, Edward C. Bull, Company L, 118th Infantry, 30th Division, 59th brigade to Dell Culbreath, March 7, 1919, mentions high number of soldiers with lost limbs and being in the hospital.
67. Letter, from J. M. Sanders, Company M, 323rd Infantry, Grancey, France to Dell Culbreath, March 22, 1919, mentions Edward C. Bull being wounded.
68. Letter, Nelson Parker, Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. to Dell Culbreath, April 10, 1919.
69. Letter, James Ruffin, Company M, 53rd Pioneer Infantry to Dell Culbreath, April 16, 1919.

70. Postcard: Brest, France, from Richard L. Nisbit, June 1, 1919

Folder 8. Correspondence of Caroline Culbreath, Covington, Tenn., 1900-1952:

1. Letter, handwritten, from Lula F. Davis to Caroline Culbreath, December 25, 1900.
2. Letter, typed, from Eldon Hunt (brother), Sedalia, Colorado, to Caroline Culbreath, January 17, 1914, mentions visiting Vaudeville Houses and seeing a "Moving Picture show."
3. Letter, handwritten, Jess Hunt, Bolivar, Tenn., to Caroline Culbreath, June 25, 1914.
4. Letter, typed, E.W. Hunt, Sedalia, Colorado, to Caroline Culbreath, May 17, 1915, discusses family.
5. Letter, typed, E. W. Hunt, Monument, Colorado, to Caroline and Farrar Culbreath, Sunday 25, discussing Monument School in Colorado.
6. Letter, typed, Charles ?, Memphis, Tenn., to Mr. & Mrs. Culbreath, Sept. 7, 1920, expresses sympathy over Dell Culbreath's death on August 20, 1920.
7. Letter, handwritten, Clara F. Johnson, Columbus, S.C., to Caroline Culbreath, September 10, 1920, expresses sympathy over Dell Culbreath's death.
8. Letter, handwritten, from Bettie Hunt to Caroline Culbreath, September 13, 1920, expresses sympathy over Dell Culbreath's death. (copy)
9. Letter, handwritten, from Cecil Cole, Normal, Memphis, Tenn., to Mrs. Culbreath, July 10, 1921.
10. Letter, handwritten, from Maude Somerville, Mason, Tenn., to Caroline Culbreath, August 31, 1921, expresses sympathy for Dell Culbreath's death.
11. Letter, typed, William Ruffin, Memphis, Tenn., to Caroline Culbreath, August 31, 1921, expresses sympathy for Dell Culbreath's death.
12. Letter, handwritten, William Ruffin to Caroline Culbreath, February 8, 1922.
13. Letter, typed, Charles L. Morgan, Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn. to Carol Ann (Dell's niece?), October 20, 1944.
14. Christmas card, Elizabeth Hunt Block to Caroline Culbreath, December 16, 1949.
15. Telegram, to Lu to Caroline Culbreath, Baptist Hospital, December 18, 1952.

Folder 9. Letter, handwritten, Sallie E. Hunt to Bettie Hunt (sister), January 6, 1875. Includes transcript.

Folder 10. Miscellany:

1. Two pages from appointment book, December 27-31, 1948, handwritten poem "When You Get to Know a Fellow".
2. Genealogical notes.
3. Tennessee State Department of Education Pupil's Reading Circle Certificate, Avery Culbreath, May 31, 1929.
4. Poem, typed, "Our Principal," Avery Culbreath, age 13, 8th grade.
5. Clipping: Obituary, Mrs. Carrie H. Culbreath; drawing of ducks on a pond by Elizabeth Culbreath, age 7.
6. Cabinet card: Medora Hunt and fiancé Tom Fowler, undated.