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Guide to the

Estelle Massey Osborne papers

1943-1967

Sc MG 158

Processed by Debra Carter.

Summary

Creator: Osborne, Estelle Massey, 1901-1981

Title: Estelle Massey Osborne papers

Date: 1943-1967

Source: SCM 80-13; Miscellaneous American Letters and Papers

Abstract: Correspondence relating to Osborn's activities with the National League for Nursing. Also, report entitled "Brief Statement of the National Picture of Health" by Osborne and an article she wrote on black insurance companies.

Preferred citation: Estelle Massey Osborne papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Debra Carter; machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

Creator History

Estelle Massey Osborne was born May 3, 1901, the eighth child of William H. and Betty Estelle Massey. A native of Palestine, Texas she attended local public schools before beginning teacher's training at Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College. After two years Osborne received a certificate and began her career as a public school teacher. Her teaching career ended when an act of violence committed at the school almost resulted in her death.

It was at this time that Estelle, encouraged by her brother Edward, a dentist in St. Louis, Missouri, decided to pursue a nursing career. She began her training at City Hospital No. 2 in St. Louis. She later received the first scholarship awarded to a black nurse by the Julius Rosenwald Fund and continued her studies at Columbia University, where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1930 and a Master of Arts degree in 1931.

Estelle Osborne opened many doors for black nurses. She was the first black superintendent of nurses and director of the nursing school at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis (1940-1942) and the first black nurse to receive a Master of Arts degree with a major in nursing from Teacher's College, Columbia University. In 1949 as a member of the board of directors of the American Nurses Association, she was an official delegate to the International Council of Nurses in Sweden. Upon her appointment as a consultant in 1943 to the Coordinating Committee on Negro Nursing for the National Council for War Service, she became the first black person to hold an office on the staff of a national nursing organization. Osborne's other career achievements include becoming head nurse at St. Louis City Hospital No. 2.

Osborne also taught at the Central Nursing School of Lincoln Junior College in Kansas City, Missouri (1972) as well as at the Harlem and Lincoln Schools for Nurses in New York City (1929-1931). She was later appointed Educational Director at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C. In 1934 Mrs. Osborne went to work as a researcher to undertake studies of rural life for the Rosenwald Fund. Through her efforts, black colleges in the South were able to benefit from federal provisions established to aid nursing education. From 1934 to 1939, Mrs. Osborne served as the eleventh president of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, and in 1947 she was selected to join the faculty of the Department of Nursing Education at New York University. Osborne was also Assistant Director of the National League for Nursing (1959) and Associate Professor of Nursing Education at the University of Maryland (1954); chairman of the Local Program Committee, National Council of Negro Women; a member of the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corp; an Advisory Committee member of Harlem Hospital School of Nursing; a member of Key Women of Greater N.Y., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League.

In 1946 Estelle Massey Osborne was the recipient of the Mary Mahoney Award for her contributions to the field of nursing. She was cited for her efforts to open professional opportunities to minority groups. In 1959 the New York University Department of Nursing honored her as "Nurse of the Year", and the Estelle Massey Scholarship was established in her honor at Fisk University.

Estelle Massey was married to Dr. Bedford N. Riddle in 1932. In 1947 she married Herman Osborne.

Scope and Content Note

The Estelle Massey Osborne Papers (1943-1959) reflect her career as the Assistant Director of the National League for Nursing, Inc.

The papers consist of Correspondence, 1943-1959; Programs, 1946-1959; Writings and Articles, 1945-1967.

Arrangement: Papers organized into three series: I Correspondence, 1943-1959; II Programs, 1946-1959; and III Writings and Articles, 1945-1967

Key Terms

Subjects

African American businesspeople
African Americans in medicine
Insurance companies -- United States

Nurses -- United States -- Societies, etc
Nursing -- United States
Public health -- United States

Occupations

African American nurses

Names

Osborne, Estelle Massey, 1901-1981
National League for Nursing

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence 1943-1959
- b. 1 f. 2 Programs 1946-1959, n.d.
- b. 1 f. 3 Writings and Articles 1945-1967