

Mildred Bard Charlesworth Pepper Papers, 1913-1980 (bulk 1913-1915)

Collection number [reference code]: TCNJ003

Collection title: Mildred Bard Charlesworth Pepper Papers

Dates: 1913 - 1980 (bulk 1913-1915)

Name of creator or collector: Pepper, Mildred Bard Charlesworth, 1895-1985

Extent: 2 linear feet (1 half-sized document box and 1 oversized box)

Name and location of repository: Archives and Special Collections, R. Barbara Gitenstein Library, The College of New Jersey, PO Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628-0718

Abstract: Mildred Bard was a New Jersey State Normal School at Trenton student from 1913 to 1915, a teacher in Millville, New Jersey for decades (after marrying a Charlesworth), and a prolific painter and traveler in retirement (after marrying a Pepper). She documented her time at the Normal School through a diary, candid photographs of students and faculty, and an annotated yearbook. Her collection extends to a few alumni materials and a few photographs of her paintings up to 1980.

Language(s): English

Accession number: 2003.01

Acquisition information [Immediate source of acquisition]: Unknown - there is an entry for the collection in the old Accessions Register dated May 1, 2003, but it has no additional information.

Accruals: None anticipated.

Processing information: The Bard Charlesworth Pepper materials were originally part of the legacy collection "Scrapbooks and Diaries," which was re-processed into three separate collections. The Mildred Bard (Charlesworth) Pepper Papers were processed by Deb Schiff and Kerin Shellenbarger in April 2024. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services IMLS grant number ST-252518-OMS-22.

Condition/conservation notes: The diary has water stains leading inward approximately 1 inch from all edges, especially in the first and last several pages. The *Sea* yearbook has a broken binding, is held together and reinforced on all edges with plastic packing tape, and the pages have foxing. Some of the photographs have been removed from their album pages, are inscribed in ballpoint ink, and are no longer in original order; the album pages are loose, without their original cover or binding, and may not be in their original order.

Conditions governing access: This collection is open for research.

Physical access restrictions: The items in this collection may be used by patrons who abide by the Archives and Special Collections Use Policy of the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library at TCNJ.

Technical access restrictions: Portions of the collection have been digitized and are available for viewing in the library on a provided computer, or on: <https://atom.tcnj.edu/index.php/Mildred-Bard-Charlesworth-Pepper-Papers>

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Preferred citation: TCNJ003 Mildred Bard Charlesworth Pepper Papers, The College of New Jersey, R. Barbara Gitenstein Library: Archives and Special Collections.

Related collections: TCNJ008 Diaries Collection

Separated material: None.

Published descriptions: <https://atom.tcnj.edu/index.php/Mildred-Bard-Charlesworth-Pepper-Papers>

Location of originals: Room 410, Archives and Special Collections, Gitenstein Library, TCNJ

Publication note: This collection is unpublished. However information about Mildred Pepper may be found in the book authored by her second husband, G. Vernon Pepper: *Help! There's an Artist in my Cabin*, Egg Harbor City, N.J., Laureate Press, 1972.

Biographical information/Organizational History:

Mildred Eleanor Bard was born on May 11, 1895, to Elmer Bard, a glassblower, and Ella V. Boogar, in Millville, Cumberland County, New Jersey. She had three siblings: Leon, Helen, and Ethel (1891-1980) who also attended New Jersey State Normal School at Trenton and graduated in June 1911. Ethel taught at South 4th Street Elementary School in Millville and later in a private kindergarten. She married Lloyd Cassell, lived in various locations in the Northeast, and died in Massachusetts.

Mildred graduated from Millville High School then began Normal School in the fall of 1913, where she had an active social life with friends and fellow students from Millville. She participated in school and social clubs including "The Fates." She was Vice-President of Theta Phi, a literary society, and helped to win one of their debates against the Shakespeare Society with her short story "Death's Hill," which she described in her diary as about "camp life in Shawmont with an adventure mixed in." She studied the Domestic Science course and graduated in June 1915, with her final assessment in *Grade Books and Reports, volume III*, reading: "Bright and a good student but conceited. Always self-conscious and self-centered. State report very good."

In 1918, Mildred married Harry M. Charlesworth, who was approximately 20 years her senior and worked as a glass mold maker in the Whitall Tatum glass company in Millville. They had a son Kenneth, in 1920. Harry died in 1953.

She began teaching in Millville schools, but she continued her education in Home Economics and received a bachelor's degree with a Phi Alpha Phi award in 1941 from Drexel Institute of Technology (now Drexel University) in Philadelphia. She also completed a masters degree at Drexel, with the thesis "A Study to Determine the Nutritional Background and Needs of Students in Order to Plan a Functional Unit at the Senior High School Level" in 1947.

For nearly 41 years until her retirement in 1957, Mildred taught Home Economics at Millville High School, later becoming a supervisor of that department. Shortly before her retirement she took up painting and quickly became a prolific artist who created over 500 paintings during her lifetime.

In June of 1960, she married George Vernon Pepper (1896-1979), who worked for the New Jersey Employment Service and also was a real estate broker and author. Prior to Mildred, George was married to Dorothy Adams (1901-1949), with whom he had two daughters. George and Mildred began to travel extensively after they both reached age 65. He wrote the book: *Help There's an Artist in my Cabin*, about their world travels via freighter ship. Mildred painted throughout despite the challenges of traveling with wet canvases and palettes. Throughout her career and after, she also was active as a participant and volunteer in community service clubs and local arts organizations. She died on August 12, 1985, in Millville, New Jersey.

Scope and Content notes:

The bulk of the collection pertains to Mildred's time at the New Jersey State Normal School at Trenton from 1913-1915. Of special note is her diary, which begins with a daily account of camping in Shawmont, Pennsylvania (now Roxborough, Northwest Philadelphia) before going off to Normal where she writes of her classroom and social activities. Her copy of the *Seal* yearbook is heavily signed and annotated with alumni information up to 1980. Her photograph collection documents students in their everyday lives on campus including in their dorm rooms, wearing gym uniforms, performing a Japanese Tea ceremony, and a possible inside joke of her and her friends enacting characters based on their teacher William N. Mumper (the yearbook is inscribed to indicate "Mumpers" characters). There also are several photographs of faculty members (before they were pictured in the yearbooks).

There are some additional materials from the late 1970s including Normal School alumni lists and photographs of her paintings from her post-retirement career as an artist.

Organization and system of arrangement: The collection is arranged in five series: Diaries, Yearbooks, Alumni, Photographs, and Certificates and Diplomas, and chronologically within each folder when applicable.

Subject headings [access points]:

Personal Names

Eby, Minnie Dorothy, 1871-1945
Kingman, Susan Oliver, 1853-1922
La Fetra, Emma Jane, 1888-1974
Leavitt, Robert Greenleaf, 1865-1942
Minar, Ruby Lee Lamb, 1883-1952
Mumper, William Norris, 1858-1931
Pepper, Mildred Bard Charlesworth, 1895-1985
Scobey, Frank Henry, 1858-1940
Seeley, Levi, 1847-1928
Wagg, Margaret Cochran, 1889-1964
Wood, Grace A. 1862-1941

Corporate Names

New Jersey State Normal School (Trenton, N.J.)

Genres

Diaries
Photographs
Photograph albums
School yearbooks

Locations/places

Trenton (N.J.)
Millville (N.J.)
Roxborough (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Other Subjects

Outdoor recreation
Students
Students--Social life and customs
Teachers
Teachers colleges

Container list:

Container note: Box 2 of this collection also contains oversized folders from the Lulu Bell Clough Haskell Papers TCNJ004.

Series 1: Diaries

Box 1	Folder 1	Diary of Mildred Eleanor Bard (Charlesworth, Pepper)	1913-1915
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Series 2: Yearbooks

Box 1	Folder 2	The Seal - New Jersey State Normal School, Trenton	1915 (with annotations to 1980)
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Series 3: Alumni Materials

Box 1	Folder 3	Class of 1915 alumni lists	c. 1980
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Series 4: Photographs

Box 1	Folder 4	Portraits of Mildred Bard, Partial photo album (disassembled) and photos of students and faculty at New Jersey State Normal School, Trenton	c.1913-1915
Box 1	Folder 5	Portrait of Mildred Pepper and her paintings	1978

Series 5: Diplomas and Certificates

Box 1	Folder 6	New Jersey State Board of Education Normal School Certificate	1915 (updated to 1947)
Box 2 (oversized)	Folder 1	New Jersey State Normal School at Trenton Diploma	1915