

Collection #
P 0430

BALL FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS 1936–1946

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Processed by

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 4 folders

COLLECTION
DATES: 1936–1946

PROVENANCE: Copy photographs of the Ball Brothers' residences from Mary Ellen Gadski, Indianapolis, January 1988. Photographs of Ball family members and newspaper clippings from the Minneapolis

Public Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN, received in 1995.

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1988.0158, 1995.0793

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Ball brothers, best known for their home canning jars, first went into business together in 1880. Their parents, Lucius Styles Ball (1814–78) and Maria Polly Bingham Ball (1822–92) had six sons and two daughters: Lucina Amelia (1847–1901), Lucius Lorenzo (1850–1932), William Charles (1852–1921), Edmund Burke (1855–1925), Frank Clayton (1857–1943), Mary Frances (1860–1926), George Alexander (1862–1955), and Clinton Harvey (1867–69). The family was raised in eastern Ohio and in upstate New York.

Edmund and Frank started the Wooden Jacket Can Company in 1880 in Buffalo, New York, and were soon joined in business by William and George. They sold wood-jacketed tin containers to hold paint, varnishes, and kerosene. They soon refined their product to tin-jacketed, glass-lined containers. In 1884, the renamed Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Company began producing the home canning jar, which eventually made Ball a household name.

The discovery of natural gas in Muncie, Indiana, in 1886 significantly increased the population and industry in that town. Because great quantities of natural gas were necessary to make glass, the five Ball brothers moved their business to Muncie in 1887–88 to take advantage of the natural gas boom there. They had been invited by local businessman James Boyce, and were offered \$5,000 in cash, seven acres of land for a plant site, a gas well, and a private rail line if they would transfer their operations to Muncie.

Today the Ball Corporation is an international manufacturing company, recognized around the world for its metal and plastic food and beverage containers, as well as for its aerospace technology products and services. The famous Ball canning supplies are now made by the Alltrista Corporation, a separate, independent company spun off from Ball.

In 1917 the Ball brothers bought what had been Eastern Indiana Normal University. In 1918 they donated the property to the state to establish a teachers college. In recognition of the Ball family's generosity, the Indiana legislature changed the school's name to Ball Teachers College in 1922. The institution achieved university status in 1965, and is now known as Ball State University.

The formation of the Ball Brothers Foundation was the idea of Edmund B. Ball, from whose estate the original funding of the foundation came. The foundation's first major project, Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie, was completed in 1929.

In 1894 the brothers (then joined by the fifth brother, Lucius, a physician who had moved from Buffalo that year)

bought a large tract of land north of the bend of the White River. The two Ball sisters, Lucina and Mary Frances, gave the area the name Minnetrista from the Indian word *minne* for “water” and the old English word *tryst* for “agreed meeting place.” Thus, the site where the Ball brothers built their large homes became a meeting place by the water, “Minnetrista.”

Frank C. Ball and his wife Elizabeth built the first house on the site in 1894. It was a large frame house with porches and a gambrel roof. It was remodeled in 1902 to reflect the colonial revival style fashionable at the time, and was faced with Indiana limestone. In the 1940s the house was converted to student use, and later housed business offices. It was destroyed by fire in 1967, and the Minnetrista Cultural Center is now located on its site. The columns from the front portico of the house survived the fire and mark the entrance to the grounds of the center.

George A. Ball and his wife Frances built their house in 1895, using the same architect who designed Frank’s home.

William C. Ball and his wife Emma built their Georgian revival house in 1898. It now serves as a guest house for the Ball Corporation.

Lucius L. Ball bought an existing farmhouse and had it moved toward the river.

The home of Edmund B. Ball and his wife Bertha on Minnetrista Boulevard was completed in 1907. The house was named “Nebosham,” and was the home of Edmund’s family for fifty years. In 1975 the Ball Brothers Foundation gave the property to the Ball State University Foundation to use as a continuing education facility. The building is now known as the E.B. and Bertha C. Ball Center for University and Community Programs, and offers educational, social, and enrichment opportunities to the east central Indiana community.

Dorothy Ann Ball (born 1925) was the daughter of E. Arthur Ball, who was the son of Frank C. Ball.

Frank C. Ball was responsible for moving the family from Buffalo, New York, to Muncie in 1887. He served as the first company president, and remained in that capacity for sixty-three years.

George A. Ball, during the course of his career, served as the company bookkeeper, secretary, treasurer, vice president, president, and board chairman. He participated in the company’s evolution from kerosene cans and fruit jars to aerospace technology. He served on the boards of numerous organizations and banks, Indiana University, Ball State Teachers College (now Ball State University), and Ball Memorial Hospital. In 1935 he became the owner of a railroad empire. He was also involved in politics, and was a Republican national committeeman from Indiana for several years.

Sources:

Items in the collection.

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Hill, Louis, Jr., Valerie Robbins, and Jane Sondgerath. “Neighborhood Studies: McKinley and Minnetrista,” Department of Urban Planning, Ball State University, Spring 1999 (<http://www.bsu.edu/classes/schoen/plan302/mckinley/frontpg.htm>). Accessed 2 June 2004.

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The Star Press. “Delaware County” (<http://www.thestarpress.com/tsp/communities/delaware.php>). Accessed 27 May 2004.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of sixteen photographs and twenty-nine newspaper clippings. Twelve of the photographs are of three members of the Ball family; four copy photographs are of the homes of four of the founding brothers of the Ball Corporation. The collection is arranged into four series – one for the photographs of the residences, and a series for each of the individuals of whom there are photographs. Photocopies of the newspaper clippings are stored with the photos of the individuals to which they pertain. There is no indication of the source newspapers from which the clippings came, but most of the clippings have been date-stamped.

Series 1, Ball Brothers' Residences: This series includes four black-and-white copy photographs of the Muncie residences of Edmund B. Ball, Frank C. Ball (home built in 1893, but lost in a fire in 1967), George A. Ball, and William C. Ball. The photographs all show the front exteriors of the homes.

Series 2, Dorothy Ball: This series contains two black-and-white photographs and photocopies of three brief newspaper articles.

Series 3, Frank C. Ball: This series consists of two black-and-white photographs and one photocopy of a short newspaper obituary.

Series 4, George A. Ball: This series includes eight black-and-white photographs and photocopies of twenty-five newspaper clippings.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Ball Brothers' Residences

CONTENTS

Four copy photographs show the front exteriors of the homes of: Edmund B. Ball, Frank C. Ball, George A. Ball, and William C. Ball.

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 1

Series 2: Dorothy Ball

CONTENTS

Two Associated Press photos from 1946: one portrait of Dorothy; one photo of Dorothy with her father, E. Arthur Ball.

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 2

Photocopies of three short newspaper clippings from 1946: one from April regarding her brief disappearance from college; two announcing her engagement to William Paul Pickhardt, II.

Photographs, Folder 2

Series 3: Frank C. Ball

CONTENTS

CONTAINER

Associated Press photo and Wide World photo, both from December 1938, showing Frank C. Ball as he testified in Washington, D.C. before the National Economic Committee during a hearing on monopolistic practices in the glass container industry.

Photographs, Folder 3

Photocopy of newspaper clipping with brief obituary of Frank C. Ball, 19 March 1943.

Photographs, Folder 3

Series 4: George A. Ball

CONTENTS

Five Associated Press photos, 1936–37.

One Wide World photo, 1936.

Associated Press photo of Indiana Republican national committeeman George A. Ball with national committeewoman Grace B. Reynolds, state chairman Ivan C. Morgan, and Governor Alf Landon, 1936.

Tribune Wirephoto of George A. Ball with Robert Young, Frank P. Kolbe, and Allan P. Kriby (Kirby?), the three men who bought controlling interest of the Van Sweringen Railroad from Ball, 1937.

Photocopies of twenty-five newspaper clippings regarding George A. Ball's business dealings.

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 4

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://opac.indianahistory.org/>
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, P 0430).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.