

Newton Family Collection 1920s - 1986

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INTRODUCTION

Title: Newton Family Collection

Collection Number: 36

Accession Number: 003-09-2007

Physical Description: 4 boxes (about 4.2 linear feet)

Creator: Sheila Newton

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Provenance: The Newton Family Collection came to the Archives through an unknown source. Sheila Newton left seven boxes with a friend (presumably the Donor) in the United States upon her return to Scotland in 1986. It is assumed that after Sheila's death in 1988 the Donor transferred ownership to the Milligan College Archives.

Access: This collection is open for research. While most materials are written in English, there are some items in Chinese.

Processing Information: The collection was originally processed and a box list created by Tabra Woolbright in 1995. During a review of the finding aid in September of 2007 it was discovered that Ms. Woolbright's organization of the collection had been undone and that some reprocessing was necessary. The collection was broken into four Series and letters and other paper materials were unfolded and placed in new folders. Some photos were put into mylar album sheets, others were removed from a "magnetic" photo album and placed in a new archival album with corner tabs. The original album was kept in the Series because its cover contains an inscription. Further, some weeding of the family's artifacts was done, and the finding aid was retyped and updated.

The collection originally required five boxes, upon review in 2007 there were only four. The current collection consists of three. Woolbright's report on the Newton materials mentions a diary she guessed to be from Sheila's grandmother, circa 1862. However, it appears to have been removed from the collection. Clint Holloway, who oversaw the original processing of the collection, suggested that Norman Newton may have retrieved the diary for the family during a trip to Milligan. Adding weight to this theory, a copy of

the old box list notes that an insurance policy and some photos were “taken by N. Newton” on October 30, 2000.

Ginger Dillon finished reprocessing and updating the finding aid in November of 2007. A list of items weeded from the collection is kept in the Collection Files.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Stanley Warke Newton was born on November 17, 1905, in the fishing town of Cullen, Banffshire, Scotland. After graduating from high school, Stanley began an apprenticeship with a drapery company. At age 21 he accepted a job in London and advanced rapidly. He was soon a full time representative to Scotland and transferred to the company's Glasgow office. It was at this time that he met Sheila Nelmes. Sheila was born September 14, 1915 in Glasgow, Scotland, and grew up in the Shawlands Church of Christ.

Stanley and Sheila were married August 8, 1942. They established a successful business in Scotland had two children – Norman Stanley, born May 12, 1944, and Ruth, born September 22, 1949. The couple worked with Alan Robinson in the establishment of the East Kilbride Church of Christ.

In 1956 the Newtons moved to Nelson Province, New Zealand, where Stanley worked for an insurance company as well as owned his own dress shop and café. Stanley further became the first president of the province's chapter of Gideon International, served on the National Home Missions Committee and was chairman of the Men's Fellowship following a Crusades for Christ conference. Sheila was involved in starting Nelson's first Women's Church of Christ Conference.

At the invitation of Milligan president Dean E. Walker, the Newton family moved to northeast Tennessee in 1961. Stanley served as Milligan's first director of the Student Union and later became the part-time periodicals and reference librarian. He also took a number of classes in order to gain an appreciation of American college life. It is said that their home was always open to students. Stanley and Sheila were members of Hopwood Memorial Christian Church, then served at the integrated congregation at West Main Street Christian Church from 1969 to 1974. Sheila worked as secretary of Emmanuel School of Religion during its opening years. She also served as organist for both the West Main Street congregation and Emmanuel. A biographical sketch by Stanley in the Name Files states that during this period an Inter-racial Collegiate Christian Fellowship was started among Milligan and East Tennessee State University students and students from the West Main Street congregation.

Stanley and Sheila moved to Taiwan in 1974 in order to teach English at the College of Chinese Culture. A number of photos in the collection are from this period of time. Due to Stanley's failing health, the Newtons returned to Johnson City in 1977.

Stanley Newton passed away in Johnson City on April 3, 1979. Sheila remained until 1986. She remained an active member of West Main Street Christian Church, was a proofreader for the *Johnson City Press*, and was active in Contact, a local crisis telephone line. In 1986 she moved to Campbeltown, Scotland, where she died on December 20, 1988.

Stanley Newton expressed himself through painting, photography, and poetry. A number of his poems were published, including a small book, printed in both English and Chinese, titled *Places to Go*. Someone, perhaps Ruth Newton, appears to have been a stamp collector.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Newton Family Collection contains various materials created or collected by Stanley and Sheila Newton and their children. This includes correspondence, financial papers, poetry, newspaper clippings, drawings and paintings by Stanley, books, postcards, stamps, photographs, and children's toys. Many of the items are undated, but the bulk of the material is from 1960 through 1985.

The Newton Family Collection has been organized into four Series. Series I contains correspondence, Series II contains poems and family papers, and Series III contains photographs, and Series IV contains family artifacts.

BOX LIST

Series I, CORRESPONDENCE, 1920-1986, Box 1.

This series contains 10 file folders of letters, greeting and post cards sent to the Newton family. These materials are grouped by decade but are not necessarily in chronological order within the folders. Among these materials is one folder of correspondence and other materials relating to the Newton's employment at the College of Chinese Culture.

Series II, POEMS AND FAMILY PAPERS, 1958, 1961-1986, and Undated, Box 1.

This series contains sketches and poems by Stanley Newton, including a copy of his book *Places to Go*. It further contains newspaper clippings about the Newtons, financial papers, insurance papers, pension plan papers, family stationary, church and other bulletins, and news materials regarding the East Kilbride Church of Christ. Any blank checks or deposit slips from banks were removed and shredded. These materials have been separated by material type and placed in alphabetical order by topic, but are not necessarily in chronological order within the folders.

Series III, PHOTOS, 1969-1986, Box 2.

This series contains five folders and one album of both black and white and color photographs of the Newtons, their family, friends, and students. There is one folder of negatives. The photos are largely unidentified and undated. Photographs from the album were removed due to the damaging effects “magnetic” albums are known to have on photographs. The photos were transferred to the pages of an archival paper album using photo corner tabs. The order of the photos was preserved. The original album was kept because several friends of Sheila Newton had signed its cover. Loose photos were placed in archival album sheets in order to make them easier to handle and to reduce their bulk. Tabra Woolbright previously had the photographs arranged by subject. Those labels have been preserved with the exception of replacing “China” with “Taiwan” in the titles and renaming one folder “West Market Street Christian Church” (previously titled “West Side Christian Church”). Folders are alphabetical by title.

Series IV, FAMILY ARTIFACTS, 1956-1986 and Undated, Boxes 2-3.

Series IV contains children’s books, games, toys, and trinkets belonging primarily to Ruth Newton from her childhood in New Zealand and Tennessee. Also included are menus and paper mementos from a 1961 cruise, address books, collectible stamps, children’s school rulers, maps and tour books, and other small collectable items. This series was weeded because it was primarily undated material that was not documentary in nature and had no relevance to Milligan College history. Items obviously collected during travel and some representative materials from Sheila and the children were kept. A record of items removed is kept in the Collection Files. Box 3 contains most of the non-paper artifacts, as follows:

- unused postcards
- plaid change purse
- toys (articulated snake, spinning top, tiny plastic doll house furniture)
- woven names for Ruth, Sheila and Norman Newton and a small sewing set
- pocket diary with a few entries by Ruth
- comb and scissors set
- Chinese-style wall Hanging of red and white flowers
- red egg made of carved wood and wood stand
- tiny edition of the Gospel of Matthew in Japanese
- metal abacus and how-to book
- wooden folding fan
- gold “greetings” charm from New Zealand
- registered key tag from Laubach Literacy International
- Shakespeare and Rob Roy wall hooks
- Sheila’s metal geometry tools from Hutcheson’s Girl’s Grammar School
- wood thistle door knocker
- small collectable spoons from Thornsby

- octagonal, collapsible box with Chinese figures on it