

**BLOSSOM SISTERS
PAPERS, 1932-1953****SC22853**

QUANTITY: 6 Boxes (ca. 2 cubic ft.)
ACCESS: Open to research
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April, 2005

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE*:

Dorothy Blossom was born Dorothy Eleanor Leamon in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and died in Kingston, New York, in 1999. At the time of her death she resided in Gardiner, New York, with her sister Helen (Leamon) Blossom.

While still children, the sisters moved with their parents, Ralph and May Knaupp Leamon to Jamaica, Queens, New York, residing at 150-24 Grand Central Parkway. In 1932, the sisters began appearing in vaudeville and musical comedy shows under the name "Two Blossoms in the Garden of Song and Dance."

Touring nationally through the 1930s in vaudeville and musical comedy revues was important preparation for their later work as USO performers throughout World War II and into the 1950s. The USO tours brought them to venues in Europe, the South Pacific, and to bases, military hospitals, and other facilities across North America. They claimed, in publicity pieces, to have performed as many as 2,000 shows in a single year of touring.

Between tours they worked at least part-time as ushers in New York City theaters. Although they achieved a measure of success and popularity as USO performers, their performing career apparently did not continue after they stopped doing USO tours. Newspaper accounts indicate that one or both of the sisters ventured to Hollywood, California to try out for roles in motion pictures. Some items in the collection bearing the name "Dorothy Dunhill" suggest that Dorothy Blossom may have attempted a solo career under that name, although this cannot be verified independently.

At Dorothy's death in 1999, the sisters resided in Gardiner under their birth name, Leamon. Photographs in the collection include several family and personal photographs. Other than the sisters, no one else present in the photographs is identified. There is no indication that either sister ever married.

* Some of this biographical information comes from an article in *The Long Island Daily Press*, August 6, 1942, p. 14.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE:**

The papers of Dorothy Blossom (a.k.a. Dorothea Blossom, Dorothy Dunhill) and Helen Blossom (a.k.a. Helene Blossom) document their careers as dancers and comediennes, first on the vaudeville circuit, and later as part of USO shows entertaining armed forces personnel at remote stations during and just after World War II. The collection contains a significant collection of love letters and personal correspondence from Theodore H. ("Ted") Richmond to Dorothy Blossom between 1933 and 1935. During the period covered by the correspondence, Richmond managed theatres in Boston, Massachusetts, and (briefly) Schenectady, New York. Smaller files of letters include fan mail, business and personal correspondence.

Numerous press clippings document the Blossom Sisters' USO touring experiences, and to a lesser extent, their early vaudeville work. Significantly there are several mimeographed and/or printed armed forces base newsletters from bases around the world.

Scripts for comedy sketches and longer dramatic pieces, along with heavily annotated orchestra charts and music scores, complete the record of the sisters' performing career. The remainder of the collection is made up of personal photographs, greeting cards, and ephemera.

**Unless otherwise noted all information is from an obituary notice for Dorothy Eleanor Leamon, published in the *Middletown Times-Herald-Record*, March 20, 1999. The obituary states that she was born in 1919, although correspondence in the collection suggests an earlier birth date.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST:

Box	Folder	Description of Contents
1	0	Finding aid
		Series I – Correspondence
1	1	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, 1932
1	2	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, Jan. 1933
1	3	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, Feb. 1933
1	4	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, May 1933
1	5	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, June 1933
1	6	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, July-Aug. 1933
1	7	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, Dec. 1933
1	8	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, 1934
1	9	Theodore H. Richmond to Dorothy Blossom, 1935
1	10	Ralph Saylin to Dorothy Blossom 1945, 1948
1	11	Miscellaneous correspondence
1	12	Postal covers
		Series II – Miscellaneous personal and business papers
1	13	Greeting cards
1	14	Small scrapbook, 1935-36 (includes pre-USO touring notes, clippings, etc.)
1	15	Financial statement: salary and expenses while touring, ca. 1935
1	16	Photographs
1	17	Certificates
		Series III – Scripts/Lyrics/Poetry (mss. or typescript except where

		noted)
2	1	Beware Brother Beware
2	2	Cowboy Scene
2	3	Debbies from Dubuque
2	4	Gags
2	5	I Double Dare You
2	6	McCarthy
2	7	Mrs. Warren's Profession
2	8	My Man
2	9	My Three Angels (printed script)
2	10	Rhythm in Nursery Rhymes
2	11	Simple Lines to a Dimpled Damsel
2	12	The Telegram
2	13	Two Little Maids
		Series IV – Orchestra Charts
2	14	Beware Brother Beware
2	15	Bluebird Singing
2	16	British Are Coming
2	17	But I Did
2	18	Caravan
2	19	Debbies from Dubuque
2	20	I'm Just a Girl Who Can't Say No
2	21	Jim Jam Jive
3	1	Lady
3	2	Leap with a Creep
3	3	Leave Us Let Things
3	4	McCarthy
3	5	Medley
3	6	My Hero
3	7	My Man
4	1	Nobody's Sweetheart
4	2	One Meat Ball
4	3	Opera
4	4	River
4	5	Shoo Fly Pie
4	6	Solid Citizen of the Sunny South
4	7	Spanish Number
4	9	There Comes a Time
4	9	Miscellaneous Drum/Percussion Cues.
4	10	Unidentified Partial Chart
		Series V – Printed Scores
4	11	Ain't She Sweet
4	12	All for One and One for All
4	13	All of a Sudden My Heart Sings
4	14	Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing in a Hurry

4	15	Boogie Woogie for Beginners
4	16	Comic Song Album
4	17	Comin' In on a Wing and a Prayer
4	18	Couple of Swells, A
4	19	Don't Get Around Much Any More
4	20	Good, Good, Good
4	21	I Could Have Danced All Night
4	22	I Didn't Know the Gun Was Loaded
4	23	I Only Know That I Love You...
4	24	In My Arms
4	25	Is I In Love? I Is.
4	26	Jumpin' Jive, The
4	27	Just The Way You Are
4	28	King of Zulu, The
4	29	Kiss, The
5	1	Love Is the Reason
5	2	Love Is Where You Find It
5	3	Madame Butterfly's Song
5	4	Maurice
5	5	Moon Song
5	6	Moonlight and Roses
5	7	Music Goes Round and Round, The
5	8	No Can Do
5	9	On the Road to Mandalay
5	10	Pistol Packin' Mama
5	11	Salutations United Nations
5	12	Service Is Fine, The
5	13	Small Fry
5	14	Snake Charmer
5	15	Sooner or Later
5	16	Stay Out of the South
5	17	Stone Cold Dead in the Market
5	18	Sunday, Monday or Always
5	19	Sweet Old-Fashioned Girl
5	20	Sympathy
5	21	That's Why I'm Leaving You
5	22	There Are Such Things
5	23	There's Something in Your Eyes
5	24	Three Little Sisters
5	25	Tico-Tico
5	26	Twenty Million People
5	27	What Do the Simple Folk Do
5	28	Who's Your Little Who-Zis?
5	29	With a Little Bit of Luck
5	30	Yes My Heart

5	31	You Tell Her – I Stutter
5	32	You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To
		Series VI – Printed ephemera (includes newsletters, magazines, clippings, etc.)
5	33	<i>Argentia Foghorn</i> , Argentia, Newfoundland, Oct. 22, 1952 (Newsletter of the Argentia Naval Base – 2 copies)
5	34	<i>B.B.C. News</i> , Bermuda (Vol. 2, No. 44) Nov. 7, 1942 (Newsletter of Bermuda Base Command)
5	35	<i>Bushnell Bugle</i> , Brigham City, Utah (Vol. X, No. 5) Oct. 14, 1944 (Newsletter of Bushnell General Hospital)
5	36	<i>Contact</i> (Vol. 1, No. 8) Dec. 15, 1942 (Newsletter “published by the personnel of the Air Depot”).
5	37	<i>Daily Force</i> (Vol. 12, No. 3) Jan. 16, 1943 (2 copies)
5	38	<i>Daily Magnet</i> (Vol. 11, No. 261) Nov. 4, 1943 (Newsletter of the Lockheed Overseas Corporation)
5	39	<i>Fitzsimmons Stethoscope</i> , Denver, Colorado (Vol. 2, No. 18) Oct. 21, 1944 (Newsletter of Fitzsimmons General Hospital)
5	40	<i>Force Star</i> , New York (Vol. 7, Nos. 2-4) January 16-23, 1943 (some duplicates)
5	41	<i>LaGarde Sentinel</i> , New Orleans, Louisiana (Vol. 3, No. 25) Aug, 25, 1941 (Newsletter of La Garde General Hospital)
5	42	<i>Vetegee</i> , Tuskegee, Alabama (Vol. 3, No. 23) July 2, 1949 (Veterans' hospital newsletter)
5	43	Miscellaneous small news clippings
6	1	“Another USO Show” – Poster for Harmon Theatre (Deer Lake, Newfoundland) May 26-28 [1952?]
6	2	<i>Trinidad News Tips</i> , Port-of Spain, Trinidad (Vol. 2, No. 5) January 15, 1943.
6	3	<i>Mid-Ocean News and Colonial Government Gazette</i> , Hamilton Bermuda (Vol. 32, Nos. 71-72) Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 1942 (Vol. 32, No. 74) Nov. 4, 1942 (Vol. 32, No. 77) Nov. 7, 1942
6	4	<i>The Stars and Stripes</i> , London, England (Vol. 3, No. 214) July 12, 1943 (Vol. 3, No. 304) Oct. 25, 1943 (Vol. 4, No. 21) Nov. 25, 1941
6	5	<i>G.I. Gazette</i> , Camp Pendleton, Virginia (Vol. 3, No. 9) May 13, 1944
6	6	<i>Camp Roberts Dispatch</i> , Camp Roberts, California (Vol. 1, No. 45) March 20, 1941
6	7	<i>Ford City Leader-times</i> , Ford City, Pennsylvania, March 6, 1944.
6	8	<i>Daily Express</i> , London, England, June 29, 1943 (pp. 1-2) Nov. 16, 1943 (pp. 1-4)
6	9	<i>Long Island Daily Press</i> , August 6, 1942 (pp. 13-14 only) <i>Long Island Sunday Press</i> , May 22, 1949 (pp. 19-20 only)
6	10	<i>The Star</i> , London, England, June 12, 1943 (pp. 3-6 only)

6	11	<i>Puerto Rico World Journal</i> , San Juan, Puerto Rico Dec. 18, 1942 (pp. 2-3 only) – 2 copies
6	12	Several clippings with versions of a 1944-syndicated story about the Blossom Sisters, entitled “Good Troupers.” <i>The Post-Star</i> , Glens Falls, New York, March 6, 1944 (pp. 7-10 only) Unidentified paper (possibly from New York) dated March 6, 1944 (pages 16-17). King-Features Syndicate clipping, release date March 6, 1944
6	13	<i>Sunday Mirror Magazine</i> , New York, New York, clipping dated 1948 (2 copies)
6	14	<i>G.I.</i> , Army Reception Ctr., New Cumberland, Pennsylvania (Vol. 2, No. 3) March 5, 1943.
6	15	<i>Thunderjet Express</i> , K-2 (later Teagu) Air Base, South Korea, Sept. 12, 1953 (pp. 3-4 only)
6	16	<i>Laundry Age</i> , New York, (Vol. 24, No. 5) March 15, 1944
6	17	<i>Caribbean Sentinel</i> , San Juan, Puerto Rico, (Vol. 3, No. 9) Dec. 25, 1942 (pp. 1-2 only)
6	18	<i>Military Service News</i> , San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 27, 1942 (pp. 11-14 only)
6	10	<i>New York World-Telegram</i> , March 14, 1949 (pp. 15-16, 25-26)

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