



Arthur and Bull Family Papers (SP0061)

Collection Number: SP0061

Collection Title: Arthur and Bull Family Papers

Dates: 1842-1996

Creator: Danielson, Elizabeth Kay Bull, 1949-

Abstract: The Arthur and Bull Family Papers consist of the correspondence and business papers of John Arthur, the World War I correspondence of Harrison Bull, the World War II correspondence of his son Joseph Bull, the postcard collection of Belva “Bess” Lee Estes, and the music lesson ledgers of Elizabeth Hodges Bull.

Collection Size: 0.75 cubic foot
(22 folders, 1 volume, 224 postcards, 17 photographs)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Springfield](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at springfield@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the Society all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials, with the exception of the published memoir to which she retains all rights.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Arthur and Bull Family Papers* (SP0061); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Springfield [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Springfield].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Elizabeth Kay Bull Danielson on December 5, 2019 (Accession No. SPA0065).

Processed by: Processed by Erin Smither, January 23, 2020

Biographical Note:

John Arthur was born in 1814, in Marion County, Kentucky. His father, Barney Arthur, moved the family to Missouri when John was a boy. They settled near present-day Rolla. John worked for the Maramec Iron Works and supplemented his income by selling fresh produce door to door in "Stringtown," a community of cabins the ironworks erected to house their employees. He met Elizabeth Hyer while selling his wares, and they married in 1839. Frequent purchases of land resulted in the Arthur family owning a 3,000 acre farm in Dent County. John and Elizabeth Arthur had 12 children together, only five of whom survived to adulthood: Samuel, Mattie, Alice, and Katherine. The identity of their fifth child is unknown. Elizabeth Arthur died in 1888, and John Arthur in 1897.

Harrison Bull was born June 28, 1894, the second son of John Henry and Nina Bull. John Henry was fifty years old with seven adult children from two prior marriages when he married twenty-year-old Nina. John and Nina had three children together, Charles Olan, Harrison "Ben" and Hobart. When Ben was seven, his family moved to Humansville, Missouri, where John Henry owned a blacksmith shop. By the start of World War I, the Bull family lived in Springfield, Missouri, and Olan and Ben were drafted. Olan served at Camp McArthur in Waco, Texas and Ben went to Camp Funston in Manhattan, Kansas. Ben never went to Europe, and was home by December 6. Within two months of returning home, however, his father died of cancer. Nina, married a German immigrant, Henry Sudheimer a few years later. She died in 1949.

Ben Bull worked many years for the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad Company. He lived in Newburg, Missouri, and specialized in the repair of tank cars. Ben worked for the company until 1922, when his employment ended due to a strike that lasted until 1925. Ben married Elizabeth Hodges in 1921. She was the daughter of Joe Hodges and Katherine Arthur. Together they had four children: Joe, John Olan, Bennie Luther, and Kathryn. The family moved to Springfield where Ben purchased an ice truck. Elizabeth gave private music lessons for additional income. Ben and Elizabeth remained in Springfield for the rest of their lives. Elizabeth died in 1978, and Ben in 1980.

Joe Henry Bull, the oldest child of Ben and Elizabeth Bull, was born on July 27, 1922. Joe was the first in his family to attend college. The attack on Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, interrupted Joe's studies and he joined the Navy in 1942, with aspirations of becoming a Naval pilot. Poor eyesight resulted in Joe's assignment to Naval Mine Warfare and Naval Gunnery School instead, and he spent the war in Brazil, where he served as a gunnery instructor. Joe married Margaret Louise Owens in July 1945, and then used the GI Bill to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia. He graduated in 1949, with a degree in engineering. Joe and Margaret had five children together: Melinda, Elizabeth Kay, David, Michael, and Peggy Jo. He worked in California, Arizona, Missouri and Texas over the course of the next twenty years. Rocketdyne Corporation laid Joe off in 1974, and he spent the rest of his professional life working in the Arizona mining industry. In 1978, Joe and Margaret purchased a house in Mesa, Arizona, where they lived for the next thirty years, until his retirement in 1987. He died in 2001, after a struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

Belva Lee Estes, known as Bess to her friends and family, was born September 21, 1926, the daughter of John and Belle Estes. She spent her childhood in Christian County, Missouri, where she married Joe's brother, John Olan Bull, in 1945. They lived in Springfield, Missouri; Wichita, Kansas, and Washington State at various times during their married life. John worked as a mechanical engineer and died in 2015 in Mesa, Arizona. Bess passed away in 2019.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following five series:

Craven and Hyer Family Photographs

John Arthur Papers

Bull Family Papers

Belva Estes Postcards

Memoir

Scope and Content Note:**Craven and Hyer Family Photographs**

This series contains photographs of members of the Craven and Hyer families. The collection contains ten cabinet cards and two daguerreotypes. Some of the photographed subjects are identified. The photographs have been arranged by size and photograph type.

John Arthur Papers

This series contains land patents, business documents, legal documents, real estate transactions and the personal correspondence of John Arthur. The documents have been arranged by document type and then chronologically.

Bull Family Papers

This series contains the personal correspondence of the Bull family including the World War I letters of Harrison "Ben" Bull. Harrison discusses the flu epidemic of 1918, while stationed at Camp Benjamin Harrison in Indiana. He describes living under quarantine, and downplays the seriousness of the epidemic, even as he reports that five of the eight men in his squad are hospitalized. The collection also contains the ledgers kept by Ben's wife, Elizabeth Hodges Bull, from her years as a private music teacher, as well as the World War II letters their son Joe wrote home while stationed in Brazil. The series has been arranged by family member and in chronological order.

Belva Estes Postcards

This series contains 224 postcards collected by Bess Bull. Bess received postcards from several soldiers serving during World War II, who sought out unusual or interesting postcards they thought she might enjoy adding to her collection. Most postcards contain a message, but some

were collected for their appearance or humor. Blank postcards have been separated from those with correspondence. Mailed postcards have been grouped by sender and arranged chronologically.

Memoir

This series contains a book about the Bull family titled, "The Making of an American Family" authored by Elizabeth Kay Bull Danielson. Danielson used many of the primary sources contained in this collection to research the book. She also used oral history interviews with her parents, Joe and Margaret Bull, and her mother's journals, neither of which are in the collection. The book also records her autobiographical experiences and memories.

Container List:

f. 1		Photographs
Box 001	f. 1	Craven and Hyer Family photographs, no date
f. 2-5		John Arthur Papers
	f. 2	John Arthur correspondence and documents, 1842-1858
	f. 3	Land patents, 1845-1859
	f. 4	John Arthur business documents, 1863-1878
	f. 5	John Arthur correspondence, 1880-1895
f. 6-10		Bull Family Papers
	f. 6	Harrison Bull, railroad records, 1906-1920
	f. 7	Harrison Bull, World War I correspondence, 1918
	f. 8	Elizabeth Hodges Bull, music lesson ledgers, 1919-1930
	f. 9	Joseph Bull, World War II correspondence, 1943-1946
	f. 10	John Bull, jet ejection seat project, 1953-1961
f. 11-21		Belva Estes Postcards
	f. 11	Postcards, various authors, 1907-1996
	f. 12	Postcards to Everett Estes, 1917-1939
	f. 13	Postcards from Harold Blumenstock, 1934-1945
	f. 14	Postcards from John Estes, 1940-1946
	f. 15	Postcards from Bennie Bull, 1943-1944
	f. 16	Postcards from Dwayne Blumenstock, 1943-1946
	f. 17	Postcards from Jimmy Crownover, 1943-1946
	f. 18	Blank World War II postcards, 1943-1945
	f. 19	Blank Japanese postcards, no date
	f. 20	Blank travel postcards, no date
	f. 21	Humorous blank postcards, no date
f. 22		Memoir
	f. 22	<i>The Making of An American Family</i> , 2018

Index:

Index Term	Folder	Image
Arthur, John, 1814-1897	2-5, 24	
Blumenstock, Dwayne	17	
Blumenstock, Harold	13	
Bull, Belva Lee Estes, 1926-	11-24	
Bull, Bennie Luther, 1925-	16, 24	
Bull, Charles Olan, 1893-1964	7, 24	
Bull, Harrison, 1894-1980	6-7, 9, 24	
Bull, John Olan, 1924-2014	10, 24	
Bull, Joseph, 1922-2001	9-10, 24	
Bull, Margaret Louise Nutt, 1925-2015	24	
Camp Funston (Kan.)	7	
Camp MacArthur (Tex.)	7	
Craven, Franklin Asbury, 1886-1947	1	Yes
Craven, Mattie Arthur, 1855-1944	1	Yes
Craven, Sam A., 1891-1973	1	Yes
Crownover, Jimmy	18	
Estes, Everett	12	
Estes, John	15	
Fort Benjamin Harrison (Ind.)	7	
Hodges, Elizabeth, 1897-1978	8, 24	
Hubbard, Bess Whitelaw	1	Yes
Hyer, Anna	1	Yes
Hyer, Ella	1	Yes
Hyer, Kate	1	Yes
Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1919	7	
Jenkins, Mildred Craven, 1880-1968	1	Yes
St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Company	6	
World War, 1939-1945	9, 13-18, 20	
World War, 1914-1918	7	