



THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K1223

Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt (1905-1993) Papers

ca. 1861-1993

8 cubic feet, oversize

Family, personal and professional materials of Bergfeldt, professional dancer, teacher, producer, and founder of the Kansas City Dance Theatre. Includes family papers: photographs and legal documents for the Sharon and Headlee families, Spring Hill, KS; personal papers: correspondence between Ula and William Harold Bergfeldt (1895-1971) during their courtship and early marriage, as well as Harold's correspondence to his parents and photographs from France following World War I; and professional papers: scripts for ballets and administrative records of the Kansas City Dance Theatre.

BIOGRAPHY:

Ula Sharon Robinson was born to John M. and Lilleth (Sharon) in Spring Hill, Kansas, on March 17, 1905. John was a railway civil engineer who moved the family to the Philippines when Ula was a baby. She always showed talent for dancing, and upon the family's return to the United States, she became a child star in Philadelphia's vaudeville scene. At age ten, she toured Australia for three months. The Robinsons moved to Kansas City, where Ula enrolled in the Norman School and began dance instructions with Dorothy Burrows Perkins. At age 14 she and Lilleth moved to New York, and at age 15, Ula began a year of critical and popular acclaim starring in the vaudeville hit, *Broadway Brevities*. For the next several years she continued to study dance and perform in London and New York, most notably in the *Greenwich Village Follies* and a command performance for King George V.

In 1931, Ula married William Harold "Perky" Bergfeldt (1895-1971), proprietor of Dale-Bergfeldt Tailors, and in 1935, their only child, William Jr. was born. Ula taught dance and produced many original shows in Kansas City, and in 1954 she founded the Kansas City Dance Theatre. KCDT performed many of Ula's works and gave hundreds of the area's young people exposure to the dance. Ula continued to teach dance and body mechanics until 1983, and she passed away on January 19, 1993.

PROVENANCE:

This gift was received from Jean Babcock as accession KA0955 on June 16, 1997 and KA0976 on December 1, 1997.

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PREFERRED CITATION:

Specific item; folder number; *Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt (1905-1993) Papers (K1223)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

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DESCRIPTION:

The collection consists of family, personal and professional materials of Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt. Family papers include many photographs (including tintypes) and legal documents pertaining to the Sharon and Headlee families in and around Spring Hill, Kansas in the 1800s. Personal papers include correspondence between Ula and W.H. Bergfeldt during their courtship and early marriage, as well as Harold's correspondence to his parents and photographs from France following World War I. Ula also saved many programs of dance and theatre performances she attended. Professional materials include scripts for ballets and administrative records of the Kansas City Dance Theatre.

This collection is closely related to the *Jean Coover Babcock (1944-2012) Papers (K0740)*, who was a student and close friend of Miss Sharon's.

INVENTORY:

BOX 001

- Folder 1. Wedding book – Ula Sharon (aunt) and Samuel M. Simmons, August 15, 1894
- Folder 2. John and Lilleth (Sharon) Robinson – passports (1922-1930), marriage license (1904)

- Folder 3. Funeral book – John M. Robinson (April 14, 1868 – February 5, 1960)
- Folder 4. Funeral book – Lilleth Sharon Robinson (November 22, 1875 – March 6, 1964)
- Folder 5. Funeral book – Ula Sharon Simmons (December 8, 1871 – June 6, 1973)
- Folder 6. Funeral book – William H. Bergfeldt (August 10, 1895 – May 3, 1971)
- Folder 7. Diary – Jacob Headlee, Carrollton, MO 1861
- Folder 8. Religious writings “wrote for Josephus Headlee”, c.1880s
- Folder 9. Stock certificates, c.1902-1912
- Folder 10. Legal documents, correspondence, etc. – Sharon and Headlee Families, 1800s
- Folder 11. Legal documents, correspondence, etc. – Sharon and Headlee Families, 1800s
- Folder 12. Personal account books – Samuel M. Simmons, 1884-1899, 1956-1957
- Folder 13. Correspondence – Ula (Mrs. SM Simmons), and Samuel Simmons from John and Lilleth Robinson , 1910-1934
- Folder 14. Correspondence – John from Lilleth and Ula, 1903, 1915
- Folder 15. Correspondence – Ula (aunt) from Lilleth and Ula, 1912-1923
- Folder 16. Correspondence – Ula from Lilleth (chiefly from the Philippines), 1907-1922
- Folder 17. Reminiscence – Charlotte Simmons, c.1908-1909
- Folder 18. Poems by Lilleth Robinson
- Folder 19. “Mama’s Art Work”
- Folder 20. “Memories of HaHaTonka”
- Folder 21. Leather wallet
- Folder 22. Westport High School Herald, 1913
- Folder 23. Westport High School Herald, 1914
- Folder 24. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to parents from France, 1918-1919
- Folder 25. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, June 1931
- Folder 26. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, July 1931
- Folder 27. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, August 1931

- Folder 28. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, September 1931
- Folder 29. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, October-November 1931

BOX 002

- Folder 30. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, August 1932
- Folder 31. Correspondence – W.H. Bergfeldt to Ula in Florida, February 1938
- Folder 32. Correspondence – Mildred and Joe, 1977 and undated
- Folder 33. Correspondence – Charles and Hannah Bergfeldt, 1906, 1909
- Folder 34. Miscellaneous correspondence to Ula (1956-1991)
- Folder 35. Essay by William Bergfeldt, Jr. – “Take Shakespeare off the Bookshelf...” undated
- Folder 36. Christmas cards
- Folder 37. Dardanells/Greece trip, undated
- Folder 38. Dried rose
- Folder 39. Poetry for Ula by E.M.G. (Maurice) 1931
- Folder 40. Autograph book (Aunt Ula), 1886
- Folder 41. Passports
- Folder 42. Body mechanics/chiropractic
- Folder 43. Script – “The Road Beyond”
- Folder 44. Script – Circus Ballet
- Folder 45. Script – Chinese
- Folder 46. Script – “The Nightingale and the Rose”
- Folder 47. Script – “Karma”
- Folder 48. Script – “Cowboys and Indians”
- Folder 49. Miscellaneous scripts
- Folder 50. Songs
- Folder 51. “My Book”
- Folder 52. “The Dance”

Kansas City Dance Theatre

- Folder 53. “Parc Parisienne” – correspondence, publicity, programs
- Folder 54. “Parc Parisienne” – script, notes, production notebook
- Folder 55. “The Sword and the Lute” – script, publicity, programs

- Folder 56. "Susan Goes to the Art Gallery" – script, publicity, programs
Folder 57. "Fantasy of the Toys" – script, publicity, programs
Folder 58. Nelson Art Gallery – regulations, clippings
Folder 59. Administrative records, 1950s-60s
Folder 60. Administrative records, 1950s-60s
Folder 61. KCDT photos
Folder 62. Notecards – talk on dance
Folder 63. Program – Ballet Celeste, 1958
Folder 64. Nomination of Ula to Women's Leadership Fountain Project, 1991
Folder 65. Miscellaneous
Folder 66. Miscellaneous clippings
Folder 67. Ula Sharon: Premiere Danseuse, 1993
Folder 68. Working papers for Folder 66.

BOX 003

- Family photographs
Photograph album – Ula as little girl
Publicity photographs
Photographs of entertainers
Photograph scrapbook – chiefly Perky, Jr.
Photograph albums and scrapbook – Perky, Sr. in WWI
Clippings – photocopied from scrapbook

BOX 004

- Programs
Slides, film, videotape

BOX 005

- Reel-to-reel audiotapes - chiefly music and religious

BOX 006

- Reel to reel audiotapes - chiefly music and religious

BOX 007

- Reel to reel audiotapes - chiefly music

BOX 008

- Folder 8.1 Script – The Tempest, 1926
Folder 8.2 Programs-Ula Sharon, 1938; Convention Hall 1916, 1917

- Folder 8.3 Program – “Temple Varieties” – B’Nai Jehuda Sisterhood dedicated to the House of Living Judaism
- Folder 8.4 Souvenir book – Verdun, France
- Folder 8.5 Yearbook – The Log (Rockhurst High School), 1927
- Folder 8.6 Kansas City Dance Theatre, 1961
- Folder 8.7 Photographs-Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt and others- includes baby pictures, professional dance photographs, ca 1906-1943, 1980s (photocopies)
- Folder 8.8 Photographs-Kansas City Dance Company, 1954-1964
- Folder 8.9 James M. Robinson-Madeira Mamore Railway-Brazil, South America (photocopies) 1910, memoir 1965
- Folder 8.10 Betamax videotape, 2 reels 8 mm color movie film
- Folder 8.11 Paper dolls commissioned by the Lincoln Exhibit for the Century of Progress (World’s Fair) held in Chicago, 1933

OVERSIZE (includes KA0955 and KA0956)

Photographs (including railroad construction in the Philippines and South America)

Costume sketches, other artwork

Photocopies of Ula Sharon's scrapbooks