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National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Annamae Barlup Myers and Stephen Harriman Diaries

NMAH.AC.0345

Grace M. Angle

1990

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Annamae Barlup Myers and Stephen Harriman Diaries
Date:	1883 - 1967
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0345
Creator:	Harriman, Stephen (farmer) (Author) Myers, Annamae Barlup (farmer) (Author)
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (3 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Collection consists of diaries for Annamae Myers, documenting the activities of a farm family in Ohio, 1931-1967 and Stephen Harriman, Mrs. Myers' maternal grandfather, covering the years 1884, 1888, 1893 and 1894.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Mrs. Margaret Myers, June 22, 1989.

Provenance

Collection transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (now Division of Work and Industry), July 25, 1989.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Grace Angle, 1990

Processing Information

Collection contents digitized by Noah Stewart, intern, 2017.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Annamae Barlup Myers was born April 7, 1903 in Ohio and spent most of her life on a farm, first, the "home farm" which her parents bought in 1915, then that of her father-in-law, followed by about seven years in a

small Ohio town and a return to the home farm. Her diaries are a record of life in rural Ohio for more than thirty years. The diaries reflect a life busy with household chores, laundry, cooking, churning, gardening, canning, and preserving and helping on the farm. For example, Mrs. Myers helped with the threshing, driving the tractor, and cooking for temporary farm helpers during peak periods. In addition to making some of her own and the children's clothes, Mrs. Myers sewed for friends and neighbors and during some years took care of a small child for pay. The many references during the early years to not having enough money to meet their obligations gradually give way to a picture not of affluence but of more comfortable financial circumstances without the constant worry about bills evident in entries during the thirties and early forties. Although the diaries primarily note the events of family life they also mention major political or historic events with a few emotional overtones.

Scope and Contents

The Annamae Myers diaries record the activities of a farm family in Ohio, 1931-1967. There are daily entries about the weather and frequent mention of trips to the hairdresser and trips to the children's music and dancing lessons and to town for shopping, movies, or to pay bills. The diaries include frequent entries of amounts received for the sale of farm produce, and some financial data are entered at the end of each volume, but such entries are neither regular nor complete. They do however provide information on prices for agricultural products in a rural community. Major political and historic events are noted. There is infrequent reference to the emotions generated by family living and by the historic and political events of the twentieth century. Also includes a few diaries kept by Stephen Harriman, Mrs. Myers' maternal grandfather, with very brief daily entries of the weather, trips to town, visits made and visitors to the farm, and the start of farm operations, i.e., plowing, sowing.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Agricultural Prices
- Agriculture
- Rural families

Types of Materials:

- Diaries
- Housewives

Places:

- Ohio
- West Liberty (Ohio)

Container Listing

Series 1: Annamae Barlup Myers Diaries, 1931 - 1967

Scope and Contents: Annamae Barlup Myers was born April 7, 1903 in Ohio and spent most of her life on a farm, first, the "home farm" which her parents bought in 1915, then that of her father in law, with a period of about seven years in a small Ohio town and a return to the home farm. Her diaries are a record of life in rural Ohio for more than thirty years. During the early years of her marriage her husband Clarence worked at a number of temporary jobs in addition to farming on the county roads, at a foundry, at the Farm Bureau. From 1949 he worked regularly in a factory. In addition to working the farms Mr. Myers plowed and threshed for several neighbors. During the 1950's the Myers also raised sheep. There were three children, Gwynn, a small boy in 1931 when the diaries begin, Margaret or Peg, born November 5, 1935 and Richard, born November 3, 1937. During the period of the diaries all three children were married and had children of their own. The daughter, Margaret Myers Wilkins, and her husband Paul bought fourteen acres of the home farm in 1975 and live there in a house they built in 1975.

The diaries reflect a life busy with household chores, laundry, cooking, churning, gardening, canning and preserving and helping on the farm. For example Mrs. Myers helped with the threshing, driving the tractor, and cooking for temporary farm helpers during peak periods. In addition to making some of her own and the children's clothes, Mrs. Myers sewed for friends and neighbors and during some years took care of a small child for pay.

The diaries record much visiting with relatives and friends. Taking a "covered dish" for the meal was a common practice. Mr. Myers was a Mason, they both belonged to the Grange and the Farm Bureau, Mrs. Myers was a member of the Eastern Star, the Blue Jackets and the Ladies' Aid Society and participated in the social activities of such groups. The family regularly attended church and Sunday school. Mrs. Myers sang at church and for many club programs and the children, all of whom took music or dancing lessons, also performed at church and on social occasions. There were frequent trips to the movies with the title of the picture and Mrs. Myers opinion of it noted. Card playing was a regular activity, once or more every week. Euchre, five hundred, pokino, bridge and canasta are all mentioned frequently. Bingo was played with small amounts often won \$1.00 \$2.50. Once a \$10.50 win is mentioned and another time \$25.00. Working jig saw puzzles was a pastime at home. Radio and later television were important for news and entertainment. Annual vacations with travel by car were a combination of sight seeing and visiting relatives and friends. These included trips to Gettysburg, Washington, D.C., Annapolis, Hagerstown and Florida. During one of these trips to Florida in 1956 to visit Mrs. Myers' sister the house and most of its contents burned. Friends and neighbors held showers for the family with substantial gifts of housewares and clothing. On May 9, 1956 workmen started to dig the foundation for a new house and an entry on October 4, 1956 states "We stayed all night in our new house. I think we are going to like it fine ."

The many references during the early years to not having enough money to meet their obligations gradually give way to a picture not of affluence but of more comfortable financial circumstances without the constant worry about bills evident in entries during the thirties and early forties. A bathroom was installed in 1948 and on September 4, 1948 the family took their first showers. In August of that year a dial phone was installed. In June of 1947 the Myers bought a new Plymouth and Mrs. Myers wrote in her diary of June 17 "Its quite a thrill to drive a new car a pleasure I've never had before." In addition to the income from Mr. Myers factory and other work, Mrs. Myers sold chickens, eggs, cream and garden produce.

There are frequent entries of payment for these products and for child care. An entry on Mar 19, 1932 shows that she "got 104 a dozen for eggs and 194 for cream. That is a little better."

Mrs. Myers worked at the polls on election day a few times and in 1950 was a census enumerator. During the 1960's she made and sold ceramics and also used them for gifts. Receipt of a milk subsidy check and a Soil Bank check appear in the mid forties and there after. On August 7, 1966 receipt of the first Social Security check is noted.

Although the diaries primarily note the events of family life they also mention major political or historic events with few emotional overtones. Among these are the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the U.S. declaration of war, D Day, President Roosevelt's death, the dropping of the atomic bomb and the Japanese surrender. The Cuban crisis and John Kennedy's assassination are also noted. There was no immediate family involvement in World War II but Glenn, the oldest child, was drafted and served in the Korean War.

Box 1	Diary, 1931
Box 1	Diary, 1932
Box 1	Diary, 1933
Box 1	Diary, 1934
Box 1, Folder 1-2	Diary (xeroxed), 1935
Box 1	Diary, 1936
Box 1	Diary, 1937
Box 1	Diary, 1939
Box 1	Diary, 1940
Box 1	Diary, 1941
Box 1	Diary, 1942
Box 1	Diary, 1943
Box 1	Diary, 1944
Box 1	Diary, 1945
Box 1	Diary, 1946
Box 1	Diary, 1947
Box 2	Diary, 1948
Box 2	Diary, 1949

Box 2	Diary, 1950
Box 2	Diary, 1951
Box 2	Diary, 1952
Box 2	Diary, 1953
Box 2	Diary, 1954
Box 2	Diary, 1956
Box 2	Diary, 1957
Box 2	Diary, 1960
Box 2	Diary, 1961
Box 2	Diary, 1962
Box 2	Diary, 1963
Box 2	Diary, 1965
Box 2	Diary, 1967

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Series 2: The Stephen Harriman Diaries, 1883 - 1894

Scope and Contents: Also included in the collection are a few diaries kept by Stephen Harriman, Mrs. Myers' maternal grandfather. These cover the years 1884, 1888, 1893 and 1894. They contain very brief daily entries of the weather, notations of trips to town, of visits made and visitors to the farm, of the start of farm operations i.e. plowing, sowing. In addition to his farming, Mr. Harriman kept bees and sold honey.

There are some financial entries most of which relate to prices received: for honey 164 per pound on June 13, 1888; 14 each for eggs on March 14, 1888 and 194 per pound for butter on January 28, 1888.

The election of Grover Cleveland in 1884 and Benjamin Harrison in 1888 to the presidency are noted.

Box 3 [Diary, 1884](#)

Box 3 [Diary, 1888](#)

Box 3 [Diary, 1893](#)

Box 3 [Diary, 1894](#)

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