

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Taylor, Hilda Harbin, 1912-

Hilda Harbin Taylor Papers, 1935-1938

MS 168

1 box
0.4 linear ft.

Processed By: Gladi Kulp
March 1998

Provenance: The papers were donated by daughter, Alma Greenwood, in 1996. Photographs form a separate collection, PCA 386 (Accession no. 1996-31).

Access: The collection is unrestricted.

Copyright: Request for permission to publish material from the collection must be discussed with the Librarian. Photocopying does not constitute permission to publish.

Processing: A folder level inventory is available. Papers are arranged by type of material. The correspondence files are arranged chronologically. Photographs form a separate collection, PCA 386.

Biographical Note

Hilda Irene Harbin was born in Columbia Falls (Flathead County), Montana on June 24, 1912. She married Clarence Curtis Taylor on January 24, 1931 in Kalispell, Montana. Hilda Taylor's first time away from the Flathead area was in 1935 when she and her husband and their baby went to Bendel Island (in the Shumagin Islands, part of the Aleutian Range) near Sand Point, Alaska to raise blue fox. Daughter Alma Irene ("Amy") was born on Bendel Island in November 1935, a few months after their arrival there. The Taylors spent most of three years, 1935-1937, on Bendel Island or Mist Harbor, and finally gave up because the venture was not profitable.

Hilda and Clarence returned home and spent the rest of their married life on small farms or rural areas in Montana and Idaho. James Curtis was born December 29, 1942 in Kalispell and Patti Jo on April 26, 1956 in Sandpoint, Idaho. Clarence died in the mid-1960's. Hilda moved to Washington and began college at St. Martin's. She graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1969, the same year as her daughter Alma.

Hilda was employed as a school librarian at the Tumwater Junior High School while continuing to attend school; she earned her Master of Librarianship from the University of Washington in 1972. She retired from the school district and moved to Anderson Island (Washington) in 1978 but spent six months in the Peace Corps in Jamaica. Since then she has mostly lived on Anderson Island except for a few years in Seattle until she moved to Elma, WA in 1994.

Scope and Contents Notes

The Hilda Harbin Taylor papers consist primarily of correspondence, journals and her written account of her experiences during her time in Alaska. The journals are mostly written by Hilda with a few entries by her husband Clarence whom she referred to as "Tate." Correspondence is written to family members by both Hilda and Clarence. Hilda signs her letters, "Jimmy."

Folder Inventory

Correspondence

- Folder 1: Letters written by Hilda "Jimmy" Taylor and Clarence "Tate" Taylor, 1935.
- Folder 2: Letters written by Hilda and Clarence, January-April 1936.
- Folder 3: Letters written by Hilda and Clarence, May-June 1936.
- Folder 4: Letters written by Hilda and Clarence, September-December 1936.
- Folder 5: Letters written by Hilda and Clarence, 1937.

Other documents

- Folder 6: U.S. Dept. Of Agriculture Bulletin no. 1350, Blue-Fox Farming in Alaska;" menus from the SS Alaska and SS Yukon; pencil diagram of the Taylors' cabin on Bendel Island.

Journals

- Folder 7: Hilda's journal, January 1936-October 1937.
- Folder 8: Journal kept by Hilda and Clarence, April 1937-March 1938.

Folder 9: Excerpts from *Say, That Reminds Me!*, 1994 (The Alaska Years: 1935-1938), copy 1, double-sided.

Folder 10: Excerpts from *Say, That Reminds Me!*, 1994 (The Alaska Years: 1935-1938), copy 2, single sided.