

Loretto Heritage Center Archives and Museum

Finding Aid: Personal Mission Materials, Sr. Imelda Wallace, SL

LHC17.0

Date Range: 1896-1992

Creator: Sr. Imelda Wallace, SL

Extent: 0.67 linear ft.

Language: English

Access Restrictions: Access to materials in the Loretto Heritage Center archives are granted at the discretion of Heritage Center staff and the Loretto Community.

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Citation: LHC17.0 Personal Mission Materials, Sr. Imelda Wallace, [Folder i.d.] [Folder Title], Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center and Archives (Nerinx, KY)

Creator of Material Biography: Imelda Wallace, SL, was born September 6, 1884 as Lorabel Marie Wallace on a farm near Forester, Michigan, to Daniel and Isabella Wallace. Her mother wanted to name her Laura Isabella, but her father combined the two names to create her birth name Lorabel. As a young child, her family moved to the Northern Arizona mountains, which at the time was considered the "Last Frontier." Imelda came from a Methodist family that had been steeped in anti-Catholic propaganda for generations. She grew up listening to her father and grandfather frequently call the Roman Catholic Church blasphemous. However, at 14 years old, Imelda found herself attending a Catholic funeral Mass by chance, and after sensing the presence of Jesus Christ on the altar, emerged a convinced Catholic. Revealing to her parents that she was a Catholic caused a rift that lasted until their deaths. Nevertheless, Imelda persisted in practicing her chosen faith. She secretly wrote to the local priest, began attending weekday Mass, and visited a nearby convent populated by Sisters of Loretto to study Catholicism. Yet she could not officially be received into the Catholic Church without her father's permission until she turned of legal age at 21. As that birthday approached, she was baptized, made first Holy Communion, and was confirmed all in the same day in 1905. However, her entrance into the Sisters of Loretto was delayed several more years, because she was expected to contribute to her family's household, even though she no longer felt welcome there. She graduated from the Northern Arizona Normal School and taught grade school until she could finally leave for Kentucky. She entered the Novitiate in 1908 and was received into the order May 10, 1909, taking the religious name Imelda. She spent the next 40 years teaching at Loretto schools across the Midwest and became a well-respected author, often using her childhood on the Western frontier and her family's Scottish heritage as inspiration. She wrote a series of religious textbooks for children, numerous short stories, and two novels: *Outlaws of Ravenhurst* and *The Lure of the West*. She earned a bachelor's degree from Loretto Heights College in Denver, Colorado in 1934 and a master's degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska in 1946. Imelda died on April 15, 1957 at the Loretto Motherhouse Infirmary.

Description: Material created by, collected by, or about Imelda Wallace.

Related Materials: Personnel file for Imelda (LHC04); Published resources (LHC13) for copies of her published works; Heritage Center research room collection for a copy of the file adaptation of *Outlaws of Ravenhurst*

Arrangement

Material was grouped into sub-series and files by the archivist, Laurel Wilson.

Sub-series 1: LHC17.0.a Biographical Materials, Photographs, and Correspondence

Box 1: LHC17.0.a.01

- Folder 1: Biographical Materials
- Folder 2: Photographs
- Folder 3: Correspondence
- Folder 4: Contracts [Re: published works]
- Folder 5: Correspondence After Imelda's Death

Sub-series 2: LHC17.0.b Written Work

Box 1: LHC17.0.b.01

- Folder 1: Published Short Stories
- Folder 2: Short Story Manuscripts (1)
- Folder 3: Short Story Manuscripts (2)
- Folder 4: "Lone Panther Rages" Manuscript
- Folder 5: "Old Mrs. Sullivan's Curse" Manuscript
- Folder 6: "Fifty-Nine Years After" Manuscript

Box 2: LHC17.0.b.02

- Folder 1: Charles Nerinckx Manuscript
 - File contains a manuscript about Loretto founder Charles Nerinckx that Imelda co-wrote with Sr. Constanza Mosley.*
- Folder 2: Memoirs of Dr. P.J. McHugh Manuscript
 - File contains a manuscript of Fifty Years of Western Medicine, a memoir written by Dr. P.J. McHugh. Imelda appears to have made comments on the manuscript and corresponded with the author.*