

Guide
To The
Mary L. Bower Collection
Hist. Mss. 1-94

Written By

Timothy Rice
RR 1, Box 136
Perkasie, Pa. 18944

In
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Collection
Previously Organized

By

Joel Alderfer
Archivist and Curator
For
Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania

And

The Above Mentioned Timothy Rice

Mary L. Bower was born on 19 Nov 1876 to Dr. Joel B. & Elizabeth Latshaw Bower. She was a public school teacher for a period of time and also a practical nurse. Outside of her job, she served as secretary and historian for Latshaw Family Association which is now extinct. She did a considerable amount of both American and European research and correspondence on and with many Latshaws. Mary L. Bower never married and died on 3 July 1961 at the Eastern Mennonite Home where she had lived since September 1949. She was buried in Fairview Cemetery, Boyertown, Pa. She was a member of the Boyertown Mennonite Church.

This archival collection is largely the genealogical records and correspondence either of or done for the Latshaw Family Association. But it does also contain records on an assortment of other surnames and local & Mennonite history. There is even a small amount of Mary Bower's personal records within the collection.

Hist. Mss. 1-94; Mary L. Bower Collection, Box #1

- 1) Latshaw Family Record Sheets
These sheets include the following information:
address, date born & where, who married to & sometimes
the date, religion, occupation, date died & age &
burial place, and education data for the informant, his
parents, grandparents & great-grandparents of the
Latshaw family, children, and great-grandchildren.
Sometimes other related historical information is
included.
- 2) Cor. Sec. Latshaw Sketches and Obituaries
Most of these are newspaper clippings.
- 3) Cor. Sec. Latshaw Reunion Programs, Sketches, and Obituaries
Excluding the reunion programs, this file consists
mostly of newspaper clippings.
- 4) Latshaw Program Notes and Reunion Notes, 1927-1930
This file contains reports of the historical committee
of the Latshaw families in America.
- 5) Latshaw Reunion Letters-Correspondence
This file contains letters written approximately
between 1928 and 1950.
- 6) Mailing List of Latshaw Family Assn. of America, n.d.
- 7) Latshaw Mailing List, 1931
- 8) Mailing List (no ID)
- 9) Correspondence, c. 1929-1933
- 10) Correspondence, Miscellaneous, c. 1929-1936
- 11) Bechtel, Jesse - Correspondence, c. 1927-1936
Also contains programs or brochures of the Bechtel
family reunions for the years of 1911, 1913, 1920,
1925, 1927, 1928, 1931, & 1932.
- 12) Landes, Dorothy - Correspondence, c. 1952-1954
- 13) Latshaw, Allen S. - Correspondence, c. 1930-1934
Deals mostly with the Latshaw family reunions.
- 14) Frantz Latshaw Records
Includes some correspondence in addition to the
genealogical records.
- 15) Frantz II Line: Gehman-Boreneman
Includes correspondence (c. 1927-1931) in addition to
the genealogical records.

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- 16) Latshaw, Fred (line) - Correspondence, c. 1928-1930
- 17) Jacob Latshaw Records - German Letters Frantz to America, c. 1928
- 18) Latshaw, Preacher John - Spring City
- 19) Latshaw-Moyer - Harrison
- 20) Latshaw History, Northumberland Co. - Mt. Carmel
Includes some correspondence, c. 1928-1929.
- 21) Latshaw in Canada / George Weber-Canada
Includes a program for the 1920 Betzner Reunion in Waterloo, Ontario and a printed memoir of Mrs. Latshaw McGuire containing her picture.
- 22) Latshaw Wills - Franz, Abraham, Jacob
- 23) Latshaw - Reference / Publication of History Book
Contains a booklet about The Latshaw School of Elementary Construction and Development copyrighted 1915; includes some correspondence, c. 1928-1929.
- 24) Latshaw - Landis Letters in Ohio / West, c. 1928-1929
- 25) Latshaw - Miscellaneous Notes
- 26) Bower Family History
- 27) Mostly Bower Notes
Also contains the 1899 Annual Financial Statement of the Treasurer of the Boyertown Water Company, the program for the June 1901 University of Pennsylvania Baccalaureate Services, & the 21 July 1951 program for the Youth Sunset Meeting at Eastern Mennonite Home
- 28) Misc. Papers and Letters, c. 1928 - 1934
- 29) Misc. Papers (Loose)
- 30) Institute of American Genealogy - Correspondence, c. 1929-1931
- 31) Perkiomen Region - Kriebel Letters, c. 1931-1934
- 32) Spring City - Vincent Area Clippings

Hist. Mss. 1-94; Mary L. Bower Collection, Box #1

33) Booklets

Contains Should Christians Fight? by I. C. Wellcome published by Scriptural Publication Society of Yarmouth, Maine in 1885; also contains a booklet entitled Life and Times of Conrad Weiser published by the Board of Trade of Reading in 1893.

The following items listed on this page are set loose in box #1:

put in
H.M. 3-31
(Photos)

{ A small picture of Moses Kindig Latshaw, 1818-1852

{ Photos of Joel B. Bower and one of Elizabeth Latshaw-2nd wife of Joel B. Bower

Miscellaneous letters and documents in an Alasco document envelope, c. 1936-1937

Hist. Mss. 1-94, Mary L. Bower Collection, Box #2

- 34) Geographischn Verbreitung Der Menschenracen
- 35) Barnes - Correspondence, c. 1931-1932
- 36) Bauman, Beary, Buckey/Close, Berky
Includes some correspondence, c. 1931-1932, in addition to some genealogical records.
- 37) Buckwalter
Includes some correspondence, c. 1930-1937, in addition to genealogical records.
- 38) Burkholder, Stauffer
Includes some correspondence, c. 1928-1935, in addition to genealogical records; also includes the 1930 Burkholder Family Reunion booklet.
- 39) Detwiler, Frederick, Cleuenst
Includes correspondence, c. 1927-1928.
- 40) Funk - Hiestand
Includes widely scattered correspondence between 1925 & 1952 in addition to genealogical records.
- 41) Schantz, Sholtz, Borneman, - Latshaw, Catharine
Includes some correspondence from c. 1936 to 1947 in addition to genealogical records.

The previous files were organized by Joel Alderfer, librarian and curator at The Meeting House. The following files were found later and were then organized by Timothy Rice of RR #1, Box 136, Perkasio, Pa. 18944 under the direction of the above Joel Alderfer.

- 42) Latshaw Family Assn. Histories and Reports, c. 1927-1930
- 43) Latshaw & Bower Family Records & Correspondence
Also contains the Seventh Annual Report of Chrysler Corporation Year Ended December 31, 1931. Mary Bower used it to write notes on the Bower family.
- 44) Latshaw Family Records, #1
Contains a number of newspaper obituaries among the genealogical data.
- 45) Latshaw Family Records, #2
- 46) Latshaw Family Records, #3

Hist. Mss. 1-94, Mary L. Bower Collection, Box #2

- 47) Latshaw History - Mennonitische Blatter, 1929, 1932, & 1933
- 48) Correspondence with Julien Latsha, Oswald Latsha, and Paul Lachat, c. 1930-1931, 1945-1950
Many letters are in German and one is in French.
- 49) Misc. Latshaw-Related Correspondence & Records, c. 1928-1937
Many letters are in German.
- 50) Daniel Latshar Eymann Fund Correspondence, c. 1931-1932
Also contains a record of donations for this fund.
- 51) Hans Latscha Documents, c. 1929-1931
Many documents are written in German.
- 52) Jacob Latschar - Correspondence, c. 1929-1939
These letters are written in German. This folder also contains a book entitled Jakob Latscha: Der Mann und sein Werk. The book does not give a publishing date.
- 53) Miscellaneous German Correspondence, c. 1932-1933 & 1946-50
- 54) Correspondence, Pictures, Misc., c. 1919, 1929, 1947-1954
Contains pictures of the Daniel Latschar Eyman family and relatives. Daniel Latschar Eyman lived from 1880 to 1933. One of the pictures shows him in uniform in the German Army. He served in Romania.
- 55) Maps and Brochures - Switzerland and Germany
- 56) Mary Bower's Newspapers, #1
- 57) Mary Bower's Newspapers, #2
- 58) Mary Bower and Family's Personal Documents
Contains school and health documents among other things.

The following is a list of items in Box #2 that are not in numbered folders:

A photocopy of a ship list dated 15 June 1728

Photocopies of a couple late 17th century indentures

A photocopy of a ship list dated 24 Aug 1728

Copies of wills for John Latcha, Frantz Latshar, & Jacob Latshaw

A small box with napkins and doilies

Hist. Mss. 1-94, Mary L. Bower Collection, Box #2

The Youth's Book on Natural Theology

This book has Mary L. Bower's name written in it on the first Contents page. On the inside cover, the following is written: Hickorytown March 25 1862.

Not included in either of the two boxes are two large scrapbooks. The one scrapbook contains mostly magazine articles that are doctrinal or Mennonite-related. The other scrapbook contains newspaper clippings that are mostly local history or Mennonite-related. In the back of this scrapbook are envelopes containing newspaper or magazine clippings including the following topics:

Discussion between C.S. Moser & Andrew Mack
Fifty Mennonite Leaders in the Gospel Herald, 1934
The Story of the "Titanic" Disaster
Account of Menn. General Conference at Belleville, 1927
Boyertown & Hereford Mennonite Church Histories

MARY LATSHAW BOWER, HISTORIAN

The Mary Latshaw Bower (1876-1961) collection was recently processed at the Historical Library revealing her interest in local history and genealogy. The collection was donated by her nephew Henry L. Bower of Boyertown.

Mary Latshaw Bower was the daughter of Mennonite dentist Dr. Joel B. Bower (1840-1933) and Elizabeth Latshaw Bower of the Boyertown Congregation. Joel Bower attended Mt. Pleasant Seminary and Freeland Seminary, Collegeville in the 1860's and graduated from the Philadelphia Dental College in 1867. Mary's three brothers, Abram L., Samuel L. and Daniel L. Bower, also graduated from the dental college. The various diplomas and degrees of her father and brothers were found in her collection.

Mary attended the Boyertown High School (1892-1894) and the West Chester State Normal School. In her handwritten notes of her family's history, she lists her "occupations" as "Teacher, Daughter at home, Chautauqua Nurse, Jr. Audubon, Historian, Bookshop". Mary was baptized, at the age of twenty-one, into the Hereford Mennonite Congregation by Bishop Andrew S. Mack on Easter 1897.

With her interests in Local and Mennonite history and genealogy she became the secretary and historian for the Latshaw Family Reunion and historian for the Boyertown and Hereford Mennonite Congregations. In 1935, Mary wrote and published Mennonite Church of Boyertown, Pa. With Amy Hestand Gehman of Bally, PA, she authored and published the twenty page History of the Hereford Mennonite Congregation at Bally, Penna., which she sold for 25 cents in her little "bookshop" located in her home. She also assisted J. C. Wenger in his writing of the History of the Franconia Conference in 1937 by supplying him information on the Boyertown and Hereford Congregations. As her interest in genealogy grew, she became a member of a number of local and national genealogical and historical societies, associations and reunion committees.

Mary apparently lived with her father, Joel Bower, until his death in 1933 when she bought his house on South Reading Avenue, Boyertown. She lived in the house until 1949 when she moved to the Eastern Mennonite Home in Souderton. In 1952, she sold her house in Boyertown to her nephew Henry L. Bower, who became the heir to her genealogical collection. Mary lived at the Souderton Home for twelve years until her death in July, 1961. She was buried in the Fairview Cemetery in Boyertown, where her father had a lot, not the Boyertown Mennonite Cemetery of which her father was a trustee.

-Joel D. Alderfer



This interesting map, Geographical Distribution of the Human Race, was found in the Mary L. Bower Collection