

Collection #
M 0736
OM 0388

FLORENCE AND ISAAC RITCHEY PAPERS, 1903–1953

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	2 manuscript boxes; 3 oversize folders
COLLECTION DATES:	1903–53
PROVENANCE:	Mrs. R. Lee McGathey, 3521 Arlington, Columbus, IN 47201,

10 November 1998

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1999.0130

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Florence Etta Gambill (b. 1883), daughter of Marion F. and Rose (Powell) Gambill, was a native of Sullivan County, Indiana. She attended Brown's Business College and the State Normal College in Terre Haute (Vigo Co.). Florence taught school for two years in Terre Haute and one year at Hymera.

In 1903, she became a member of the Terre Haute Lodge No. 27 of the Pathfinders, a social organization. Three years later, she lived in Sullivan, where she worked in an insurance agency. In June 1910, Florence moved to Colorado to open an insurance agency, but apparently this ultimately failed.

By 1927, she had married Isaac S. Ritchey, who may have been a native of Colorado, and the couple lived in Jasonville, Indiana (Greene Co.). Ritchey was a farmer and had at least two sons when he married Florence. They were John Albert (b. 1906 in Scott City, Kansas) and Paul M.

By 1931, Florence and Isaac were living in Bloomfield in Greene County. They operated Ritchey's Leader Store, a clothing and shoe store from around 1932 to 1939. In June 1932, Florence was appointed receiver of the Star Coal Company. The receivership was closed in November 1937 and the company was sold. The Ritcheys also invested in land in Arkansas, Colorado, and Illinois. During World War II, Florence assisted with the Greene County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

Gilbert W. Gambill, Sr. (1881–63) was the brother of Florence Gambill. He graduated from the Normal College at Danville, Indiana in 1906, and was admitted to the bar that same year. Gambill was an attorney in Terre Haute for 30 years, being a senior partner in the firm of Gambill, Cox, Zwerner, Gambill, and Sullivan. Gambill and his wife, Conza D., had a son, Gilbert W. Jr. (b. 1921), who was a partner in the firm.

Sources: Material in the collection and in the collection's accession file.

History of Greene County, Indiana, 1885–89. p. 17.

Res Gestae. Vol. 7, No. 9 (September 1963). p. 29.

Wolfe, Thomas J. *History of Sullivan County* (1909). Vol. 2, p. 392.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of the correspondence and papers of Florence and Isaac Ritchey of Bloomfield, Indiana, and

records relating to their involvement with the Ritchey's Leader Store and the Star Coal Company. Correspondents throughout the collection include Gilbert W. Gambill, Sr., Florence (Gambill) Ritchey, and Isaac Ritchey.

The early personal papers and correspondence (1903–12) cover Florence's life from ages 20 to 29, while she lived in Indiana and when she moved to Colorado. It contains letters received from friends and family, a membership certificate and program for the Terre Haute Lodge No. 27 of the Pathfinders, a school registration card, and a graduation program for Palestine (Ill.) High School. There are also two business letters addressed to Isaac S. Ritchey.

There is no material for the years 1913 to 1926; when the collection begins again, Florence has already wed Isaac Ritchey and returned to Indiana. The majority of the later material (1927–53) relates to the Ritchey's ownership of land in Arkansas, Colorado and Illinois. It is in the form of correspondence, real estate deeds and leases, and tax records. Tax records for Rose Gambill are also present. Other topics include the Ritchey's involvement in selling livestock and government agricultural programs and Florence's work with the American Red Cross during World War II.

The Ritchey's Leader Store records (1932–39) contain correspondence concerning orders placed with suppliers, receipts, store licenses, catalogs and order forms from suppliers, and a few miscellaneous items.

Records of the Star Coal Company (1920–41) contain correspondence, corporation reports, tax and financial records, deeds/leases, legal records, and miscellaneous items, including the articles of incorporation for the Jasonville Fourth Vein Coal Company.

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Ritchey's Leader Store Correspondence, 1939, February 1–14	Box 2, Folder 2
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CONTAINER

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0736).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.