

Edith Leora Dennis '34 Papers 1928 - 1982

2013.008

Quantity:	1.5 record cartons
Access:	Open to Research
Acquisition:	Gift; the estate of Edith Leora Dennis, Fall 2013
Processed by:	Abigail Stambach, November 2013; additional material added April 2014

Biographic/Historical Note:

Edith Leora Dennis was born on October 29, 1912 in Brooklyn, New York. After graduating from high school in 1931, she enrolled in Russell Sage College's School of Physical Education and Hygiene. During her time at RSC, Dennis was a member of the Glee Club, Gamma Sigma, the Christian Association and two dance committees. In 1933, she traveled with a group of students to Ollerup, Denmark to complete a six week summer course at the Gymnastics Peoples College. Dennis graduated from Russell Sage with a B.S. in Physical Education in 1934. After graduation, she kept in touch with Helen McKinstry, the Dean of the School of Physical Education and Hygiene. McKinstry wrote regularly to Dennis following her graduation informing her of job opportunities in the Physical Education field.

After leaving RSC, Dennis earned a Master's degree in 1937 from New York University. Afterwards, she taught Physical Education at the Kent Place School in New Jersey and then was the Director of Recreational Activities at the Evangeline Residence for Women in New York City. In 1938, she joined the faculty of Brooklyn College as a tutor in Physical Education. Dennis also began working on a PhD in Physical Education and completed her degree in 1943. She continued teaching at Brooklyn College until she retired and reached the rank of Associate Professor.

Dennis received many honors during the course of her career. In 1970, she received plaques from the Legislative Advisory Committee of the New York State Assembly and the Student Governing Council of Brooklyn College. She also received a plaque from the American School and Community Safety Association in 1975. Dennis was a member of the New York State Association for Health & Physical Education, American Alliance for Health & Physical Education, and the American Scholarly and Community Safety Association. She published several journal articles and contributed to several books during the course of her career.

In 1957, Dennis married Charles A. Schmacke. She lived in Ozone Park, New York until her death in 2009.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection contains the papers of Edith Leora Dennis, a 1934 graduate of Russell Sage College. The collection mostly holds materials related to her time at RSC such as copies of the Russell Sage College

Bulletin, course syllabi, concert and theater programs, commencement programs, and a dance card to a RSC dance. These materials date from 1929 to 1934. The collection also contains materials related to a school sponsored trip to Denmark in the summer of 1933. A group of Physical Education students and school administrator, Helen McKinstry traveled to Denmark to complete a course in the Fundamental Gymnastics of Niels Bukh held at the Gymnastics Peoples College. These include a brochure for the course, a postcard with the return ship details, photographs, Dennis' passport and her scrapbook of the trip.

There is also letters written by Helen McKinstry to Dennis, dating between September 1934 and December 1937. The majority of these letters discuss available job opportunities in the Physical Education field. They were written during the height of the Great Depression when jobs were not plentiful. In many of the letters, McKinstry asks Dennis to keep her informed of how she is doing. There is also concerning Dennis' summer employment at Camp Serrana and Camp Wind in the Pines. These letters date between June 3, 1935 and October 6, 1936.

Finally, the collection holds materials pertaining to Dennis' career as a Professor of Physical and Health Education at Brooklyn College. This includes a copy of her doctoral dissertation, *The Genesis and Development of the American Red Cross Water Safety Service*, her doctoral degree from New York University and two biographical dictionaries in which she is listed. There are also two photographs of a field hockey team Dennis coached as well as a photograph of Dennis from about 1971.

Additional material was added to the collection in April 2014. This includes a scrapbook with memorabilia from Dennis' trip to Denmark in 1933; a letter from Helen McKinstry from 1943; a copy of the Helen McKinstry Club Constitution, invitation; schedule and program from the 1934 Commencement ceremony; a dance card; concert programs and a photograph, which is believed to be the Class of 1934. This material is noted on the Box and Folder Listing.

Box and Folder Listing:

Box Number	Folder Number	Folder Contents
		Control Folder
1	1	The Dome, 1930 (Yearbook)
1	2	The Central School of Hygiene and Physical Education, 1928-1929 (catalog)
1	3	Russell Sage College School of Physical Education and Hygiene, 1929-1930 (catalog)
1	4	Russell Sage College Bulletin, 1929-1930
1	5	Russell Sage College Bulletin, 1930-1931
1	6	Russell Sage College Bulletin, 1931-1932
1	7	Russell Sage College Bulletin, 1933 and 1934
1	8	An Introduction to Social Sciences, syllabus
1	9	Foundation Course in Fine Arts, syllabus
1	10	A Survey of Natural Sciences, syllabus
1	11	Russell Sage Review, April 1932
1	12	Sixth Summer Course in the Fundamental Gymnastics of Niels Bukh (booklet)

1	13	Bergen Ship Details, August 1933
1	14	Photograph, Ship to Denmark, 1933
1	15	Passport, Edith Leora Dennis
1	16	Choir and Theater programs, 1931-1934 (9 items)
1	17	Commencement and Class Day Programs, 1932-1934 (3 items)
1	18	Russell Sage College 1934 Commencement Invitation (5 items)
1	19	Dance card, 1934
1	20	Letters to Edith Leora Dennis from Helen McKinstry, September 25, 1934 – December 15, 1937 (7 items)
1	21	Letters to Edith Leora Dennis, June 3, 1935 – October 6, 1936 (3 items)
1	22	Helen McKinstry Obituary, (2 items)
1	23	<i>The Genesis and Development of the American Red Cross Water Safety Service</i> by Edith Leora Dennis (PhD thesis, New York University)
1	24	Neshobe-Serrana: A Camp for Girls Brochure (1 item)
1	25	Photograph, Edith Leora Dennis, ca. 1971 (1 item)
1	26	Miscellaneous photographs (6 items)
2		Photo album, Denmark Summer course, Summer 1933
2		Diploma, New York University, 1943
2		Kay, Ernest, ed. <i>The World of Who's Who of Women</i> , 5 th edition. International Biographical Centre: Cambridge, England, 1980.
2		Men and Women of Distinction, 1 st /2 nd edition. International Biographical Centre: Cambridge, England, 1982.
2	1	Commencement invitation, schedule and program, 1934 (2 items, added Spring 2014)
2	2	Concert programs (2 items, added Spring 2014)
2	3	Excuse note, April 11 [no year] (1 item, added Spring 2014)
2	4	The Helen McKinstry Club Constitution (1 item, added Spring 2014)
2	5	Dance card, RPI Sophomore Soiree, April 27, 1934 (1 item, added Spring 2014)
2	6	Letter from Helen McKinstry, May 20, 1943 (1 item, added Spring 2014)
3		Scrapbook, Denmark Summer course, Summer 1933 (added Spring 2014)
3		Photo, [Russell Sage College Class of 1934?], n.d. (added Spring 2014)
3		Diploma, New York University