



ARCHIVES

TRINITY COLLEGE

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Description and Finding Aid
ETHEL RIDLEY FONDS
F2115

Prepared by
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ETHEL RIDLEY FONDS

Dates of creation

1895 - [1980?]

Extent

1 folder of textual records
13 graphic items
1 B.A. diploma

Biographical sketch

Ethel Blanche Ridley, nurse, was born in 1872 in Belleville, Ontario to father Charles Neville Ridley [1825?-1892?], physician, and to mother Elizabeth Ridley [b. 1838]. She entered St. Hilda's College, University of Trinity College, Toronto, in 1891 and graduated with a B.A. in 1895. She enrolled as a nurse-in-training in New York. By 1897 she was a registered nurse and in 1898 and 1899 she served as a nurse with the United States Army in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War.

In 1900 she joined the staff of the "Hospital for Ruptured and Crippled" (later New York Orthopaedic Hospital) and served until the outbreak of the First World War. Ridley returned to Canada in August 1914 and on 16 September was appointed nursing sister in the Canadian Army Medical Corps (C.A.M.C.). She was stationed at Valcartier, Quebec, for basic training and was promoted to Matron of the No. 2 Canadian Stationary Hospital of the C.A.M.C.

On 22 September 1914 she sailed on the "Franconia" to England. From 1914 to 1919 she served at a number of military hospitals. She was stationed at Le Touquet, France from 7 November 1914 to 20 November 1915, and at hospitals in England, including Granville Canadian Special Hospital at Ramsgate and Buxton between 1916 and 1917. She was subsequently stationed at the Canadian Head Quarters of the Lines of Communication in France in 1918. Ridley was made Matron, Principal Matron, and Matron-in-Chief of the Canadian military nursing staff and received several decorations, including the Star (1914), the Royal Red Cross (1916). She was mentioned in dispatches and appointed Commander, Order of the British Empire in 1918, receiving the C.B.E. in 1919 at a ceremony in Buckingham Palace. She retired from military service later that year.

In 1920, Ridley returned to New York City and rejoined the New York Orthopaedic Hospital, serving as Directress of Nurses from 1924-1942. In 1944 Ridley returned to Canada and settled in Gananoque, Ontario, where she died in 1949.

[Source: George E. Mills, nephew of Ethel Blanche Ridley; A. H. Young, W. A. Kirkwood, eds. *The War Memorial Volume of Trinity College, Toronto* (Toronto: Printers Guild, 1922); David B. Levine, "The Hospital for the Ruptured and Crippled: William Bradley Coley, Third Surgeon-in-Chief, 1925-1933," *HSS Journal* 4.1 (2008), 1-9.]

Scope and content

The fond consists of photocopies of records that document her military career, and photographs pertaining to the life, education and military career of Ethel Blanche Ridley.

Notes

Acquisition history: Materials were donated in 1980 by George E. Mills, nephew of Ethel Blanche Ridley.

Dates of creation: Photocopies are presumed to have been made shortly before the originals were sold at auction in May, 1980.

Arrangement: Records have been arranged by the archivist.

Restrictions on access: None.

Terms governing use and reproduction / publication: Public domain.

Provenance access points:

Ridley, Ethel Blanche (1872-1949)

Location / item listing:

1. University of Trinity College Certificate of Degree of Bachelor of Arts, signed 27 June 1895 by Registrar William Jones.
2. Portrait photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley [1910?] : b&w ; 10 x 7.5 cm (oval photo) ; 8.5 x 14 cm (border).
3. Portrait photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley [1910?] : b&w ; 10 x 7.5 cm (oval photo) ; 13.5 x 9 cm (border)
4. Portrait photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley in formal dress and pearl necklace [1918?] : b&w ; 15.2 x 10.3 cm (photo) ; 25.2 x 18.8 cm (mat) ; engraved name and partial address of photographer, Rita Martin, 27 Baker Street West.
5. Postcard featuring b&w photo of St. Hilda's College 1906 : addressed by "E. B." of Toronto to Ethel Blanche Ridley, 504 b – 112th Street, New York.
6. Postcard featuring b&w photo of Trinity College 1906 : addressed by "E. B." of Toronto to Grace E. Duer, 504 b – 112th Street, New York.
7. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley, Mrs. Sophie Mills, Louisa Ridley and George Mills [1919?] : b&w ; 6 x 10.5 cm (photo) ; 11.4 x 7 cm (border).
8. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley in nursing uniform [1916?] : b&w ; 13.7 x 8.6 cm.
9. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley in nursing uniform [1916?] : b&w ; 16.5 x 11.7 cm (photo) ; 17.7 x 12.7 cm (border); enlarged copy of previous photo.
10. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley reclining in chaise longue, Ganonoque [1948?] : b&w ; 10.8 x 6.1 cm (photo) ; 6.8 x 11.4 cm (border).
11. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley in nursing uniform on day of investiture with C.B.E. emerging from Buckingham Palace, London, England 1919 : b&w ; 18.7 x 13.5 cm (photo) ; 19.5 x 14.4 cm (border).
12. Photograph of Ethel Blanche Ridley in nursing uniform on day of investiture with C.B.E. emerging from Buckingham Palace, London, England 1919 : b&w ; 16.6 x 11.6 cm (photo) ; 17.7 x 12.6 cm (border); two copies with identical measurements, enlarged detail of previous photo.
13. Photocopy of photograph of the original collection of war memorabilia of Ethel Blanche Ridley according to George Mills, the collection was sold by the executor at auction to an unknown private individual.
14. Photocopy of Letter from an unidentified Major General of the British Military: the author writes to convey certificates commemorating the service of Ethel Blanche Ridley.

15. Photocopy of Certificate from the office of Sir Winston Churchill: the certificate commemorates the reference of Ethel Blanche Ridley in dispatch of 1915.
16. Photocopy of Certificate from the office of Sir Winston Churchill: the certificate commemorates the reference of Ethel Blanche Ridley in dispatch of 1918.
17. Photocopy of Certificate from the office of the Grand Master of the Order of the British Empire 1919: the certificate commemorates the investiture of Ethel Blanche Ridley as Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1919.
18. Photocopy of cover letter [1919?] from the Secretary of the War Office of the British Government]: the letter presumably was addressed to Ethel Blanche Ridley.
19. Photocopy of Letter from an unidentified Major of the Canadian Military, 26 December 1919: the author conveys confirmation of the decoration of Ethel Blanche Ridley with the Star in 1914.
20. Photocopy of Certificate of Service of Ethel Blanche Ridley 1920: issued by the Director of Personal Services of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.
21. Photocopy of Letter from a captain in the Canadian Military, 4 August 1920: the author conveys confirmation of an Emblem to be worn on the ribbon of a Victory Medal.
22. Program from the Armistice Celebration held 11 November 1930 by the University of Toronto at the Soldiers' Tower.
23. Photocopy of Letter from the Registrar of the Order of the British Empire to Mrs. G.K.R. Boyd, 13 August 1949: the office conveys regrets regarding the death of Ethel Blanche Ridley.