
Guide to the

ROBERTS FAMILY COLLECTION

1900-1990s

1.25 inches

Accession Numbers: 0001-09; 0001-33; 0203-110

Collection Number 43

Prepared by Kevin Kendro

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CITATION: Roberts Family Collection, Box number, Folder number, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Biographical Sketch

Joe Henry Roberts was born December 31, 1913. He was the son of Dr. John W. Roberts and Mary Etta Williams both of whom were from early-day Irving families.

John W. Roberts and Etta Williams Roberts

John W. Roberts was born December 25, 1883. He attended North Texas Normal School and then graduated from the Ft. Worth Medical College in 1910. He married Mary Etta Williams that same year. Their wedding was described in the Irving Index as "The social event of Irving's life-the first wedding observed with formal program and under delineated social rules in Irving. . . ." The couple made their home in Irving, Texas, where John Roberts practiced medicine with his stepfather, Dr. D. W. Gilbert (see the Gilbert Family Collection for additional information). John and Etta Roberts had three children, John, Joe, and Hugh. Dr. John Roberts became ill and died in 1918 at the age of 35. Etta raised her three sons working as a postmistress and operating a boardinghouse with her mother in Irving. Etta Williams Roberts died in Irving in December 1960.

Joe H. Roberts

The Roberts' children attended the Irving schools during the 1920s and 1930s. After graduating from high school, Joe Roberts attended the University of Texas and then entered the Baylor Medical School in Dallas.

He graduated from medical school in 1939. After graduation, he began an internship at Jefferson Davis Hospital in Houston. He had entered medical school under a program that, upon completion of his studies, would qualify him as a reserve officer in the U. S. Army medical corps. As part of the program, he took a temporary one-year assignment in July of 1941 as a medical officer in the U. S. Army. In December 1941, the United States entered

WWII, and Joe Roberts' temporary assignment became one for the duration of the war. In February of 1942, he was commissioned a captain, and later that year was made a company commander.

During the war, Dr. Roberts was commander of the medical battalion of the 36th Infantry Division. The 36th Infantry fought in North Africa, then took part in the landings at Salerno, and Anzio, Italy. While at Monte Casino in Italy, Dr. Roberts was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service for continuing to treat the wounded while under heavy enemy bombardment. Roberts held the rank of major when he left the army in February 1946.

After the war, Dr. Roberts returned to his internship at Jefferson Davis Hospital in Houston. He remained there for almost two years, before returning to Irving to begin his practice of medicine in 1947. Dr. Roberts went into practice with Dr. F. M. Gilbert, his uncle and the son of Dr. D. W. Gilbert. The two opened the Gilbert and Roberts Clinic in Irving in 1949. This was Irving's first modern medical facility.

Dr. Roberts married Jeanne Caldwell in 1948. The couple had three daughters and made their home in Irving until 1960, when they moved to Dallas.

Dr. Roberts continued his practice in Irving. During the late 1950s, he became involved in the drive to establish a hospital in Irving. After years of fund-raising and planning, the Irving Community Hospital opened in 1964. Joe Roberts was the hospital's first chief of staff. He served on the staff of the Irving Hospital for 30 years as well as on the staff of St. Paul's Hospital and Methodist Hospital. He was presented the Irving Healthcare System Foundation's Award of Excellence in 1994.

In addition to his medical work, Dr. Roberts served on the Irving School Board of Trustees and as president of the Irving Chamber of Commerce during the 1950s. He was also vice-president of the Dallas County Medical Society during the early 1960s.

Dr. Joe Roberts died in 1994 at the age of 80.

Jeanne Caldwell Roberts

Jeanne Caldwell Roberts was born in 1922 to C. P. Caldwell and Pauline Arnold Caldwell. C. P. Caldwell, born in Arkansas, moved to Texas to attend college at Southern Methodist University. After graduating from SMU in 1921, he moved to Irving. He married Pauline Arnold, also of Arkansas, in 1921, and the couple made their home in Irving. They had three children, Jeanne, C. P. "Bud" Jr., and Nancy.

C. P. Caldwell opened an insurance agency in Irving in 1921. He was elected mayor of Irving for three consecutive terms during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Caldwell died suddenly in 1942 at the age of 44. After his death, his wife Pauline ran the insurance agency until she retired in the mid-1970s (for further information see the Caldwell Family Collection).

Jeanne Caldwell attended the Irving schools, graduating from Irving High School in 1939. She then attended the University of Texas and graduated with a degree in business in 1943. Jeanne married Lieutenant Durward Oilar, a military pilot, who was killed in action in 1944 during the Allied invasion of France.

In 1948, she married Dr. Joe Roberts and the couple had three daughters. The Roberts made their home in Irving until 1960, when they moved to Dallas. Jeanne Roberts was involved in, among others, the Woman's Auxiliary to the Dallas County Medical Society, the Dallas Symphony League, the Dallas Civic Ballet, and the 20th Century Gardeners Club.

Jeanne Roberts died in 1986 at the age of 63.

Sources:

The Roberts Family Collection, Collection 43, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

The Caldwell Family Collection, Collection 42, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Joe Roberts, interviewed by Gnat Bozeman, January 21, 1994, transcript only, Oral History Collection, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Nancy Caldwell Tracy, interviewed by Kevin Kendro, November 10, 2000, tape #54, and transcript, Oral History Collection, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Scope and Content Note

The Roberts Family Collection is contained in three file folders in a one-half size legal document box. The collection is broken down into two series: Documents and Photographs.

Series I consists of photocopies of newspaper articles and other types of documents pertaining to Dr. Joe Roberts, Jeanne Roberts, and the Roberts family. The main topics addressed by the articles are Dr. Roberts medical career at the Irving hospital; his military service during WWII; Jeanne Roberts' involvement in various civic and social organizations in Irving and Dallas; and Roberts, Williams, Cate, Gilbert, Caldwell, and Lucas family genealogies. All of the documents are photocopies of originals and date from the 1910s-1990s. The original material was loaned to the Archives for copying by Jill Roberts McClung, one of the Roberts daughters. After copying, the original material was returned to her.

Series II is made up of photographs and digital images relating to the Roberts and Caldwell families. The photos span the years from about 1900 to the 1990s. There are 15 actual photos in the collection and 79 electronic images. The electronic images are scanned at 300 dpi and are in the Archives' master electronic photo file. The original photos were loaned to the Archives for scanning by Jill Roberts McClung. After scanning, the originals were returned to Ms. McClung. The electronic images have also been copied onto two CD-ROMs, which are in folder three of this collection.

The subjects of the photos in the collection are primarily: C. P. and Pauline Caldwell and their children, 1920s-1930s; Joe Roberts' military service, 1940s; and Joe and Jeanne Roberts and their children, 1950s-1980s.

Photos of particular interest to general Irving history are: a portrait of Etta Williams, c. 1910; a portrait of Dr. John Roberts, c. 1910; the Irving High School football team, 1932; Dr.

Roberts in his lab coat posing with his nurse in his office, c. late 1940s; Lynn and Kay Brown, c. 1980s; Boots and Katherine Roberts, c. 1970s; F. M. and Dorothy Gilbert, c. 1940s; and the first St. Luke Church building, c. 1904.

Provenance Statement

The Roberts Family Collection was donated to the Irving Archives in three accessions, accession numbers 0001-09, 0001-33, and 0203-110, by Jill Roberts McClung in October and November 2000 and February 2003. Most of the material in the collection was loaned to the Irving Archives for scanning or photocopying. Afterward the original material was returned to the donor.

Literary Rights Statement

Permission to publish from the Roberts Family Collection must be obtained from the Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Note to Researcher

See also: The Caldwell Family Collection, Collection 42, Irving Archives. This collection has additional information on Jeanne Caldwell, Joe Roberts, and the Caldwell family.

See also: The Irving Archives' Oral History Collection for interviews with Dr. Joe Roberts, transcript only, and Nancy Caldwell Tracy, tape #54, and transcript.

See also: The Irving Archives' Oral History Collection for an interview with Lorene Lucas Looper, tape #12, and transcript, provides additional information on Etta Williams and her relation to the Lucas family.

See also: accession number 0001-13 for additional photos of Dr. Joe Roberts during his military service.

See also: accession number 0001-115 for a photocopy of an *Irving News-Record* article, January 21, 1949, on the opening of Gilbert-Roberts Clinic.

See also: accession number 0102-145 for an electronic image of the Gilbert-Roberts Clinic, c. 1949.

Container List

Series I. Documents

Box 1

Folder

1 Newspaper Clippings, 1910s-1990s

Contains photocopies of newspaper clippings and various other documents relating to Dr. Joe Roberts and his family. The documents pertain to: Roberts family genealogy; Dr. Joe Roberts receiving the Award of Excellence from the Irving Healthcare System Foundation, 1994; the opening of the Joe Roberts medical staff library in the Irving Hospital, 1992;

material on Dr. Joe Roberts military service during WWII; articles on Jeanne Caldwell Roberts and her mother Pauline Arnold Caldwell and their social and civic activities; articles on Dr. Joe Roberts' campaign for the Irving school board, 1955; wedding announcement for Joe and Jeanne Roberts; wedding announcement for Nancy Caldwell and Kermit Tracy; articles on a variety of events and activities participated in by Dr. and Mrs. Roberts through the years; and obituaries for Dr. John Roberts, 1918; Dr. Joe Roberts, 1994; Mrs. W. B. Arnold, who was Jeanne Roberts' grandmother, n.d.; Etta Roberts, who was Dr. Joe Roberts mother, 1960; and Jeanne Caldwell Roberts, 1986.

2 Irving City Directory, 1952

Contains an Irving city directory, 1952. The directory list residents by name, address, phone number, and occupation.

Series II. Photographs

3 Contains prints of Roberts family photos, c. 1900-1960s.

43-01 Mary Etta Williams Roberts, portrait, c. 1910. Black-and-white, 4 in. x 6 in.

43-02 Irving school class, 2nd grade, 1923. Note on back states this may be Hugh Roberts' class. Black-and-white, 7 in. x 5 in.

43-03 Irving High class, c. early 1930s. Note on back states this may be Hugh Roberts' class. Black-and-white, 7 in. x 5 in.

43-04 Irving High School football team, 1932. Sepia, 7 in. x 5 in.

43-05 Joe Roberts walking on street in downtown Dallas, c. late 1930s. Black-and-white, 4 in. x 6 in.

43-06 Joe Roberts in field uniform and helmet during WWII. Black-and-white, 4 in. x 6 in.

43-07 Joe Roberts in uniform posing with two children in Germany during WWII. Black-and-white, 5½ in. x 3¾ in.

43-08 Joe Roberts in dress uniform, portrait, c. 1941. Black-and-white, 8 in. x 10 in.

43-09 Joe Roberts and C. T. Lucas in Germany, June 1945. Black-and-white, 8 in. x 5¼ in.

43-10 Jeanne Caldwell Roberts and Anna Lou Byrd in grass skirts, c. 1940s. Black-and-white, 4 in. x 6 in.

43-11 Joe Roberts and nurse in office, c. 1950. Black-and-white, 8 in. x 10 in.

43-12 Lynn and Kay Brown, c. 1980s. Color, 4 in. x 6 in.

43-13 Boots and Katherine Roberts (no relation to Joe Roberts), 1981. Color, 5 in. x 3½ in.

43-14 St. Luke Catholic Church, original building, built 1904. Black-and-white, 5 in. x 4 in.

43-15 Proposed model of Irving Community Hospital, c. 1960. Black-and-white, 4 in. x 3

in.

Digital images

Series II Photographs, also consists of 79 digital images. The images are of the Joe and Jeanne Roberts family, 1950s-1980s; the F. M. and Dorothy Gilbert family, 1930s-1940s; and the C. P. and Pauline Caldwell family, 1920s-1940s. Other Irving notables in the electronic images are Dr. John Roberts, Mary Etta Roberts, Opal Duckworth, and Sally B. Elliott.

These images have been copied to two CD-ROMs and are in folder 3 of this collection. The images are also available on the Irving Archives master photo drive.