

**McLean County Museum of History**

**LaRue Augspurger Diary Collection**

Processed by  
Mary Alice Wills  
Summer/Fall 2019

**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1925 - 1945
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

## Brief History

LaRue Augspurger's diary records her observations, experiences, and adventures at Mennonite Hospital's nursing school. The entries are of a young girl away from home and making friends and discovering a new life. LaRue excelled at her studies and was given opportunities to further her knowledge in bigger cities and in larger hospitals. She also took part in the fund drive to build a new hospital in 1928-29.

The diary ends in 1942, twelve years after her last entry. Her married surname is now name Sloan. She writes of joining the war effort as a registered nurse. As such, there are RN certificates for 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945.

## Scope

Diary entries begin in 1925 with Augspurger's arrival at the Mennonite Hospital school of nursing. Sometimes events are entered out of chronological order.

## Box and Folder Inventory

### Diary entries – 1925

Observations of having just arrived from Pulaski, Iowa, w/photos  
Photo of "The Mennonite Sanitarium," 3"x 5" with comment  
Photo of "Probationers – September 1925," with list of 10 names  
Two 2 ½' photos of nurse instructors  
"Extract from My Diary," August 22, 23, 24 entries reflect excitement, new surroundings, roommate, first day on duty, learning to give a bath  
Classes began – one page of comments.  
Admitted to Mennonite Nurses Student Body at a party w/photo 6"x 9".  
Thrill of first wearing uniform and starched cap w/photo  
Samples of uniform fabric  
Things We Can't Forget – one page comments and 5 images.  
Photos and ½ page comments on doctors: Dr. Edwin Plummer Sloan, Dr. Guy A. Sloan, Dr. Howard P. Sloan, Dr. Frank Deneen, Dr. Herman Wellmerling, Dr. Harold Watkins, Dr. Watson Gailey, Dr. James A. Casner, Dr. James C. McNutt  
Photo of Charlie Purkey, 2"x 3" driver, 13 small photos of nurses  
Three roommates w/photos and 1/3 page comments each.  
House where nurses lived w/photo, comments on life at the house, including cleaning with photo 2"x4" and burglar excitement.  
"The Black Sheep Bad Girls" two 1'x 3' photos, "too many drinks"  
Saying goodbye to favorite instructor at C&A train station with 2 ½" x 4 ½" photo

### Diary entries – 1927

Student nurses, January 1, 1927, 6"x 9" photo.  
Social life cartoon and comment

Smallpox vaccination certificate for LaRue Augspurgen, Nov.11, 1925  
Bugs and varmints were found,  
Cut-out of Beck Hearst. Poetic comments about shots.  
Kitchen temperature was either too hot or too cold, trays were very heavy, one page  
w/photo and cut-out illustrations.  
“Dictionary for Student Nurses,” A to Z  
“Sweet Young Things,” very old women w/photos.  
Augspurgen has appendectomy on May 24, sent home for 5 weeks to recover.  
Comments on experience of appendectomy  
Went to Springfield for 3 months Pediatrics, 3 1/2” x 5’ photo of crying baby  
Three 2 1/2” x 3 1/2” photos of family.  
One 2 1/2” x 3 1/2” nurses saying good-bye  
Seven snapshots of nurses and one nun with babies/toddlers.  
Baby related cut-outs, comments  
“My State of Mind in Springfield,” one page poem about the work in Pediatrics, and  
longing to return to Bloomington, w/two 1”x 2 1/2”photos.  
Fifteen 3”x 5” note papers w/Dr. names and operations scrubbed for in 1927-1928

#### **Page 44-59**

“Surgery,” poem about gall stones.  
“Surgical Alphabet,” A to Z  
Photos of surgical nurses in scrubs and teacher.  
Cut-out samples of surgical instruments and “Operation House,” photo of operating  
room.  
“Dr. Guy’s Plea,” poem about accepting appendectomy, Surgeons Rubber Glove picture,  
Ether label, cut-out of light  
Short poem, comment on operating day, and notice that Saturday is Miss Augspurgen’s  
last day in op. room.  
Photo 3”x 4” of two nurses and comment. Label for PLAIN Catgut, comment  
“Babies” baby cutout, photo, footprint,  
“A Corner for Babies,” 3 photos of nurses w/babies, one baby alone, cartoon.  
Student nurses dressed as babies and kids 1927, 9”x 6 1/2” photo.  
Six photos of uniformed nurses, labeled, three of w/Augspurgen.  
“Look Here Girls!” cut-outs w/scrubs pasted and verse.  
“Evolution,” photo of Augspurgen in 1908, 1928, and 3<sup>rd</sup> photo of “Ukulele Rosie”  
“The Much Trained Nurse,” w/ 2 photos, poem about reality after obtaining the degree.  
“Rose and her Creed,” poem about friend’s romance w/3 photos

#### **Page 60-66**

“Females,” 15 small photos of unidentified young women.  
“Males,” 12 small photos of unidentified young men.  
Three photos of different nurses, 2 labeled.  
“My First Vacation,” 8 photos of Starved Rock, Chicago, Lake Geneva, and Wisconsin  
Dells.  
“Good Times I’ve Had,” 4 labeled photos  
“Just a Few of ‘Em” 4 labeled photos.

Two photos, 1 labeled.

### **Diary Entries - 1928**

“Memories of Graduation,” undated newspaper article, “Mennonite Seniors Begin Senior Week With Theater Party,”

Photo, place card, memo to invited guest.

“April 27,” undated newspaper article, “Mennonite Seniors Are Feted by Alumnae Group at Friday Dinner Party,” brochure “Constitution and By-Laws of the Alumnae Association of the Mennonite Hospital School of Nurses,”

“Miss LaRue Augspurger,” invitation from Junior Class to dinner at Illinois House.

“May 1,” undated newspaper article, “Juniors at Mennonite Entertain at Banquet Honoring Senior Class,” photo.

Graduation Announcement, Augspurger photo in nurses’ uniform.

“May 2,” undated newspaper article, “Graduation Exercises for Mennonite Seniors to Be Held Wednesday,” place card

### **Page 74-80**

Program, Class Roll (12)

Graduate name cards (12)

Envelope containing copies of speeches made during commencement, Junior-Senior Banquet, Alumni Banquet.

Envelope addressed to Mrs. G. A. Sloan, Bloomfield, Iowa, containing 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary memorabilia, April 29, 1978

Mennonite Sanitarium diploma to Mary La Rue Augspurger, Sept. 5, 1928.

St. John’s Hospital School of Nursing certification for 3 months in the Children’s Hospital, signed November 15, 1929

Copy of speech Augspurger made at North Danvers Church in July ‘28 for new hospital.

Undated newspaper article about Junior-Senior Banquet at Rogers Hotel, Miss LaRue Augspurger was president of the class. Augspurger photo and miscellaneous.

Ad for J.A. & R.E. Solmes, Quality Uniforms, w/cutout model sample, and Augspurger comment, “ill-fitting, horrid.”

Two verse poem about student nurse experience.

### **Page 81-88**

Undated newspaper article announcing Augspurger’s graduation with highest honors and temporary appointment as surgical supervisor of operating room until regular supervisor returns from vacation, miscellaneous pen and ink drawings of fellow students.

State of Illinois Registration for R.N. Exam, in Chicago, Sept. 13-14, 1928, 2 photos of Augspurger in nurse’s cap, and in street clothes.

State of Illinois Department of Registration & Education, Nursing Examination Schedule, 6 hour long exams on first day, 4 on second day.

Commercial sketch of hotel dance floor, card from Hotel Royalton, 4 paragraphs about “fun” after the exams.

Newspaper photo of Republican, Herbert Hoover, comment of “My Choice” in first presidential election.

Newspaper photo of Democrat, Alfred E. Smith, poem and comment against Smith. Pages from Memorandum Calendar for February and March, 1927, with notes of night duty for every date.

### **Page 89-97**

Song composed by class of 1928, sung at Junior-Senior Banquet at Rogers Hotel, May 3, 1927. There is a verse for each doctor and nurse instructor, 4 pages.

Notification from State of Illinois that Augspurger passed Registered Nurse exam, dated October 9, 1928.

State of Illinois, Department of Registration and Education Certifies that M. LaRue Augspurger is entitled to practice as a Registered Nurse, 20<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1928.

State of Illinois Registered "1929" Nurse, and "1930" Nurse Licenses 10 of Spades playing card w/left corner cut off, comment that they played while bored "mother would disapprove," also played "500." Score bottom of page.

Private Duty was bad experience – 1 page

### **Page 97-104**

"The Detroit Free Press," newspaper logo.

"I Go to Detroit for Three Months," October 12, 1928, Chicago to Detroit train ticket, comment on accommodations.

Photo of Grace Hospital, Detroit

Receipt from Grace Hospital to LaRue Augspurger, \$50 for course

Paper signed by W.L.Babcock, Director certifying Augspurger completed Operating Room Technique and Surgical Nursing, December 29, 1928.

Info on course taken.

Newspaper article about LaRue's operating room, classes in Detroit.

Nurse Examination Record dated 9/13/14, 1928

One page of personal notes, shows attended while in Detroit

Sample of The Grace Hospital patient History Sheet, cut outs of doctor, intern names along sides of page

The Grace Hospital Operating Room Service sample sheet, comment on wealth of knowledge learned, and bad food

Augspurger tells of returning to Chicago and on to Bloomington

### **Page 105 – 113**

"January 1, 1929" LeRue tells of her first time as Mennonite surgical supervisor. She is engaged with diamond ring, but has reservations.

5" x 7" photo in nurses' uniform

Newspaper articles of advice for newlywed, or engaged

4" x 3" snapshot w/Hank

Comments on indecision

"National Hospital Day," invitation for babies born in last 3 years, also friends and former patients.

"National Hospital Day 1929" pamphlet w/photo

"The Sunday Pantagraph," May 12, 1929, full page article about Mennonite Hospital w/photos

“The Blushing Bride,” ode written by a friend telling of LaRue’s single days  
2” x 5” photo of unidentified nurse w/comments.  
Formal invitation to Commencement Exercise, May 29, 1929  
Ina Lucille Coleman 2” x 3” photo w/comment  
Copy of speech made to graduating class upon presenting the school pin.  
“Diplomas Presented to Seven Nurses at Hospital,” undated newspaper article

### **Page 114-132**

One page commenting on June, July and August being hardest in the hospital, but personally happiest months.  
6” x 9” glossy of 32 nurses  
Western Union Telegram, March 19, 1929, To LaRue, Congratulations from Lyle.  
Snapshots – 4 – of nurses, some ID by first name  
Page pasted with cutouts/comments of social life.  
Newspaper clippings: “Hastings-Plotner” wedding, “Mennonite Nurses Hold Hallowe’en Carnival.”  
“Instructions for Tonsil Operation Cases” brochure.  
“True Stories!” 4 nurses’ comments.  
Friend Rose’s cartoon illustration of LaRue’s love life.  
Two labeled doctor, nurse snapshots, baby announcement  
Three labeled snapshots of nurses and doctor w/comment

### **Page 132-145**

Three social life snapshots w/comments  
Photo of Mr. and Mrs. Noble O. Hoover, Superintendent of Mennonite, page w/comment.  
Birthday card from Rose  
Formal letter starting campaign for new hospital, May 31, 1929.  
One page missing friend Rose who is in NYC taking a course.  
Snapshot taken at fishing trip near Pontiac, 1928.  
Special Delivery postage stamp – 10 cents. Separate cancelled date of Jul 30.  
Snapshot, 3’ x 5’ LaRue in uniform, April, 1930  
Two page typed letter about LaRue’s astrological sign.  
Wedding invitation, At Home card, w/comment – friend, Norma’s wedding.  
Valentine’s Day card from Rose, Feb. 14, 1930  
LaRue writes she has just met THE man on June 22, 1929, waits a year to write about it as they have plans for the future, photo.  
“College of Surgeons Fails to Recognize Three Hospitals Here,” undated newspaper article.

### **Diary entries - 1930**

Mennonite Training School, Class of ’31, dinner invitation  
“Annual Banquet by Mennonite Nurses,” undated newspaper article.  
Glossy 6” x 9” photo, Mennonite Nurses Banquet, May 14, 1930. 6 page fold-out brochure w/photos, promoting new hospital.  
“The Mennonite HOSPITALER,” Vol. one, Number one, May, 1930, 6 page newsletter w/photos. New building developments.

Copies of humorous menu, questionnaire, award and end of probation song, "Happy Days," in envelope labeled "Alumnae Banquet."  
Three snapshot photos of Drs. Young, Ball, Deneen.  
Four snapshot photos of Drs. Stevenson, Jensen, Marvel, Cline, Scott  
Three snapshots of operating room, "N.O.H, our Pope," 4 unidentified nurses.  
Snapshot of nurses named representing 6 states labeled, 1928.  
Undated newspaper article about setting bone fracture.  
"Wesleyan Presents Students in Final Twilight Recital,"  
"The First Augspurgen Summer Reunion, Keokuk, Iowa, 1930." 7 family snapshot photos.  
"The Mennonite HOSPITALER," Vol. one, Number two, February, 1931, 4 page newsletter w/photos. Work starts on new building.  
Formal photo, 4" x 6" of toddlers Dean and Mary LaRue Weihner, named after Auspurger while at Mennonite.  
Formal photos, 4" x 6" of 13 nurses from classes of 1929, 30, and 31.  
Miscellaneous (5) family and friends snapshots.

### **Diary entry - 1942**

Photo 3½" x 4½" of LaRue, "In 1942, while there was a war on, I went to Chicago and took an oral exam to be reinstated as an R.N."  
Department of Registration and Education Certificate as a Registered Nurse issued for 1942 to La Rue Sloan.  
Department of Registration and Education Certificate as a Registered Nurse issued for 1943 to La Rue Sloan.  
Department of Registration and Education Certificate as a Registered Nurse issued for 1944 to La Rue Sloan.  
Department of Registration and Education Certificate as a Registered Nurse issued for 1945 to La Rue Sloan.