Mary L. Nock papers
4.5 linear feet; 2 manuscript boxes, 1 oversize box, 1 oversize clamshell box

Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland

Finding aid written by Hallie M. Kroll, January 2015.

Accession Number: 1989.030
Creator: Mary L. Nock
Acquisition: The Mary L. Nock papers were donated to the Nabb Research Center by Garland Nock in 1989, Frederica Danielus and France E. Smith after, and Shirley Freberger from 2012-2015.
Language: Material entirely in English.
Use: Records are open for research. Copyright, including literary rights, belongs to the author(s) or their legal heirs.
Citation Style: “Item, Mary L. Nock papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland.”
Related Materials: E. Homer White papers, 2014.012
Wayne Gilchrest papers, 2011.034
Separated Materials: Oversized materials have been placed in the Nabb Research Center’s flat file system.
Library materials have been cataloged and added to the Nabb Research Center’s non-circulating collection.
Artifacts have been catalogued and housed in object storage at Blackwell Library.
Biographical History: Mary Layfield Nock was born in September 3, 1903 on a farm near Old Green Hill Church, fifteen miles from the city of Salisbury, Maryland. Her parents were William T. and Lulu T. Layfield. She had a twin sister, named Nan who, like Mary, wanted to be a teacher. Mary was sent to Beacom Business College. After she graduated, she worked as a secretary and began participating in local politics. In 1925, she married Garland Nock, a Salisbury contractor. Through family connections, Mary became the secretary of David J. Ward, President of Salisbury Motor Company, and accompanied him to Annapolis when he was elected a State Senator. Despite her wish to become a housewife and remain in her home community, Mary Nock got the urge to return to politics, and with the support of her husband, she ran on the Wicomico County Democratic ticket of the Maryland State House of Delegates. She won the election and began her political career. Despite a reputation in the House for not introducing legislation, she ran for State Senate on the Wicomico County Democratic ticket and won in 1954. She was the only female senator at the time. As a champion of the farmer, local businessman, and a Christian, she voiced her opposition to the State Roads Commission, arguing that Wicomico County did not need massive highway projects through their farmland. She would later become a defender of Wicomico County’s education system. The lasting results of her legislative goals in this regard may be seen in Wor-Wic Community College today. Mary remained State Senator from 1954 to 1974, when she was defeated by E. Homer White, Jr. She then served on the Rosenberg Commission for State Education until 1984. She published her memoirs, It Was a Joy and a Pleasure in 1979, reflecting on her life and political career. Mary was an honorary member of Soroptimists International, the Delta Kappa Gamma Society, the Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers, as well as other organizations. Mary died on May 20, 1987, at the age of 83.

It Was a Joy and a Pleasure, Mary Nock, 1977

Scope and Content Note: Mary L. Nock papers document the professional and personal life of Mary Nock, who lived from 1903 to 1987. The papers, range 1669 to 1992, as she included in her possession colonial land grants as well as a copy of the Laws of Maryland which established Salisbury in 1735. Her personal papers document her life as a wife and family member of the Layfield-Nock families through photographs, greeting cards, and genealogical research. Mary Nock’s professional papers include materials such as professional correspondence, speeches, drafts of her book It Was a Joy and a Pleasure, awards, as well as ephemera from her time as a politician. Also included in the Nock papers are written works on Mary Nock by Ginger McClain Beningo, as well as Beningo’s notes and correspondence regarding the biographical works from 1990-1992, which make up the bulk of the material.
Arrangement Statement: The Mary L. Nock papers have been arranged into three series, PERSONAL PAPERS, PROFESSIONAL PAPERS, PUBLISHED MATERIALS. Personal papers document the life of Mary Nock as a wife, family member, and friend, and include visual materials, historical documents, and personal correspondence. The Professional papers series includes written works by Mary Nock, political ephemera, and awards. The Published Materials series includes an oral interview by Mary Nock, drafts of her book, as well as written works on Mary Nock by Ginger Beningo.

Folders are listed by their location in each box; any given subject may be dispersed throughout the entirety of the collection.

Subject Terms:

**General Terms**

- Genealogy & local history
- Legal records
- Legislation
- Local government
- Politics
- Politicians
- Quantico, Md.
- Wicomico County (Md.)—Politics and government

**Corporate Names**

- Beacom Business College
- Maryland State Government
- Salisbury State University

**Personal Names**

- Beningo, Ginger
- Nock, Garland
- Nock, Mary L.
- Smith, Al
- Tawes, J. Millard
Series I: Personal papers
Box 1
1. Portrait, Mary L. Nock, undated
2. Photographs, Nock and Layfield families, 1900-1983
3. Photograph, Mary and Garland Nock 60th Wedding Anniversary, 1985 April 11
5-6. Scrapbook, Tribute to Mary Nock, undated
7. Publications, Mary Nock Memorial, 1987
8. Research, Family History, 1922-1984
9. Award Ribbon, “Height of Fashion”, 1985
10. Correspondence, From Various People to Mary L. Nock, 1922-1987
11. Watercolor Portrait, Mary Nock, undated
13. Bulletin, Quantico Methodist Church, 1985 March 31

Series II: Professional papers
15. Correspondence, From Mary L. Nock to Various People, 1967-1977
16. Correspondence, From Colonel Felix Millhouse to Garland Nock, 1969 March 20
18. Papers, Maryland State Senate, 1949-1977
22. Photographs, Professional, undated
23. Pamphlets, Meetings Attended by Mary Nock, 1979-1986

Series III: Published Materials
27. Notes, It Was a Joy and a Pleasure by Mary Nock, circa 1977-1978
28. Notes, Photocopies, It Was a Joy and a Pleasure by Mary Nock, circa 1990-1992
29. Transcription, Oral Interview by Mary Nock, 1977 July 4- October 18
30. Audio Cassette Tapes, Oral Interview by Mary Nock, 1977 July 4-19

Box 2
1. Audio Cassette Tapes, Oral Interview of Mary Nock, 1977 July 4-19
2. Audio Cassette Tapes, Oral Interview of Mary Nock, 1977 July 25- August 29
3. Audio Cassette Tapes, Oral Interview of Mary Nock and J. Millard Tawes, 1977August 12-October 18
8. Correspondence, Various Maryland State Senators; to Ginger Beningo, 1990-1991

**Box 3**
1. Award, Wor-Wic Community College Board to Mary Nock, 1980 August 17
2. Scrapbook, Mary and Garland Nock, 1989

**Box 4**
1. Scrapbook, Mary and Garland Nock, circa 1985

**Oversize**
1. Photograph, Maryland State Senate, 1949
2. Photograph, Maryland State Senate, 1959
4. Poster, “Re-Elect Mary L. Nock”, undated
5. Land Grant, to William Keene, 1669
6. Laws of Maryland Establishing Salisbury Town, 1732-63
7. Land Grant, to Jonathan Stott, 1753 August 10

**Library Materials**
1. *It Was a Joy and a Pleasure*, Mary Nock, 1979

**Artifacts**
1. Plaque, 1989.030.01
2. Gavel, 1989.030.02
3. Place card, Mary Nock, 1989.030.03
4. Announcement, Wedding, 1989.030.03
5. Plate, 1989.030.04
6. Figurine, Animal, 1989.030.05
7. Figurine, Animal, 1989.030.06
9. Ashtray, 1989.030.08
10. Plate, 1989.030.09
11. Fan, 1989.030.10
12. Pendant, Charm, 1989.030.11