

Millikin University Archives: Staley Library

I. Laurence “Bill” and Anna Magill Sears Collection

Collection Number: 4.07.101

Inclusive Dates: 1903 – 1915

Bulk Dates: 1903 - 1904

Quantity: 1 box, 1 scrapbook.

Acquisition Information: Unknown.

Access Restrictions: This collection is open for research.

Copyright: Millikin University.

Photographs: Located in box 1. Additional photographs can be located in the scrapbook.

Condition Notes: Photographs are glued onto scrapbook pages & have some silvering and yellowing around the edges.

Processed by: Catie Zimmerman, 2004?.

Biographical Note

I. Laurence "Bill" Sears graduated from Lincoln College in 1903. At the request of Millikin University President Albert Reynolds Taylor, Mr. Sears became the first editor and business manager of the Decatur College & Industrial School of the James Millikin University's student newspaper. The *Decaturian* was first published in October 1903, one month after the opening of the Decatur campus.

Anna Dora Magill enrolled at Millikin University in 1903; and was a member of the university's first four year class, graduating in 1907.

Bill Sears and Anna Magill married in June 1908, and settled near Sullivan, IL. Anna Sears died July 18, 1948. Bill Sears died April 25, 1959.

Scope and Content Note

The Sears Collection provides insight into their lives as students at Millikin University. Their social occasions and extracurricular activities are documented in the ephemeral items and photographs that are part of the collection. Also of note is the item written by I. L. Sears describing the *Decaturian* from its very beginning. The collection offers a

special look at the University in its infancy from a student perspective. A very small percentage of the collection consists of photographs that are from I. L. Sears' time at Lincoln College, as well as a blue and white pin from the school, located in the Miscellaneous folder. The majority of the photographs in this collection were taken by Bill Sears from 1903-1907, effectively chronicling the early years of the Decatur College and Industrial School. It includes many of the social activities that Bill and Anna attended together.

Series Notes

Series 1: Correspondence

2 items

Correspondence of I. L. Sears dated 1915.

Series 2: Ephemera

5 folders + 1 loose item

Miscellaneous ephemera related to Millikin University events and Lincoln College.

Series 3: Scrapbooks

4 item(s)

1 bound and loose pages from 3 other scrapbooks depicting student social scenes from Millikin's early days, circa 1906/1907.

Series 4: Photographs

16 items

Photographs of Millikin University and its students dating from 1903-1907. Many of the individual portraits are mounted.

Collection Inventory

Folder/Item Title	Container #	Folder/Item #	Description
Correspondence	A-0041	1	Letter to Miss Blackburn (November 10, 1915).
Correspondence- Decaturian History	A-0041	2	Account of the start of the Decaturian student newspaper by I. L. Sears.
Ephemera- Invitations	A-0041	3	5 invitations to various events some with notes written on 1903-1908.
Ephemera- Meeting Programs	A-0041	4	3 programs to Senior Promenade (11/23/1904); Orlandian Lit Soc mtg (5/27/1904) and Philo Lit Society Mtg (5/7/1904)
Ephemera-	A-0041	5	various items include

Miscellaneous			Louisiana Purchase Expo 1904 Press Pass for Decaturian
Ephemera-Placecards	A-0041	6	various placecards to MU organization events.
Ephemera-Reception Cards	A-0041	7	reception cards from Sept 1903 events at MU & Church
Ephemera- Pin	Cabinet 7, top drawer	8	Lincoln University 1903 pin in small envelope
Scrapbook	E-0002	9	Small scrapbook with blue felt covers and white M on front, additional loose scrapbook pages from a larger scrapbook (no longer bound). Very few photos are labeled; most are group/social scenes.
Photographs	A-0041	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Athletics-Baseball Team-1903-? -Campus-Exterior-Liberal Arts Hall-1903 -Campus-Exterior-undated -Campus-Exterior-Winter-1903-1905? -Campus-Interior-Early 1900s -Classroom Scenes-1903-1906? -Groups-Early 1900s & undated -Miscellaneous -Portraits-Students -Baird, D.E. -Bone, Judith Mills (2) -Portraits-Students -Davenport, Hubert -Donaldson, Georgia -Portraits-Students -Magill, Anna (5) -Yanders, Ethel Margaret -Portraits-Students-unidentified

			-Portraits-Students- unidentified -Residence Halls- Interior-Early 1900s -Sorority-Chi Sigma Phi-1906?
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Note: Upon reviewing the collection in December 2017, I was unable to locate the envelope with a photo of the 1903 baseball team. AP